PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

OFFICIAL REPORT

FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT
OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN
AND NORTHERN IRELAND
FIFTY-FOURTH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF
HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

SESSION 2005–06

COMPRISING PERIOD
18 April—4 May 2006

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PRINCIPAL FLOOR SENIOR BAR ATTENDANT—Vacancy

BANQUETING MANAGER—Christian Purser

BANQUETING CO-ORDINATORS—Jason Bonello, Diane Elderfield, Carlos Ramirez Canessa

BANQUETING FLOOR MANAGER—Rui Duarte

BANQUETING SUPERVISOR—Patrick Cree

Catering Services - Outbuildings—

OPERATIONS MANAGER—Della Herd

SPECIAL PROJECTS MANAGERS - OUTBUILDINGS—Andrew Buckmaster

MANAGERS - PORTCULLIS HOUSE—Denise Durkin

MANAGER - 1 PARLIAMENT STREET (BELLAMY'S)—Tammy Holmes

MANAGER - 7 MILLBANK—James Ellis

Finance and Accounts Office—

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER—Morounke Akingbola

FINANCE MANAGER—Caroline Attenborough

ACCOUNTS OFFICE STAFF—Connie Bichri, Alison Cutts, Hannah Scott, Jan Gundersen

CASHIER—Kate Lapidge

PURCHASING MANAGER—Kate Hunt (Acting)

HEAD STOREKEEPER—Mark Wildash

PARLIAMENTARY ICT SERVICE (PICT)

DIRECTOR OF PICT—Joan Miller
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS—Matthew Taylor
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT—Caroline Morgan
DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES—Richard Ware
CUSTOMER SERVICES MANAGER—Steve Judd
MEMBERS' COMPUTING OFFICER (COMMONS)—Peter Beasley
MEMBERS' COMPUTING OFFICER (LORDS)—Loraine Midda
TELECOMMUNICATIONS MANAGER—Caroline Robertson

OTHER PRINCIPAL OFFICERS

CLERK OF THE CROWN IN CHANCERY—Alex Allan
COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL—Sir John Bourn, KCB
PARLIAMENTARY AND HEALTH SERVICE OMBUDSMAN—Ann Abraham

18 April 2006

Written Ministerial Statements

Tuesday 18 April 2006

TREASURY

Citizen Information Project

The Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Des Browne): On 28 October 2004 *Official Report*, Column 53WS, my predecessor announced that the Government had accepted a recommendation from the Citizen Information Project (CIP) about using the proposed National Identity Register (NIR) as an adult population register and that further exploratory work should be undertaken, including on shorter-term opportunities for efficiency savings in handling contact details (name, address, date of birth) in existing registers. This also included the possible use of personal reference numbers, as mentioned in the Government's reply (Cm 6359) to the fourth report from the Home Affairs Committee Session 2003–04 HC130. The CIP team, based within the Office for National Statistics (ONS), has now reported its final conclusions and its recommendations that:

> there is significant value to both citizens and the public sector in greater sharing of contact details (name, address, date of birth, reference numbers) in a secure way across the public sector;
>
> this should be implemented through the identity cards scheme on the basis that the scheme eventually becomes compulsory. The Identity and Passport Service should be responsible for developing the National Identity Register (NIR) as an adult population database. Over time public sector systems, business processes and culture should be adapted to use the NIR as the definitive source of contact details in the longer term;
>
> in developing the child index to support better delivery of children's services, the Department for Education and Skills should also consider whether there is scope to realise further efficiency and effectiveness benefits through a child population register;
>
> a number of specific, short-term arrangements for sharing contact information should be considered by the departments and agencies concerned; and
>
> HM Revenue and Customs and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) should, as a priority, agree the detailed terms of reference, time scale and resources required to complete an evaluation of the costs, legal, operational and other implications of making wider, managed use of the National Insurance Number and the associated citizen contact details held by DWP.

The Government have accepted these recommendations and further work is being carried out in line with the transformational Government implementation plan published on 29 March 2006. The Identity Cards Act 2006 includes securing the efficient and effective provision of public services as a purpose of the National Identity Register. Any further necessary legislation to implement the CIP recommendations will be subject to consultation as appropriate.

OGCbuying.solutions

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (John Healey): OGCbuying.solutions have been set the following performance targets for 2006–07.

Savings

The Agency will facilitate at least £500 million value for money improvements for the public sector in 2006–07.

Customer Satisfaction

Buying Solutions will achieve an overall customer satisfaction level of above 90 per cent.

ROCE

The Agency will make a return on Capital Employed of 6.5 per cent.

Efficiency

Buying Solutions will reduce by 5 per cent. the ratio of internal costs over value for money improvements with the outturn for the same ratio in 2005–06.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Freedom of Information Act (Central Government)

The Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs (Ms Harriet Harman): My noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Baroness Ashton of Upholland, has made the following written ministerial statement.

> "The Freedom of Information Act 2000—Statistics on Implementation in central Government October to December 2005" was published on 6 April. I have placed copies in the Libraries of both Houses.
>
> This is the fourth quarterly bulletin produced by DCA monitoring the performance of central Government and associated bodies under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. DCA will shortly be producing an annual report analysing the performance of central Government in the first full year of freedom of information."

DEFENCE

Reserve Forces Act 1996

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): A new call-out order has been made under section 56 of the Reserve Forces Act 1996 so that reservists may continue to be called out into permanent service to support military operations in the Balkans. The order will take effect from 1 April 2006.

At present, around 100 reservists are serving in the Balkans. They are providing a wide range of individual skills. We are most grateful for their continuing support.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Sure Start Children's Centres

The Secretary of State for Education and Skills (Ruth Kelly): I am very pleased to inform the House that my Department has exceeded its target agreed in the 2002 spending review for Sure Start children's centres to provide services to at least 650,000 children under five

and their families by 31 March 2006. On that day there were 836 Sure Start children's centres offering integrated services to around 657,000 children.

Sure Start children's centres are a key vehicle for improving the integrated support we give families with young children and improving outcomes for children, particularly those who live in poverty. In phase two (2006–08) of the programme we will develop children's centres to ensure all disadvantaged children have the support they need.

HEALTH

Dissolved NHS Trusts (Public Dividend Capital)

The Secretary of State for Health (Ms Patricia Hewitt): Pursuant to the dissolution of three national health service trusts on 1 April 2005 and their reconfiguration through the establishment of Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Trust, I have created originating capital for the new NHS trust equal to the net assets transferred to them and therefore propose to remit the outstanding debt of the dissolved trusts.

These operations involved no overall loss to the Exchequer. Her Majesty's Treasury presented on 28 March a minute to the House giving particulars and circumstances of the proposed remission, which it has approved in principle.

Copies of the Treasury minute have been placed in the Library.

Independent Mental Capacity Advocate Service (IMCA)

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Ms Rosie Winterton): The Mental Capacity Act 2005 created the Independent Mental Capacity Advocate (IMCA) service to help vulnerable people who lack capacity to make important decisions about serious medical treatment and changes of residence. The role of the IMCA is to support and represent the person who lacks capacity. Decision makers in the national health service and in local authorities (for example doctors and social workers), will have a duty to consult IMCA for the most vulnerable—those who have no family or friends to be consulted—in relation to decisions about:

serious medical treatment;

moving—other than on a short term basis—to accommodation arranged by the NHS or local authorities, for example in a hospital or care home; and

further circumstances as may be provided for in regulations.

The consultation which ended in September last year, asked for comments on 12 issues around the operation and implementation of the IMCA service. It sought views on some of the important operational details of the service including funding and commissioning, the main functions IMCA will carry out, how to define serious medical treatment and whether to extend the service beyond people who have no family or friends and to situations other that serious treatment and changes of accommodation.

There were a total of 176 written responses to the consultation exercise. In addition, over 450 people attended events abut the consultation. We are grateful to all those individuals and organisations who responded.

The consultation responses have informed how we now plan to use the regulation making powers and prepare for implementation of the IMCA service planned for April 2007. I am today placing a report on the outcome of the public consultation in the Library.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Correction

The Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn): I regret that in an answer to a question from the hon. Member for Richmond Park during development questions on 29 March 2006, I stated incorrectly that $13.5 million had been given towards the crisis in East Africa from the new United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF). In fact, $13.5 million was the figure that the CERF secretariat was expecting in initial applications to the fund from UN agencies in the region. On 31 March, $1.7 million of that $13.5 million was approved and disbursed to the World Health Organisation. The remaining applications are in the process of being approved for disbursal to other agencies. Under the current CERF operating rules, there is an in-principle maximum ceiling of $30 million available per crisis.

As hon. Members will appreciate, in a crisis like this, levels of humanitarian funding will be constantly changing as circumstances change.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Discretionary Social Fund

The Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office (Mr. David Hanson): On 3 April I announced that the Northern Ireland discretionary budget for 2006–07 will be £74.69 million; £13.62 million will be allocated to grants; £60.97 million to loans and £0.1 million will be held as a contingency reserve. The new allocations represent an increase of £15.1 million over the initial gross budget set at April 2005. This increase will be funded through higher loan recoveries, plus an increase in net treasury funding of £10.8 million for this year. This £10.8 million is the first instalment of the increases to the discretionary announced in the autumn 2004 pre-budget report to deal with new policy changes to the social fund loans scheme (see below). These measures, which amount to an increase in funding for the social fund of £18.9 million over the three years to 2008–09, will enable the social fund to play a more effective role in helping those families most vulnerable to over-indebtedness.

The community care grant budget has been increased by £0.3 million to £13.62 million. This will provide more help to customers, in particular families with children and the disabled.

The loans budget has been increased to £60.97 million, an increase of £14.8 million on the initial 2005–06 loans budget. To improve the fairness of the scheme, budgets will be allocated in a way that will over time achieve greater consistency of outcome for customers wherever they live.

Details of the budget allocations; together with a note explaining the basis on which they have been made, have been placed in the Libraries of the House.

Changes to the loans scheme

We have greatly simplified the rules for determining the size of the maximum budgeting loan amount that can be offered to eligible applicants. And there are now only three rates that can be offered:

One for single people;

one for couples without children; and

one for families with children.

The complex double debt rule is abolished so that those applicants with existing budgeting loan debt have more help available to them. This, and the simpler rules for determining size of the maximum budgeting loan, means that applicants will understand better the help that is available and when they can access it.

We have increased the overall limit on loan amounts that any applicant can borrow from the social fund. At the same time we are reducing the highest loan repayment rates and giving applicants longer to repay their loan debt.

Also from 3 April 2006, budgeting loan applicants will benefit from being able to have more savings before any budgeting loan award is affected. The capital limit is doubled to £1,000 (under pension age) and £2,000 (pension age).

Overall this is a significant package of changes. Also, in making loans more affordable and easier to access, we aim to help people avoid alternative high cost lenders.

Written Ministerial Statements

Wednesday 19 April 2006

DEFENCE

Armed Forces (Ethnic Minority Recruiting)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Don Touhig): A key aim of the armed forces diversity policy is that they should become more representative of the society they serve. The intention is that by 2013 the proportion of ethnic minority personnel serving in the armed forces should broadly reflect UK society (i.e. around 8 per cent. of personnel should come from ethnic minority backgrounds).

To achieve this will require sustained effort, building on the achievements of recent years to ensure that the armed forces attract personnel from the rich UK ethnic minority talent pool. As an integral part of this strategy, the armed forces have set a further round of annual UK ethnic minority recruiting goals from financial year 2006–07 for the next five years at 0.5 per cent. above the previous year's achievement for each service, or rolling forward the previous year's target where this would provide a greater challenge. This means that in the financial year 2006–07 the goals will be for the Royal Navy to recruit approximately 3.5 per cent. of intake from ethnic minorities, the Army approximately 4.3 per cent. and the RAF approximately 3.6 per cent.

MOD Training Agencies

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Don Touhig): Hon. Members will wish to be aware that with effect from 1 April 2006, the Naval Recruiting and Training Agency (NRTA), the Army Training and Recruiting Agency (ATRA), and the Royal Air Force Training Group Defence Agency (TGDA) will cease to hold Agency status.

This change is being made to facilitate the individual services plans for restructuring their headquarters and to improve the cohesion of training between training individuals and training formed units. It also seeks to recognise the changes taking place as a result of the implementation of programmes such as the Defence Training Review which aim to rationalise the services specialist training to achieve improvements in its delivery and to meet the increasing requirement for joint operations. We take our duty of care responsibilities very seriously and the well being of our personnel remains fundamental to the core values and standards of the armed forces and the establishments responsible for training them. I am confident that these changes will both contribute towards a more joined-up approach to tri-service training and the achievement of broader efficiencies. These changes will have no impact on the current initiatives to improve the arrangements for the care and well being of recruits. They are part of a package of broader measures that seek to improve all aspects of individual training capability. I also wish to stress that the recent report by Nicholas Blake QC has no influence on this decision.

I will ensure that the key benefits of agency status, such as customer focus and a strong performance management, will be carried forward under the new arrangements. We will continue to publish information about the work of the successor organisations and be proactive in releasing information under the Freedom of Information Act.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Housing and Regeneration

The Minister of Communities and Local Government (Mr. David Miliband): I am today announcing a review of the institutional structures for delivery of housing and regeneration.

Achieving mixed, sustainable communities in the 21st century is a key Government priority. These are communities that meet the needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment and contribute to a high quality of life. The Government have a role not only in articulating their vision for the future but also putting in place the mechanisms which turn the vision in to a reality.

To date successful programmes led by English Partnerships and the Housing Corporation have made an important contribution in achieving the Government's ambitions. At the start of March we approved the Housing Corporation's latest programme which will see almost £4 billion of public resources being allocated and 84,000 new affordable rented and low cost home ownership homes delivered in the next two years. In the year to March English Partnerships exceeded the previous year's outturn in respect of housing starts on sites commissioned, housing completions, employment floorspace and private sector investment. English Partnerships have also been successful in the acquisition of former public sector sites including 98 former NHS hospitals and the Oakington barracks in South Cambridgeshire which will provide an additional 10,000 new homes.

However, housing and regeneration activities are changing and becoming more closely integrated. The Government's response to the Barker review of housing supply, the growth in non-registered social landlord investment, the strategic housing role of local authorities, developing mixed, sustainable communities and helping registered social landlords flourish as social businesses are demanding and fast-moving agendas. We need to ensure that our delivery agencies have the right tools, the critical mass they need to deliver and the right structures to respond to these challenges.

As we move towards creating genuinely mixed, sustainable communities throughout England, we know that we will require even greater focus and skill in the future.

That is why the Deputy Prime Minister and I have asked for this review. It will not only look at the existing activities of the Housing Corporation and English Partnerships, but will consider more widely how we can bring innovative solutions to the range of challenges we face.

The review will consider the best way of organising national delivery mechanisms to maximise the use of private investment, public subsidy and land holdings, and assets funded by past public investment, to support the delivery of new homes and mixed, sustainable communities.

The Deputy Prime Minister and I expect to be in a position to announce initial findings of the review in the summer.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Avian Influenza

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Margaret Beckett): On 29 March, the wild bird surveillance helpline was notified of a single dead swan in Cellardyke Harbour, Fife. It was collected and samples taken from it were sent to the Veterinary Laboratory Agency at Weybridge and arrived on 31 March. Confirmation of H5 high pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) became available late on the afternoon of 5 April.

Avian influenza contingency plans were immediately activated, and in line with EU legislation a 3 km radius protection zone and 10 km radius surveillance zone were put in place around the location of the finding. The main effect of these controls was a requirement for any poultry in the protection zone to be housed. They also imposed restrictions on movement of poultry and poultry products in the area and the wider 10 km surveillance zone. The state veterinary service have subsequently carried out clinical inspection and sampling of all flocks within the protection zone and all flocks in the surveillance zone have been clinically inspected.

Further laboratory results obtained on 6 April confirmed high pathogenic avian influenza H5N1. As a precautionary measure the decision was taken to require the housing of birds in a wider area, known as the wild bird risk area, covering Fife, parts of Kincardineshire, Angus and Perthshire. The decision was based on veterinary, scientific and ornithological expert advice, and the proximity of important waters where there are swans and other wild birds. In additional to the housing requirement a ban on bird gatherings within the 2,500 sq km approximate area was also introduced, and wild bird surveillance has been intensified.

On 11 April DNA sequencing completed by the Central Science Laboratory in York confirmed that the bird was a whooper swan. In a joint statement the UK CVOs confirmed their current hypothesis that the swan originated from outside of Great Britain. The movement of swans associated with cold weather and on migration has been a feature of the recent avian influenza cases in wild birds across Europe. Based on this finding a further veterinary risk assessment has been carried out which concluded that the current measures put in place in relation to the discovery of H5N1 in the swan are adequate and proportionate. I have placed copies of the risk assessment in the House Libraries. The date for the lifting of the wild bird risk area is being kept under review and is subject to any further findings of H5N1 avian influenza in the area.

Animal health in Scotland is a devolved matter. Scottish Ministers are leading on the current bird flu situation in Scotland. However, Great Britain is seen as a single epidemiological unit, and both Defra officials and those in the devolved administrations are working very closely together, as they always do in this area.

Efforts were made to reassure the public that there is no reason for public health concern. avian influenza is a disease of birds and whilst it can pass very rarely and with difficulty to humans evidence suggests that this requires extremely close contact with infected birds.

We continue to monitor the situation, working closely with stakeholders to minimise the impact on the poultry industry and the wider rural economy and society. I will continue to keep the House informed as more information becomes available on the current incident, and the studies on epidemiological, surveillance and laboratory tests that are now in progress worldwide.

Dimmock Review

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Margaret Beckett): I am pleased to announce this joint response from the Government, the Scottish Executive and the National Assembly of Wales to the report of the independent review of avian quarantine, or the "Dimmock Report".

On 26 October of last year I commissioned an independent review of the UK's avian quarantine system. On 15 December I was pleased to announce to this House the publication of that review's report, the Dimmock Report. The report is very thorough and makes 32 recommendations to the Government, the majority of which we accept, or accept in principle.

The key elements of the response are:

- Closer veterinary supervision and audit of quarantine by the state veterinary service (SVS).
- Creation of a central SVS database.
- Revised guidance for structure and equipment of quarantine facilities.
- Introduction of management plans for quarantine operators.
- Bird welfare code for importers and quarantine operators.
- Enhanced laboratory testing of quarantined birds.

The full response is available at:

www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/control/avianquarantine/gov-strategy/index.htm.

Environment Council, Brussels

The Minister for Climate Change and the Environment (Mr. Elliot Morley): I attended the Environment Council in Brussels on 9 March 2006.

The Council unanimously adopted conclusions on the Thematic Strategy on Air Quality, which set out the Commission's vision for EU policy on air pollution up to 2020. Discussion largely focused on a call for the conclusions to take account of their concerns for a stricter approach in the proposed air quality directive on the control of fine particles and more time to meet existing standards. A presidency compromise to examining possible flexibilities was accepted by Council.

Council conclusions were adopted on the Eighth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and on Biosafety. These conclusions seek to secure better protection of biodiversity in marine areas

beyond national jurisdiction and the COP will consider, amongst other things, access to genetic resources and sharing of benefits from their use. Council conclusions on the Third Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, seeking in particular detailed documentary requirements for the identification of GMOs in bulk agricultural shipments, and the associated Council decision were agreed without debate.

Discussed over lunch, Council adopted conclusions following-up the 11th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in conjunction with the first session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (in Montreal in December 2005). Ministers agreed to restate commitments on future pathways from the 2005 Spring European Council, with the UK and others resisting efforts to weaken the EU position. The restatement on emissions reduction pathways for 2020 was important for forthcoming discussion of the future action of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme.

Conclusions were adopted by Council on the Preparations for the Spring European Council. Here, the UK, most other member states and the Commission argued successfully for a more forward-looking text on climate change to reflect the agreed conclusions reached at lunch, highlighting the EU's future role, the determination to follow up actions from the climate change conference during the UK Presidency of the EU and further work on the EU Emissions Trading Scheme. As well as climate change there was also a discussion on energy where the UK, with support, successfully secured a reference to future energy policy ahead of energy efficiency targets. A reference was also included to considering renewable energy targets.

Council conclusions on the Second Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants were adopted without discussion. The Conclusions cover the intention to include new substances within the Convention, and set out the EU position on compliance mechanisms, technical issues relating to, amongst other things, sound waste management, and enhancing co-operation with other UNEP programmes.

The Council held a policy debate on Euro V, the proposed regulation calling for harmonised vehicle emissions reductions, a longer-term perspective and include a second stage of stricter NOx emissions limits in Euro VI in particular. Most member states spoke, the majority calling for the inclusion of a tighter second stage of NOx limits. We intervened to strongly support this measure, and stated that a limited extension until the introduction of Euro VI to the derogation for certain heavy passenger cars was necessary to allow industry to catch up. Some member states had concerns with the additional costs involved and that it was too early to be calling for the early inclusion of a second stage. The Commission stressed that the available technology was not well developed and that there should be a further review of emissions limits with a substantial impact assessment in keeping with the better regulation agenda.

The public debate on genetically modified organisms (GMOs) discussed a Presidency paper on the role of the European Food Safety Authority and the EU's decision-making process. During a full roundtable the UK acknowledged public sensitivity over GMOs and expressed its support for the work of EFSA, noting that its work was still improving and that more could be done on risk communication and transparency. We also voiced our support for the current collectively agreed comitology procedures to regulate the release of GMOs, again calling for greater transparency. A few member states raised their concerns over the long-term effects of GMOs, and several member states expressed serious reservations over the EU process, and also questioned the credibility of the European Food Safety Agency (EFSA). A majority of member states pressed for more publicly funded research.

There was a policy debate on the review of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy (EU SDS) focusing on the ambition and scope of the strategy. The UK supported the Presidency's ambition for a single, coherent strategy that focuses on the delivery of existing commitments rather than introducing new initiatives. We pressed for balanced impact assessments and a shared responsibility for ensuring coherence in the economic, environmental and social aspects of Community policies. There was a call for the revised Strategy to open up trade to assist developing countries and should address agricultural, fisheries, biomass and biofuels policies. The Presidency noted that the Lisbon and Sustainable Development Strategies were separate but mutually supportive.

The Council also held a first debate on the Thematic Strategy on the Prevention and Recycling of Waste, and the proposed Directive on Waste. Member states welcomed the proposals but had misgivings. Most member states shared concerns over the hierarchy of waste priorities, the life-cycle of waste and the Commission proposal to repeal the Waste Oils Directive. A few called for simplification of the waste process. The UK, supported by several member states, raised concerns that the proposed EU-wide minimum standards for waste disposal and waste recovery operations could jeopardise plans to increase recycling levels throughout the EU, and that barriers to using recycling material should be removed. Following a member state's concern over the import of illegal waste transport, the Commission noted that individual member states should take action to avoid such imports.

The Presidency presented a progress report on the proposal for a Directive on the Assessment and Management of Floods, and stated its intention to try to secure political agreement at the June Environment Council. The Commission explained its view that member states' existing flood management systems could be built on, to form the basis of an integrated Community-wide system, whose scope should not differentiate between transboundary and national waters. The UK, supported by several member states, argued that the Directive should focus on the problem area of transboundary waters; this was where the added value of Community action lay. Coverage of all river basins and coastal zones was a disproportionate response in relation to the geography of some member states such as the UK, and did not sufficiently respect the principle of subsidiarity. Others also stressed the primary importance of co-operation on transboundary

waters, and spoke of the need to fully recognise action already taken at national level, avoid expensive duplication, and avoid undue administrative burdens.

There were seven AOB items, where Spain with some support, asked the Commission to analyse and consider EU-level standards to combat water scarcity and droughts. Belgium found some support for their concern that the Financial Perspectives deal agreed at last December's European Council might have a detrimental impact on funding for Natura 2000, and the Presidency updated Ministers on the Biomass Action Plan and Communication on the EU Strategy for Biofuels; EU conferences on "Greening Events" and "Environmentally-Friendly Travelling in Europe"; and the outcome of the First International Conference on Chemicals Management held in Dubai in February.

Single Farm Payments

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Margaret Beckett): I announced in my written statement of 16 March 2006, *Official Report*, col. 104WS, that in light of the unacceptable progress in implementing the Single Payment Scheme, steps were being taken to strengthen the leadership of the Rural Payments Agency. The House has subsequently been kept informed,—27 March 2006, *Official Report*, col. 543, and 29 March 2006, *Official Report*, col. 305WH,—of the measures introduced by the new acting chief executive to speed up payments without losing sight of the need to manage properly the disbursement of a large sum of public money.

The measures already in place have begun to bear fruit with 47,033 claims representing 39 per cent. of the customer population having being paid a total of £362.23 million as at 18 April. Given, in particular, the unavailability of the SPS system over the Easter period for a planned essential upgrade for the 2006 scheme, this represents useful progress. The upgraded system is now fully operational and further payment runs are planned over the rest of the week.

The acting chief executive has, however, now told me he does not feel confident that he can say with complete assurance that the RPA will be able to make all of the full payments by the end of June. Given that advice, I have authorised that work on a system to make substantial partial payments to the remaining claimants should now be given priority and I further decided that the system should be deployed as soon as it is operationally possible to do so. The RPA will in the meantime continue to make full payments when claims have been fully validated, with historic claimants having priority.

HEALTH

MHRA

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Jane Kennedy): On 16 March I informed the House of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency's (MHRA) suspension on 14 March 2006 of the phase 1 clinical trial for a drug in development known as TGN1412. As well as suspending the trial and alerting international regulatory authorities, the MHRA initiated an immediate investigation into the incident. On 5 April the MHRA announced its interim findings. This, and associated documents, are available on the MHRA website.

To date, the MHRA has found no evidence to suggest that there was any problem with the manufacture of the product. It does not appear to have been contaminated, or to have contained anything other than the correct ingredients. Neither did the MHRA find any problems with the administration of the clinical trial which is likely to have contributed to the incident. It was run according to the agreed protocol and the correct dose of the product was given to the patients.

There are still further tests which the MHRA is carrying out to confirm these findings. However, if those findings are confirmed, it would indicate that there was something particular about this product and its mode of operation in humans which led to the adverse reactions in this case, and which was not predicted in the pre-clinical research carried out on the drug, including animal tests.

The product in question is a very specific kind of human monoclonal antibody, and it is essential now to understand what this incident reveals about the underlying science, and how clinical trials involving these types of products should be managed and authorised in the future. The Secretary of State has therefore agreed to the establishment of an expert working group to address these questions. The Secretary of State has appointed Professor Gordon Duff to chair the expert group. It will start work as soon as possible and provide advice to Ministers. We have asked for an interim report in three months.

It is important to stress that clinical trials in general have an extremely high safety record. It is the unprecedented nature of this incident that makes it all the more important to learn the lessons from this incident and prevent a recurrence. At the same time, the progress of clinical trials for other types of product which are vital to patient care must not be impeded.

This clinical trial was conducted by a contract research organisation and not by, or within, the NHS. I would, however, like to pay special tribute to the staff of the Northwick Park Hospital, and particularly those in the Intensive Care Unit, for their exceptional work in dealing with the aftermath of the trial and saving all the participants lives.

I will provide a further report to the House when the expert group provides its interim report. In the meantime, until the expert group provides advice, the MHRA is adopting a precautionary approach to the authorisation of trials involving products of this kind, and will not authorise trials without having received expert advice on whether the effects seen in the TGN1412 case may be repeated in relation to those substances.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Miscarriages of Justice (Compensation)

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Charles Clarke): I have decided reform is needed to the arrangements under which state compensation is paid for miscarriages of justice.

The purpose of the reforms which include some important changes being made by the assessor, with my full support, is to modernise and simplify the system, and to bring about a better balance with the treatment of victims of crime. In summary with, immediate effect:

- I will not consider any new applications under the discretionary scheme for compensation;
- I will introduce time limits for all applications;
- the assessor will assess compensation in respect of applicants' legal costs by reference to the level of fees paid for Legal Help pursuant to the Community Legal Service (Funding) Order 2000;
- the assessor will take greater account of applicants' convictions when deciding the level of awards for non-pecuniary loss;
- the assessor will take greater account of conduct by applicants which contributed to the circumstances leading to the miscarriage of justice.

I shall when suitable legislative opportunity arises, bring forward legislation to:

- enable the assessor to make deductions from the pecuniary element of the award because of criminal convictions of the applicant;
- provide for an upper limit on the overall amount of compensation and as regards compensation for loss of earnings;
- enable the assessor to reduce an award of compensation to zero, in exceptional cases, on account of criminal convictions and/or contributory conduct of the applicant.

A Single Scheme

Currently I pay compensation under two schemes: a statutory scheme under section 133 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988 and a discretionary scheme which operates on the basis of the statement made by the then Home Secretary to the House of Commons on 29 November 1985.

The existence of the second, discretionary scheme is confusing and anomalous. The scheme predates the introduction of international standards and agreements in this area and addresses cases beyond the UK's international obligations. The scheme currently costs over £2 million a year to operate but benefits only between five and ten applicants. I do not believe that the discretionary scheme can continue to be justified.

Applications for compensation already received by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform will continue to be considered both under section 133 and the discretionary scheme. However, with immediate effect I will entertain new applications for compensation only under the statutory scheme.

Other Immediate Changes

Claims for compensation have increased in complexity in recent years and may drag on for several years. This reflects the absence of time limits on the process, as would be expected if the case had come to court, lack of clarity about the maximum amounts payable, and the absence of limits on legal fees, which are reimbursed at private work rates. Currently, applicants are invited simply to submit their claims for compensation and to detail their financial loss. Compensation payments for miscarriages of justice have increased sharply over the last few years and are now running at an average of well over £250,000, with more than 10 per cent. of that amount also paid in legal fees. In contrast, no legal costs are payable under the scheme for victims of crime, and the average amount received by each victim is less than one fiftieth of what is paid to those eligible under the miscarriages of justice scheme.

The level of compensation to be awarded to those eligible for compensation is determined by an independent assessor.

The assessor already takes some account of criminal convictions when deciding on the amount of compensation for non-pecuniary loss, and in assessing the amount of compensation he is able to take account of conduct by the applicant which contributed to the circumstances leading to the wrongful conviction. Typically, such deductions have been modest, ranging in most cases from around five to no more than 20 per cent. In contrast, reductions in payments to victims of crime are much higher, ranging up to 100 per cent. in serious cases.

The assessor has decided that, with immediate effect, he will take greater account of the criminal convictions of applicants when determining the level of non pecuniary compensation to be awarded. He will also, with immediate effect, take greater account of conduct by the applicant which contributed to the circumstances leading to the miscarriage of justice. These changes will apply to all existing cases (both under the statutory and discretionary scheme) which are currently awaiting a decision from the assessor on the amount of compensation, as well as to all existing cases (both under the statutory and discretionary scheme) where the question of eligibility for compensation is being considered by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform, and to all new cases for compensation under the statutory scheme received by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform.

The assessor has also decided that legal costs in relation to applications for compensation will, with immediate effect, be paid by reference to the fees for publicly funded civil cases as provided for in the legal help contained in the Community Legal Service (Funding) Order 2000. This change will apply to all existing cases (both under the statutory and discretionary scheme) which are currently awaiting a decision from the assessor on the amount of compensation, as well as to all existing cases (both under the statutory and discretionary scheme) where the question of eligibility for compensation is being considered by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform, and to all new cases for compensation under the statutory scheme received by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform. However, in the case of applications already received by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform or already under consideration by the Assessor, the change will apply only in relation to legal costs incurred after today and compensation in respect of legal costs before today will be paid on the same basis as before.

I am also asking all those dealing with applications for compensation, including my officials, to deal with them much more quickly than has been the case in the past. I propose that all supporting details of the amount of compensation being sought should be with the

assessor within six months of notification of eligibility, and I welcome the assessor's decision to make final assessments within twelve months on the basis of the information to hand. I believe that the clarifications and simplifications introduced should enable that target to be met.

Legislative plans

Currently, section 133 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988 limits deductions from compensation awards in respect of convictions to the amount awarded to the applicant for non-pecuniary loss. I intend to bring forward legislation as soon as a suitable opportunity arises to empower the assessor in appropriate cases to make deductions because of convictions from the whole of the award—including pecuniary loss—and to provide that in exceptional cases the amount of compensation may be reduced to nil because of criminal convictions and/or contributory conduct by the applicant.

I also intend to bring forward legislation to provide that the maximum amount of compensation payable under the statutory scheme should be £500,000 and that the maximum compensation payable in respect of loss of earnings should be one and a half times the gross average industrial earnings.

Finally, I have embarked on an urgent review, with the Lord Chancellor and Attorney-General, of the statutory test the Court of Appeal must use in deciding whether to quash a conviction. I propose to examine whether and if so to what extent an error in the trial process necessarily means a miscarriage of justice. I will consult upon the results of this review as soon as possible. If a change in the law is needed, we will propose it.

My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, has also decided, with immediate effect, not to consider any new applications under the discretionary compensation scheme in Northern Ireland. He also intends to have the legislation I will bring forward on compensation extended to Northern Ireland. He is now raising with assessors in Northern Ireland the other changes for the treatment of claims by Lord Brennan. In association with my own review, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland will also consider the need for changes to the test for the quashing of convictions by the Court of Appeal in Northern Ireland.

IMPACT Programme

The Minister for Policing, Security and Community Safety (Hazel Blears): The IMPACT Programme, a key element of our work to deliver Sir Michael Bichard's recommendations following the murders in Soham, has already delivered some significant benefits to the police service, most notably the IMPACT Nominal Index (INI). For the longer-term, we have a very clear vision of what the programme is planning to deliver.

The programme is now in a strong position to deliver a range of capabilities to the Police Service which will not only meet Sir Michael's recommendations but will transform the service's ability to protect the communities it serves.

IMPACT will deliver a programme of technology-enabled business change for the police service which will:

discharge our commitment to implementing the relevant recommendations in Sir Michael Richard's report following the Soham murders;

enable the delivery of improvements in police performance, producing substantial benefits through increasing numbers of crimes prevented and detected, and by bringing more offenders to justice;

increase police operational efficiency, driving out considerable savings annually in direct benefits; and

deliver a replacement for the Police National Computer (PNC).

The delivery of the IMPACT Nominal Index (INI) in December 2005 responded to the second of Sir Michael Bichard's recommendations: police officers can now establish whether any other force in England and Wales may have information on individuals of interest to them. However, the system does not give direct access to the records themselves and the next stage is to develop a national information sharing infrastructure which will make operational information visible to forces across the country, transcending force and system boundaries.

The work will build upon the achievements already delivered by the programme, providing a modular and incremental approach comprising the following stages:

The continued deployment of the INI to forces in England and Wales during 2006, initially expanding within Child Abuse Investigation Units then into other selected business areas including some non-Home Office forces and central agencies. This will be accompanied by some limited further development, to improve its functionality;

during 2006, the continued development within police forces of the capability to extract data from their local force databases in a common format (The Cross Regional Information Sharing Project—CRISP—Data Schema), enabling the data to be shared with other forces and partner agencies through data warehouses.

Completion of the development of the CRISP software, as the basis for:

Deploying to each force in England and Wales from the middle of 2007, an interim data warehousing capability which will enable information from systems serving their eight main operational business areas to be retrieved by a single query; leading to:

A national data sharing capability (A Police National Database) available to all forces in England and Wales and delivering the full benefits described above by early 2010.

Officers will be able to search for information on specific people, objects, locations and events to inform operational decision-making, or to use the national data as a resource for producing intelligence products prescribed by the National Intelligence Model (NIM). The programme will also link the information contained on the current PNC, and other national systems, to force-level information.

Business processes will be optimised through an associated programme of business change based upon the NIM; the code of practice and associated Guidance on the Management of Police Information (MoPI); and procedures developed within the programme.

This programme of work will be delivered using a managed service based on existing and planned Criminal Justice System (CJS) Exchange shared services

developed by Criminal Justice IT (CJIT). This offers the potential to exploit the new technology being piloted by CJIT and to re-use existing CJS Exchange components.

The use of the CJS Exchange will provide other Criminal Justice organisations with continued access to PNC data, and the delivery channels to populate the central system with data from outside the police service. The IMPACT programme will continue to retain responsibility for delivering the programme with a strong business lead and a sharp focus on driving out the benefits.

In order to realise the potential benefits from the programme, it will be managed alongside other related developments:

the programme to create strategic forces, including by force amalgamations, to improve the police service's capacity to deliver level 2 protective services;

the framework of police performance measures managed by the Home Office, which incentivise Chief Officers to give the appropriate measure of priority to tackling level 2 crime;

the ACPO level 2 crime programme, which aims to enhance the police operational capability at the supra-force level;

and will support the following key stakeholders:

Chief Officers directly, by demonstrating the extent to which they can reduce the risk to the reputation of their forces by exploiting the opportunities offered by the IMPACT solutions;

Police Authorities, by demonstrating the savings and efficiency gains in prospect;

HMIC, by supporting and strengthening monitoring and compliance measures developed by the programme.

While the police national database is under development, resources have been allocated to enable the police IT organisation to update the hardware platform of the PNC. This will ensure that the PNC remains fit for purpose until the police national database is fully in service.

Immigration Control

The Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Nationality (Mr. Tony McNulty): The Government are committed to maintaining effective immigration controls while at the same time ensuring that genuine passengers are able to pass through our ports with the least possible inconvenience.

The UK will stop accepting South African temporary passports with effect from today. This decision has been taken due to concerns over the effectiveness of the South African passport issuing process and the impact that has on our immigration controls.

Fraudulently obtained South African passports are regularly encountered at UK ports, held by a wide variety of nationalities. The South African temporary passport, which is issued pending the issue of a full South African passport, poses a particular problem as fewer checks are carried out prior to issue. In our opinion the temporary passport does not satisfactorily establish identity or nationality/citizenship or is in compliance with international passport practice. As a consequence there is intelligence to suggest that these passports provide an easy target for those with other nationalities who seek to come to the UK illegally.

This decision will not prevent South African nationals coming to the UK, but it will require them to obtain a full South African passport before coming here.

Transitional arrangements will apply to those who already hold SA temporary passports obtained on or before 19 April: those travellers who purchased tickets prior to 19 April will be able to travel on their temporary passports to the UK before 1 June; those who purchase an airline ticket after the announcement but before 10 May will be able to travel to the UK on their temporary passport, providing they arrive in the UK before 10 May; and those who purchase an airline ticket following the 19 April for travel between 10 and 31 May, can travel to the UK before 1 June provided they have first secured a visa for entry to the UK. This will ensure that anyone with plans to visit the UK will be able to do so or will have time to secure a new full South African passport.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Northern Ireland

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Peter Hain): Further to my oral statement to the House yesterday, copies of the joint statement made by the Prime Minister and the Taoiseach in Armagh on 6 April have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses, as have the associated speeches they delivered that day.

The Prime Minister's speech was as follows:

"So the moment comes, as we always knew it would, for the ultimate decision. On Tuesday, we had a reminder of the past: an horrific, bloody murder. It represented all we have sought to escape from, these past nine years.

Today we have the possibility of deciding, over the next nine months, to make the future work.

Go back to the core of this issue for a moment—and it's never wise to prolong this in the politics of Northern Ireland—recall the history. We are here in the island of Ireland that has been driven by strife between British and Irish for centuries.

In the early part of the last century, it was eventually partitioned. The larger part became the Republic of Ireland. The rest stayed part of the UK. But the struggle continued within that part: one tradition wanting a united Ireland; the other to remain in the UK; one predominately Catholic; the other predominately Protestant.

For decades up to 1998, the issue was marked by conflict, often of the most brutal kind. Politics here in Northern Ireland were divided not on the basis of ordinary political philosophy but on the core issue. Perpetual attempts were made to break out of this constraint but none with lasting success. The brutality continued.

Why did we manage to reach agreement in April 1998 on a basis to settle the struggle? Of course, there were acts of courageous political leadership. Of course, painstaking negotiation, often creatively deployed, allowed us to unravel knots of discord. Of course, the advent of new Governments and the pressure of the world to grasp resolution, played their part.

But what determined it, was something different and more profound. The people understood the futility of the status quo. They looked at the world around them, changing rapidly as the millennium drew to a close and realised that they were in danger of being left behind; that the way this struggle was being conducted was indeed brutal and bloody but most of all, it was unbearably old-fashioned, out of date, pointless. No-one was ever going to "win". "Winning" in the sense of the unionists driven by bombs and terror into a united Ireland; or in the case of republican and nationalist sentiment cowed into accepting partition: was simply never going to happen.

The people, without necessarily articulating it in quite this way, understood it and empowered the politicians to move forward.

The basis of the GFA was actually one of mutual respect for a difference of view. Each tradition accepted the other had a right to think and feel differently. One had a right to believe in a united Ireland; the other to believe in the United Kingdom. Both had legitimacy. But neither could be pursued without the consent of the people, freely given.

The idea was then to make politics take the strain of resolving the issues of concern to the people in Northern Ireland within that framework of mutually acknowledged difference.

The GFA was a massive achievement. If it was naive ever to think that, by it, all could be resolved with relative ease, then it is fair to say that perhaps only naivety could have emboldened us to aim so high; and without such ambition, we would have achieved nothing.

What has happened subsequently is an object lesson in all conflict resolution. I have dealt with all sides now for almost a decade. The problem is that agreements such as the GFA can provide procedures, mechanisms and laws. What they can't do is enforce a belief in the other's good faith. That can't be forced. It can only come through genuine conviction.

Essentially, in the eight years since the GFA, that has been the issue. Of course it has manifested itself in endless wrangles over the procedures, mechanisms and laws. But the true problem has been that each side has believed in its own good faith but doubted that of the other. Naturally, most of the time, everyone has doubted the good faith of the Governments!

So unionism has often thought that republicanism was adopting a series of tactics in the name of peace; but its strategy was in reality still one of physical violence to circumvent the principle of consent. Republicanism believed it was making the most mighty moves to set aside the past and that unionism was only interested in peace not equality, and without equality there could be no proper peace.

Each side wanted certainty before moving. Each side's uncertainty of the other's certainty led to more uncertainty.

In October 2002, I asked for acts of completion. The ambiguity had to end. Negotiation followed negotiation, the most recent intensive bout in December 2004. But then came the Northern Bank robbery and the McCartney murder, and uncertainty again set in. In July last year, the IRA announced its armed struggle was at an end. That was a move of huge significance. However, those earlier events still cast their pall. But now I feel, after months of desultory discussion, there is a renewed willingness to break the deadlock uncertainty has imposed.

How can this now be done? How can we make the ultimate decision?

We have today set out a framework beginning with the recall of the Assembly on 15 May; but running up to November of this year for the ultimate decision to be made. At that point we close the chapter or close the book.

The details are set out in the joint statement.

But once again, it won't be the details that settle this. This is a framework that only works if the parties choose to use it for proof of good faith, not to themselves and their own community but to the community of the other.

Unionism has to show republican and nationalist sentiment that it is serious about its commitment to share power; serious about equality; and serious about its recognition that republicanism has indeed changed and its leadership taken real and verifiable risks for peace. When, as will happen, dissident elements opposed to all we jointly seek to achieve, try to disrupt by the methods of the past, unionism must play its part, in refusing to give those elements a veto over democracy.

Republicanism has to address the unionist community in a way that recognises that though of course there may be those within unionism that hanker after the old days, the mainstream of unionism is very clear: it is worried that violence is still in the culture of republicanism and will re-assert itself, but does indeed want to put the past behind it and share power if it can be convinced it is doing so on a shared basis of democratic belief. So when the law is broken, then republicans should play their part in bringing those who break it to account and support the police in doing so.

Above all, this is a moment to let the process be governed not by suspicion but by the faith that the other does want this to succeed. I don't say suspicions will not still be there. Just don't let them prevail, to the exclusion of the basic truth: people do want this to work.

In Northern Ireland over the coming years, crucial decisions will be taken on the economy, health, schools, local government. Is it not more sensible that they are taken by the directly elected representatives of the people those decisions will affect, not by Direct Rule?

The IMC will continue its work. It has said unequivocally that the IRA no longer poses a terrorist threat. That must be recognised for the vast leap forward it is. But there are real issues about criminality and normal policing, accepted as legitimate on all sides, with criminals pursued whatever their political allegiances, would go a long way towards convincing people that culture and attitude had changed decisively.

There is ample scope to find agreement if that is what people want. But be in no doubt. At the conclusion of this period, we either resolve to go forward on the basis of mature democracy or we call time on this and seek another way to go. Two things must be understood. There can be no room for compromise or ambiguity on the commitment only to exclusively peaceful and democratic means. Political argument is the only means of persuasion. That was set out clearly in the Belfast Harbour speech and remains.

On the other hand, however, there can be no way forward that does not recognise the legitimate aspiration of nationalists and republicans for a united Ireland; and give expression to it, through partnership, North and South.

In other words, the essence of the GFA, is valid. The question is: do the political parties in Northern Ireland lead its implementation or do the two governments, perforce have to step into the breach? Stasis is not an option. The option is whether the dynamic is driven by a hale and healthy democratic mandate derived from the people or by a necessarily more rigid will imposed from outside. We, the two Governments, can't exercise that option. Only the people and parties in Northern Ireland can.

So the coming months will see a decision taken. One concluding thought: If it was a sense of the futility of the past and a desire to be part of the future, that has taken us this far; reflect please on how much more relevant that sense and that desire is today. Look at Britain and Ireland. Today, we are allies. Today we engage in common purpose in a new Europe. Today our rivalry is found in a healthy competition for which economy is more vibrant. Today there is a confidence and vitality in our relationship that has enabled us, after almost 70 or 80 years of mistrust, to work together to carry this process forward. And do so not as surrogate leaders of warring tribes, but as friends.

Today also Northern Ireland has seen more peace, stability and progress than was ever imaginable 10 years ago. Getting to here has taken many painful decisions. But in any process there is always the ultimate decision. It is yours to take.

You, the leaders here, have a far harder task than us. You have lived with the past, not just contemplated it. But now you and the people you represent have the power to decide. I ask you to use it wisely".

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Patent Office

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Barry Gardiner): My hon. Friend Lord Sainsbury of Turville, Minister for Science and Innovation today made the following statement:

"I have tasked the Patent Office with managing and shaping an Intellectual Property System which encourages innovation and creativity, balances the needs of rights holders and the public,

promotes strong and competitive markets and provides a firm foundation for the knowledge-based economy. During the coming year, the Patent Office will remodel itself and form partnerships through which new services will be delivered, so as to provide a Patent Office which meets the needs of the 21st Century.

I have also set the Patent Office the following targets for 2006–07:

Patents

Issue 90 per cent. of patent search reports within four months of request.

Grant 90 per cent. of patents within 2½ years of request.

Give good customer service in patent search and examination in 95 per cent. of quality assured cases.

Trade Marks

Register 90 per cent. of processed trade mark class applications, to which no substantive objections are raised or oppositions filed, within eight months of application.

Make the correct decision on registrability for at least 98.5 per cent. of trade mark applications.

To dispose of all trade marks *inter partes* cases within three years achieving at least 30 per cent. within one year and at least 70 per cent. in two years.

Designs

To examine 95 per cent. of all design applications within three months.

Policy/Awareness

Adoption of our educational resource, THINK Kit version II in UK secondary schools—with not less than 80 per cent. penetration.

Efficiency Targets

Reduce total current expenditure on the operations of the trading fund compared with the baseline of the Corporate Plan 2004–05, in line with the DTI's published "Efficiency Technical Note". Cumulative savings target for 2005–06 and 2006–07 is £2.3 million.

Customer Service Standards

Meet our customer service standards as reported in the annual report and on our website at: www.patent.gov.uk.

Finance

Pay 100 per cent. of bills within 30 days of receipt of goods or services or a valid invoice, whichever is the later.

Questions delegated to the Chief Executive

Reply within 10 working days to all letters from members of Parliament delegated for Chief Executive's reply".

WORK AND PENSIONS

Occupational Pension Schemes (Disclosure of Information) Regulations 2006

The Minister for Pensions Reform (Mr. Stephen Timms): In the autumn of 2005 we issued the draft Occupational Pensions Schemes (Disclosure of Information) Regulations 2006 for consultation.

One of the proposals contained in the draft regulations was a new requirement that an annual benefit statement should be issued automatically to everyone in non money purchase pension schemes, including deferred members and pension credit members.

Representations were made in the consultation that there was no need for the statements to be issued automatically to deferred members and pension credit members, as the information contained therein would not change year on year.

While it is useful to remind people regularly about their pension entitlement, we have been persuaded that the burden of issuing automatic statements to deferred and pension credit members would be disproportionate.

The proposed requirement to provide automatic statements to active scheme members will remain. Additionally, the current provision, which requires that relevant information must be provided to deferred and pension credit members on request, will be carried forward into the new regulations.

Although it will not be mandatory for non money purchase pension schemes to provide deferred and pension credit members with an automatic annual statement, schemes may wish to provide this information on a voluntary basis. Many already provide this helpful facility.

A full response to the consultation will be published with the final regulations. The regulations will come into effect from October 2006, although the annual benefit statement changes are only applicable for scheme years ending on or after 6 April 2007.

Written Ministerial Statements

Thursday 20 April 2006

TREASURY

UK Debt Management Office

The Economic Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Ivan Lewis): The UK Debt Management Office (DMO) has today published its business plan for the year 2006–07. Copies are available in the Libraries of both Houses and from DMO's website, www.dmo.gov.uk.

DEFENCE

Special Forces Support Unit

The Secretary of State for Defence (John Reid): On 16 December 2004, *Official Report*, column 1798, as part of the wider programme to modernise the UK's defence capabilities, the then Secretary of State for Defence announced to the House the Government's intention to create two new units that would significantly improve the specialist support to the Special Forces and enhance our global capacity to fight terrorism.

The first of these new units, the Special Reconnaissance Regiment, became operational in April 2005 and is already delivering a globally deployable special reconnaissance capability to the UK Special Forces.

The second new unit is the "Special Forces Support Group". SFSG is an enhanced capability that will directly support UK Special Forces intervention operations around the world and will provide the UK with an additional counter-terrorist capability.

I am pleased to be able to inform the House today that the SFSG has now stood up in St. Athan, near Cardiff, and achieved Initial Operating Capability as planned on 3 April.

Personnel for the new unit have been drawn from the Parachute Regiment, the Royal Marines, and the Royal Air Force Regiment. The unit will be part of the UK Special Forces Group.

The principal role of the SFSG is to provide direct support to UKSF intervention operations, as well as reinforcing UKSF in other key capability areas such as provision of specialist training and support to domestic CT operations. It will have a specific specialist infantry role and personnel will be equipped and trained accordingly.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

General Affairs and External Relations Council

The Minister for Europe (Mr. Douglas Alexander): My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and Sir John Grant (UK Permanent Representative to the EU) represented the UK at the General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC) in Luxembourg on 10 April. My hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for International Development represented the UK for the half-day of discussions on 11 April.

The agenda items covered on 10 April were as follows:

Inter-Institutional Agreement (IIA)

The Presidency briefed the Council on progress towards an Inter-Institutional Agreement with the European Parliament on the 2007–13 Financial Perspective.

World Trade Organisation/Doha Development Agenda

Commissioner Mandelson briefed the Council on discussions with Brazil and the US in Rio de Janiero.

A number of member states spoke in support of the Commission and the economic importance of a deal.

A special session of the Council will be convened, if necessary, in the margins of negotiations in Geneva towards the end of April.

Sustainable Development

The Council had a discussion with a view to helping the Presidency prepare a renewed EU sustainable development strategy to be adopted at the June European Council.

In June 2005, the European Council adopted a declaration on guiding principles for sustainable development based on the four principles of environmental protection, social equity and cohesion; economic prosperity; and meeting international responsibilities. In December 2005, it looked forward to adopting in June 2006 an ambitious and comprehensive strategy, comprising targets, indicators and an effective monitoring procedure, integrating the internal and external dimensions and based on a positive long-term vision, bringing together the Community's sustainable development priorities and objectives.

Belarus

The Presidency recalled the serious shortcomings in the conduct of the Presidential election of 19 March and the Council's agreement at its meetings on 7 November 2005 and 30 January 2006 to take action if the election was not conducted according to international standards.

There was broad support in the Council for a firm EU response to the elections. Ministers agreed to adopt a visa ban, and possible further targeted measures, against President Lukashenko, the Belarusian leadership and officials responsible for the violations of international human rights law.

There was agreement in the Council that these restrictive measures should be complemented by greater EU support for students, the opposition and greater engagement with civil society.

The Council adopted Conclusions deploring the Presidential elections as neither free nor fair, condemning the violence used by the Belarusian authorities against demonstrators and arrests of members of the opposition and implementing restrictive measures against those responsible for the violations of international electoral standards as well as the crackdown on civil society and democratic opposition.

Ukraine

The Council discussed the situation in Ukraine following the 26 March parliamentary elections including the ongoing attempts to form a new government.

The Council noted that the elections had consolidated the democratic breakthrough in Ukraine and provided a strong basis for renewed efforts to move forward key reforms. External Relations Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner said that talks on an enhanced Agreement to succeed the Partnership and Co-operation Agreement should support Ukraine's reform process.

Middle East Peace Process

Foreign Ministers discussed the current situation on the ground. There was broad consensus among the Council on the principle that the EU should be firm in its policy towards Hamas while maintaining the EU's commitment to help meet the Palestinian people's basic needs. Ministers also endorsed the Commission's temporary suspension of direct funding to the Palestinian Authority. This is a precautionary measure, pending conclusion of a review of EU assistance to the Palestinians. Aid to support basic human needs including health and education of the Palestinian people would continue.

The Council agreed Conclusions expressing grave concern at the Palestinian Government's failure to commit itself to the Quartet principles; urging the Government to meet and implement these principles and to commit to President Abbas' platform of peace and outlining the EU's review of assistance against the Government's commitment to these principles.

Iran

High Representative Solana presented a paper that set out options for future EU policy towards Iran. The Council agreed Conclusions calling on Iran to fulfil International Atomic Energy Agency Board/UN requirements to suspend all enrichment-related and reprocessing activities, welcoming the conclusions of the 30 March Ministerial in Berlin and underlining the EU's continued concern about the human rights situation in Iran.

AOB—UN Reform

The Council had a brief discussion on the implementation of the outcome of the 2005 UN World Summit. Several member states emphasised the important role the EU should continue to play in the reform process.

The Council adopted Conclusions welcoming the adoption of the resolution to establish the Human Rights Council as an essential element in further strengthening the UN human rights machinery as well as being an important step forward in the UN reform process.

AOB—Flooding in the Danube

Member states were briefed on the floods in central and south-east Europe. Some of the worst affected member states were examining the possibility of applying for EU assistance under the solidarity fund.

AOB—High Level meeting on a Single Free Trade Area in South East Europe

Romania briefed the Council on the decision at the High Level meeting on 6 April in Bucharest to launch negotiations on a regional free trade agreement on the basis of a Central Europe Free Trade Agreement.

AOB—South East Turkey

The Netherlands raised the recent demonstrations in South East Turkey.

The agenda items covered on 11 April were as follows:

10th European Development Fund (EDF): Internal Agreement and Financial Protocol

The Presidency opened by recalling the December 2005 agreement of the European Council for a 10th EDF of €22.682 billion, and emphasising that member states now needed to transfer this into an operational framework.

Development Ministers discussed the Commission's proposals to top-up the €22.682 billion figure with additional resources to fund (1) activities in Overseas Countries and Territories and (2) the Commission's administrative costs associated with the implementation of the EDF. The matter was referred back to COREPER by the Presidency for further discussion and decision. The Commission also updated the Council on the implementation of the Africa Strategy and on Commission activities which were being undertaken as part of the strategy. Member states raised a number of points in response, including a request for the Commission to regularly update the Council on progress.

Aid Effectiveness Package

Updated Common Framework for Country Strategy Papers

EU Aid: Delivering more, better, faster

Monterrey Report

Policy Coherence for Development

The Council adopted the conclusions on Aid Effectiveness. There was agreement to continue the good progress towards meeting EU aid volume goals and to move, on a voluntary basis, towards more joint work on country programmes between Commission and member states, based on a Common Framework for country strategies.

The Presidency noted the Commission's rolling work programme for Policy Coherence for Development (PCD) and, following a brief exchange of views, the Council adopted Conclusions on the PCD reaffirming the importance of policy coherence, inviting member states and the Commission to develop a more detailed rolling work programme by June 2006 and highlighting specific priority areas for action and a timetable on PCD.

Reform of Humanitarian Assistance: exchange of views

The Presidency opened the discussion by recognising the scope for better coordination between the areas of crisis management/civilian protection and humanitarian assistance. Development Ministers drew attention to various areas, including the UN's Central Emergency Revolving Fund; the idea of a humanitarian ombudsman or an annual global report on humanitarian assistance; the role of the Peace Building Commission in providing assistance beyond the initial humanitarian response; and

the need for greater coherency between the Commission and Council. The Presidency will organise an event on humanitarian assistance to further discussion.

AOB UN Reform

Development Ministers discussed their priorities and ideas for UN Reform, including a three pillar approach (humanitarian, development and environmental), streamlining of UN agencies, the four "Ones" principle (in each country one office, one leader, one programme and one budget line) and more predictable funding for the UN. The Presidency will host a meeting in Vienna on 9 June to discuss UN Reform and system-wide coherence more broadly. Several member states are represented on the Secretary General's panel.

Signature of the Internal Agreement on Procedures

In the margins of the Council the "Internal Agreement on Procedures", one of the implementing documents for the revised Cotonou Agreement, was signed by Development Ministers.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Zimbabwe (Immigration Removals)

The Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Nationality (Mr. Tony McNulty): The Government have previously made statements on the return of failed asylum seekers to Zimbabwe on 27 June, 6 and 18 July and 14 December 2005. I would like to provide a further update.

On 12 April the Court of Appeal allowed our appeal against two determinations of the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal (AIT). The court found that the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal had erred in its approach to the evidence before it in finding that the particular way we were enforcing returns of failed Zimbabwean asylum seekers to Harare airport put them at risk of mistreatment. The AIT's determination in that case has therefore been set aside and the AIT will consider the case afresh.

We also welcome the Court of Appeal's further finding that a person who can safely return to their country of origin voluntarily is not a refugee. The Government remain deeply concerned about the human rights situation in Zimbabwe and we are fully committed to providing protection to those who need it. For those who do, the asylum decision making and independent appeals system ensure that they get an appropriate form of protection, and the question of their removal does not arise. But it cannot be right that people who would face no risk if they returned to their country of origin voluntarily should, because they refuse to do so, be entitled to the same status as people who have a genuine fear of persecution.

In line with our original undertaking to the High Court, we will not be enforcing returns to Zimbabwe pending the further hearing the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal is now required to hold. However, we continue to expect those who have exhausted their rights of appeal and been found not to need international protection to leave the UK voluntarily. We can if required assist them in doing so through the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

Since the tribunal hearing of October 2005, we have been reviewing our methods of return, and have continued to build upon our already strong networks and relationships with NGOs, international organisations and civil society on the ground in Zimbabwe to strengthen our capacity to monitor the treatment of both enforced and voluntary returnees.

Identity and Passport Service

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Andy Burnham): The Identity and Passport Service will publish its Corporate and Business Plans for 2006–16 and Framework Agreement on Friday 21 April. Copies of the documents will be placed in the Library of the House.

Written Ministerial Statements

Monday 24 April 2006

DEFENCE

Armed Forces Pay Review Body

The Secretary of State for Defence (John Reid): I am pleased to announce that I have appointed Dr. Peter Knight and Mr. Robert Burgin as members of the Armed Forces Pay Review Body for a second three-year term, commencing March 2007. The reappointments have been conducted in accordance with the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments' guidance on appointments to public bodies.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Paul Goggins): We are today launching the new Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP).

The centre is a world first and will play a decisive part, with police forces, offender managers, children's services and other stakeholders, in protecting children, young people, families and society from paedophiles and sex offenders; in particular from those who use the internet and other new technologies in the sexual exploitation of children.

The Government are committed both to protecting children and to tackling the paedophiles who seek to abuse them. We also want to make the internet safe for young people to use. Today's children are sophisticated users of mobile phones and the internet and protecting them in this environment needs an effective response.

We have shown that much progress can be made by working in partnerships which involve law enforcement, the internet and communications industry, child protection organisations, and the Government. The Home Secretary's task force on child protection on the internet has been instrumental in forging these partnerships and in making the case for and supporting the development of CEOP. CEOP will deliver a truly multi-agency response to the sexual exploitation of children. Nowhere else in the world have the public, private and voluntary sectors come together in such a way to tackle sex offenders and protect children. The centre will be built around three core faculties—intelligence, operations and harm reduction. It will deliver a range of functions designed to: empower children and parents through information and education; protect young people through better use of intelligence; and ensure the effective management of offenders. The centre will work closely with law enforcement and partner organisations in other countries in order to tackle these issues at international level.

The centre has initially recruited around 70 staff and will be based in London. It will have an annual budget of nearly £5 million and will generate additional support from other sectors. The centre is formally part of the Serious Organised Crime Agency but will be operationally autonomous with a separate budget.

In creating CEOP we are sending a clear message to children and parents that UK law enforcement is committed and able to work with them and the industry to protect children in the digital environment. The creation of the centre makes it clear to paedophiles and sex offenders that we are determined to build on recent successes in identifying them and disrupting and preventing their offending.

Worker Registration Scheme

The Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Nationality (Mr. Tony McNulty): I am today announcing that John Grant, the Permanent Representative to the EU, has written to the European Commission to confirm that the worker registration scheme will continue beyond 1 May 2006.

The Treaty of Accession 2003 makes provision for the member states to apply transitional arrangements restricting nationals of the new member states' access to their labour markets (other than nationals from Cyprus and Malta). The worker registration scheme was established under these arrangements and has allowed the Government to monitor the impact of enlargement of the European Union on the United Kingdom's labour market.

Under the Treaty of Accession 2003, member states are required to notify the Commission by the end of April 2006 whether they intend to continue to apply transitional measures beyond that date.

The Government's decision to open its labour markets to nationals of the new member states immediately upon their Accession to the EU has been vindicated. Nationals of the new member states have entered the United Kingdom to work, have helped fill vacancies in parts of the economy experiencing labour shortages and have helped to deliver public services. There is no evidence that the entry of workers from the new member states has impacted on the unemployment rate for resident workers.

It is, however, important that the Government should continue to be able to monitor the numbers of nationals of the new member states coming here to work and their impact on the labour market. That is why I have decided that the worker registration scheme will continue beyond 1 May 2006. The need for the scheme will, however, continue to be kept under review.

Control Order Judgment

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Charles Clarke): The administrative court handed down its judgment on 12 April 2006 in the first review of a control order under section 3(10) of the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005 (the 2005 Act). The court upheld the control order, but declared that the review procedure was incompatible with article 6 (Right to a Fair Hearing) of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).

I do not accept this judgment. In my view the 2005 Act is fully ECHR compliant and contains rigorous safeguards to protect the rights of the individual, including judicial oversight and reporting and reviewing requirements. Accordingly, I am appealing the decision.

In the interim, the ruling does not limit the operation of the Act. I have not revoked either the control order which was the subject of this review, nor any of the other control orders currently in force on the back of this judgment. Nor will the judgment prevent me from making control orders on suspected terrorists where I consider it necessary to do so in the interests of national security in future.

In the Government's view, control orders are the best way of addressing the continuing threat posed by suspected terrorists who cannot currently be prosecuted or, in respect of foreign nationals, removed from the UK. It is my firm belief that the 2005 Act strikes the right balance between safeguarding society and safeguarding the rights of the individual.

Written Ministerial Statements

Tuesday 25 April 2006

DEFENCE

Personnel Deployment (Overseas)

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): In a written answer of 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2333W, I provided details of the number of personnel deployed overseas on operations. I regret that some of the information was incorrect; the table below corrects the original answer. The data collected is from manual records[1] and shows that on 7 December 2005 the following numbers of service personnel were deployed on operations overseas:

Country	*Service Personnel*
Afghanistan	820
Bahrain[2]	350
Bosnia-Herzegovina	760
Cyprus	3,380
Diego Garcia	40
Democratic Republic of Congo	10
Georgia	10
Gibraltar	569
Iraq	7,580
Kosovo	190
Liberia	~
Qatar	270
Sierra Leone	10
South Atlantic[3]	1,460
Sudan	~
USA	30

1. Data are based on personnel reports collated manually from operational deployments and may not include all current operations. Figures include UK regular forces and reserve forces.
2. Includes personnel stationed on ships in the Gulf Region.
3. Includes Ascension Island and the Falkland Islands.
When rounding to the nearest 10, numbers ending in five have been rounded to the nearest 20 to prevent systematic bias.

~ Denotes less than five.

Location statistics for service personnel may also be compiled based on posted location rather than deployed location. Posted location is where an individual is permanently based.

The numbers of personnel posted to each location abroad are shown in Tri Service Publication 6, Global Location of UK Regular Forces (TSP 6).

TSP 6 is published quarterly; the most recent publication shows the numbers of service personnel at 1 October 2005.

Afghanistan (Harrier Deployment)

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): The United Kingdom is committed to helping the Afghan people rebuild their country as a stable, prosperous and democratic nation free from terrorism. Our deployment of the Helmand Task Force, announced by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence on 26 January, is a major part of that commitment. So is our detachment of six Harrier GR7 aircraft based in Kandahar, which have made an invaluable contribution to the success of both the coalition and the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) missions.

Following requests from both NATO and coalition commanders, we have agreed to extend their deployment initially from June 2006 to 31 March 2007. Working alongside allied aircraft, primarily from The Netherlands and the United States, they will continue to provide the ISAF with a reconnaissance capability, an air presence to reassure the Afghan people of their security and the capacity to strike against insurgents that may threaten the safety of our armed forces and those under their protection. They will also be available to support coalition forces. As now, the detachment will initially be drawn from No. 1 (Fighter) Squadron, Royal Air Force. In October 2006, however, the Royal Air Force will hand over the task to 800 Naval Air Squadron, in the first operational deployment of the Fleet Air Arm's Harrier GR7 squadrons.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Agriculture and Fisheries Council

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Margaret Beckett): The United Kingdom will be represented at this month's Agriculture and Fisheries Council in Luxembourg by the Deputy Ambassador to the European Union and by the Director for Analysis and CAP Strategy in Defra.

The Health and Consumer Protection Commissioner will provide a written update to the Council on developments with regard to the spread of the avian influenza H5N1 virus.

The Council will then adopt a proposal to broaden the scope of the current provision for exceptional measures in the poultry meat and eggs sectors to help them through a drop in sales caused by consumer fears about avian influenza. The UK will support the proposals but make clear that such measures should only be used in exceptional circumstances and should not distort the normal competitive nature of the EU market.

The Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development will update the Council on the WTO agricultural negotiations. The UK will press for every effort to be made to make progress in the negotiations.

The Council will hold an exchange of views on a Commission Communication on improving the economic situation in the fishing industry. The Communication highlights measures already available to the fishing industry to cope with higher fuel prices and other economic concerns, but also proposes a new measure to support the upgrading of engines in fishing vessels. The UK will express concern that the latter could lead to an increase in fishing capacity, contradicting the principle established in the 2002 reform of the common fisheries policy and out of line with a long term sustainable solution for fish stocks.

The Council will also hold its first ministerial exchange of views on the Commission's draft action plan for simplifying the common fisheries policy. The UK will intervene to welcome the Commission's initiative and the work done so far and press for more detailed proposals.

The Council will hold a policy debate on the Commission's proposal for a management plan for North sea plaice and sole which would span a number of years. The UK will urge that the plan is consistent with the principle of long-term sustainable management and is achieved at a manageable rate for the fishing industry. We would also want to avoid proposals for plaice and sole which damage the potential for recovery of cod stocks, since the same vessels can be used to catch all three species.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Unduly Lenient Sentences Order 2006

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Fiona Mactaggart): On Friday 21 April the Government laid an Order before Parliament which will extend the Attorney General's powers with regard to unduly lenient sentences. Under part 4 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988, the Attorney General's powers apply to sentences imposed in the Crown Court for any offence triable only on indictment, and any either way offence which has been specified for the purpose in an Order. The present Order will enable a range of either way offences in the Sexual Offences Act 2003 to be referred to the Court of Appeal where it is considered that an unduly lenient sentence has been imposed. The offences in question are specified in paragraph 3 of schedule 1 to the Order. The Order also consolidates the four previous Orders of its kind, which are repealed, and updates the application of the unduly lenient sentence powers to Northern Ireland. It comes into force on 16 May, and will apply to any sentence imposed on or after that date.

Deportation and Removal of Foreign Nationals

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Charles Clarke): I have today written to the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee to inform them that, to the best of my knowledge, between February 1999 and March 2006, 1,023 foreign national criminals, who should have been considered for deportation or removal, completed their prison sentences and were released without any consideration of deportation or removal action. This is deeply regrettable and I wish to outline in this statement how we intend to improve our performance.

Since June 1996 the foreign national prisoner population has risen from 4,259 to the figure of 10,265 at the end of February 2006. This includes those detainees held in the three Prison Service run removal centres of Dover, Haslar and Lindholme. But the arrangements for identifying them and considering removal from the UK have not kept pace with that growth. Our policy has always been to consider serious offenders for deportation before release—or if that is not possible to make a decision about immigration detention, electronic monitoring or restriction orders before release. Beyond some changes to appeal rights, the process for dealing with deportation of foreign national prisoners has not changed fundamentally in recent years. However, it is clear that the increasing numbers of cases being referred for consideration led to the process falling down.

Over the course of the last year we have been making significant improvements to the system for identifying, referring and caseworking foreign national prisoners to ensure that we have a robust system to handle this group effectively. We are increasing resources in this area which will provide, amongst other things, a significant increase in the Immigration and Nationality Directorate's (IND) caseworking capacity. This increase will allow us to commence deportation proceedings twelve months before the prisoner is due for release, which is the earliest point at which case law currently allows for consideration to commence and will ensure that suitable prisoners are removed from the country at the appropriate point of their sentence.

IND is working with other relevant Government Departments to continue to strengthen the handling of these prisoners. This includes consideration of the sentencing options and improvements in identifying and processing of these prisoners to ensure that as many are removed from the United Kingdom as soon as possible.

I will also bring together the key players from the departments involved at least twice a year at ministerial level and quarterly at senior official level to create and take ownership of an effective strategy for dealing with these issues.

It is clear that there has been a failure on our part to deal with all the cases we should have. That failure has been identified in part due to the strengthening of the system for identifying foreign national prisoners and there is now a package of initiatives underway to strengthen this area of business.

My aim is to ensure that the foreign national population is managed effectively and proactively, ensuring that the number of people held in prisons under immigration powers is kept to the absolute minimum and that we have the sentencing powers and identification referral and caseworking systems in place to consider and action deportation procedures for every foreign national prisoner who has committed a serious crime, and that we are in a position to effect removal at the earliest point of release.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Organised Crime Task Force

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Angela E. Smith): This statement sets out how my Department, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment intends to take forward action to help combat losses due to fuel smuggling in Northern Ireland.

Hon. Members will be aware that the loss to HM Treasury due to smuggling of non duty paid fuels amounts to some £245 million per annum.

It was against this backdrop that the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, when asked to consider what steps might be taken to ensure a robust and consistent enforcement of petroleum licensing conditions across Northern Ireland proposed that the Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland (HSENI) which is the regional authority for health and safety at work, might assume responsibility for petroleum licensing.

This move would see HSENI having responsibility for policing the entire fuel oils supply chain. This would be a logical step as it already has direct responsibility for bulk fuel oil storage at harbour terminals and for its transport by road tankers—adding retail petrol stations would complete the chain. This proposal is strongly supported by the Organised Crime Task Force in Northern Ireland.

Such a move would permit a more consistent and robust approach to enforcement. It would also allow for a more targeted approach to inspection, provide a single point of contact for the other key agencies involved and lay the foundations of an audit trail as well as improve intelligence generally.

Government will now consult on this proposal, which could, among other things, involve amendments to the Petroleum (Consolidation) Act (Northern Ireland) 1929. Depending on the duration of any consultation on the legislation, this transfer (change) in responsibilities could be achieved in 9–12 months.

I am pleased to be able to commend this proposal to the House. I am confident that, subject to the completion of a robust consultation process with the local authorities in Northern Ireland, and the allocation of the necessary resource, it would deliver an effective tool to reduce the losses and help bring an end to criminal activity in this area.

Written Ministerial Statements

Wednesday 26 April 2006

TREASURY

ECOFIN

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Gordon Brown): The Informal Economic and Financial Affairs Council (ECOFIN) took place in Vienna on 7 and 8 April 2006. I represented the United Kingdom.

The informal council discussed globalisation, with the participation of chief executive officers of three international companies. This focused on how to preserve and further strengthen Europe's attractiveness as a business location and for foreign investment, on completing the single market, and on how to ensure a more equal distribution of benefits among citizens.

The informal council also discussed the working methods of ECOFIN; the present economic situation and prospects for the global economy; the preparation of the spring meetings of the Bretton Woods institutions; and taxation.

CULTURE MEDIA AND SPORT

BBC Funding

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (James Purnell): An independent report into the future funding needs of the BBC has been published today by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. The Department commissioned PKF to carry out a financial review of the BBC's value for money plans, its bid for the next licence fee settlement and its commercial services. The report, which is available for viewing at http://www.bbccharterreview.org.uk, concludes that it

"contains specific information for the Government to progress discussions with the BBC which would point to a lower settlement than currently sought"

but acknowledges that there are a number of areas where figures can only be finalised following policy decisions by Government. The work is part of a wider review to determine the level of the licence fee from April 2007, which also includes a public seminar with industry representation—to be held at the Department on 5 May—and willingness to pay research which will provide information on the public's views.

DEFENCE

Defence Medical Information Capability Programme

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Don Touhig): I am pleased to be able to announce that a contract has been placed today with Logica CMG for the implementation of the information system component of DMICP. DMICP will for the first time provide a completely automated, integrated health record for all members of the armed forces. It will bring better access to patient records, and improve the management of patients under treatment, leading to more successful treatment, higher health standards and more personnel fit for task. It will also enable the Ministry of Defence to improve its understanding of the health status of the armed forces and generate more comprehensive force readiness information. It will enable the defence medical services to meet planned statutory clinical governance standards. The system will be fully compatible with the NHS connecting for health programme, and will therefore lead to much better communications between the defence medical services and the NHS, which is the secondary care provider to the armed forces in the UK. The system will be introduced progressively between now and 2010; all armed forces medical and dental centres in the UK and in our permanent overseas bases should be equipped with the system by early 2008.

I regard DMICP as the most important single component of the defence health change programme, and believe it will bring a step change in the effectiveness of the defence medical services. The improved links with the NHS will significantly improve the way the two organisations work with each other, and bring significant benefits to patients.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Information Sharing Index (Sensitive Services)

The Minister for Children and Families (Beverley Hughes): I am today announcing the Government's decisions on how the details of practitioners providing sensitive services should be recorded on the information sharing index.

Section 12 of the Children Act 2004 provides for the establishment of an information sharing index. The Government announced, during the passage of the Children Bill, that there would be a public consultation on three issues relating to the operation of the index

recording practitioner details for potentially sensitive services on the index;

access by authorised users to practitioner details once recorded; and

recording the fact of a concern on the index.

The consultation ran from 27 October 2004 to 19 January 2005. There were some strongly expressed concerns in response to the consultation that recording details of sensitive services, such as mental and sexual health and drug abuse, may deter children and young people from accessing those services.

The Government's response to the consultation was issued in a written ministerial statement on 30 June 2005. In the light of the views expressed, the response set out decisions to implement a differentiated approach to recording details where for a limited number of services, restricted to targeted and specialist health services, consent would be required to record practitioner details on the index. The response committed my Department to further work, with the Department of Health, to define those services that would, for the purposes of the information sharing index, be considered sensitive.

The Government have decided that services related to sexual health, mental health and substance abuse should be the broad categories defined as sensitive. The following, specific service areas are those where practitioner details will be included only with consent:

Sexual Health—information, advice and treatment for pregnancy, abortion, contraception; sexually transmitted infections including services related to HIV/AIDS or Hepatitis B or C; rape crisis or sexual violence; sexual abuse and services related to Gay/Lesbian or Trans-Gender issues;

Mental Health—Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services tiers two, three and four which includes referrals to and assessment and treatment by, community based and in-patient teams dealing with, for example, sexual abuse and eating disorders; and

Substance Abuse—information, advice and treatment for drug, alcohol or volatile substance abuse (glue, aerosols and butane gas).

Currently, there are regulations covering disclosure of information about sexually transmitted infections which would not permit practitioners providing services in this area to include their details on the index even with explicit consent. The Department of Health plans to consult on regulatory change, well before the index is implemented in 2008, which would then, subject to the will of Parliament, permit, with explicit consent, the inclusion of these details on the index.

The Government's response to the consultation stated that there would be a facility to over-ride lack of consent to record practitioner details in sensitive services on the index, but to restrict it to carefully specified circumstances, in line with existing law, such as where there are genuine child protection concerns.

Where consent is given to record practitioner details for the sensitive service on the index, the child's index record will indicate to other practitioners that an unspecified, sensitive service is working with the child. On-line access to the sensitive service practitioner's name and contact details will be restricted to index management teams. A practitioner who wanted to contact the specialist service about the child would make a case to the index management team who would, as appropriate, broker contact with the sensitive services practitioner.

The Government announced on 8 December 2005 that the information sharing index will be implemented across all 150 local authorities in England by the end of 2008. We will seek Parliament's agreement in autumn 2006 to the main Regulations to govern the operation of the index. We will consult publicly on draft regulations in the summer of 2006.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Nepal

The Minister for the Middle East (Dr. Kim Howells): Following nearly three weeks of strikes and demonstrations across Nepal in which at least 14 people died, on 21 April King Gyanendra announced that he would hand over executive power to the Seven Party Alliance and invite them to appoint a Prime Minister. On 24 April, King Gyanendra went further and reaffirmed that the "sovereignty of the kingdom of Nepal is inherent in the people of Nepal" and reinstated the Parliament of Nepal which he had suspended in 2002. The first session of Parliament is planned for Friday, 28 April.

On 21 and 25 April I issued statements welcoming these developments, which are a victory for the democratic aspirations of the people of Nepal. The UK has worked closely with the wider international community, over many months in support of these aspirations.

But there is much still to be done to secure a fully functioning democracy and peace in Nepal. In the first instance, we hope that calm will return to the streets of Nepal, and that the security forces will exercise the restraint that has been absent from much of their behaviour of in recent weeks and months. In my statement of 21 April I condemned the loss of life that resulted from the excessive use of force by the security forces.

We further hope that an early result of the recall of Parliament will be a transfer of the Royal Nepalese Army and security forces to full civilian authority, and that these forces will work under a democratic Government as soon as it is formed. We would hope to see a ceasefire by both sides to accompany these changes, as a step towards a peace process.

In November 2005 the Maoists announced an understanding with the Seven Party Alliance which opened up the possibility of reintegrating the Maoists into a democratic political process. A comprehensive peace process, to underpin the political process, remains a key objective. The Maoists must commit to an end to violence. They must commit to democracy by entering into a peace process with the new government, beginning with a ceasefire.

The role of the King in a future multi-party democracy is for the people of Nepal to determine. He should understand that there can be no rowing back from the transfer of full executive power to a government representing the will of the people.

A paramount concern for the UK Government throughout the current crisis has been the safety of British citizens and staff in Nepal. We continue to advise against non-essential travel to Nepal while the situation remains unstable. We will continue to keep this under daily review.

The UK stands ready, with international partners, to work with the new government and the people of Nepal in this new context. We are looking closely at what practical assistance might be appropriate, in the form of development and other support.

HEALTH

NHS Foundation Trust Applications (Wave 2)

The Secretary of State for Health (Ms Patricia Hewitt): Section 4(1) of the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003 provides that an NHS trust may make an application to Monitor (whose statutory name is the Independent Regulator of NHS foundation trusts) for authorisation to become an NHS foundation trust, if the application is supported by the Secretary of State.

I am today announcing that I support Luton and Dunstable Hospital NHS Trust in its bid to become an NHS foundation trust, as part of wave 2A of NHS foundation trust applications. The trust can now apply to Monitor for authorisation as an NHS foundation trust, and set up new governance arrangements including recruiting members and holding elections to the board of governors. Section 6 of the 2003 Act sets out the matters to be taken into account by Monitor and the terms under which authorisation of NHS foundation trust status can be given.

I understand from the chairman of Monitor that Luton and Dunstable Hospital NHS Trust, if successful, would be authorised on 1 August 2006.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Justice and Home Affairs Council

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Charles Clarke): The Justice and Home Affairs Council will be held on 27–28 April 2006 in Luxembourg. I shall be attending the meeting with my noble and learned Friend, the Attorney-General, and my noble Friend Baroness Ashton will also be attending. I thought it would be useful if I were to outline the main issues I expect to be discussed at this Council meeting. While I would normally have made this statement earlier, the presidency tabled a large amount of the Council business for discussion at preparatory meetings this week and I wanted to be able to give the House the most accurate picture possible of what I expect to be discussed.

In the mixed committee formation prior to the Council itself, there will be a discussion of the French initiative to raise the charges on the processing of Schengen visa applications. The UK does not opt into this measure and so will not participate in this discussion. The presidency will seek views from member states on certain issues concerning the legal base for the second generation Schengen Information System, as well as updating on the state of play.

There is likely to be a political discussion of the proposal for a Council decision on the improvement of police co-operation, especially at the internal borders. The presidency has put forward two options: first to accept the text as currently drafted; or second, for the Council to agree to suspend negotiations on this measure. The Government feel that the outstanding issues could be resolved with more time, but that it will not be able to accept the text as currently drafted without the option of dual criminality applying for cross-border surveillance. We believe that it is reasonable to seek to apply dual criminality in this area, where not to do so would mean that police officers from one member state could conceivably have greater powers than domestic officers on the territory of another member state.

There will also be an update on the state of play in discussions on the proposal for a data protection framework decision to regulate the handling of personal data within the fields of police and judicial co-operation. The aim of the proposal is to enhance the sharing of intelligence in the fight against crime and terrorism by providing common standards for the handling of data. The Government fully support the broad objectives of the proposal, but are working to ensure that the ultimate framework is not overly-bureaucratic or so onerous that it actually has the effect of reducing the effectiveness of law enforcement agencies. In particular, we continue to question whether the proposal can or should apply to all domestic processing.

In the main Council format, there will be presentations and discussions on the issue of human trafficking. This was one of my main priorities for the UK presidency and we made great progress agreeing the action plan. The presidency, the Commission and Europol will give an update on the implementation of the action plan. The Council also intends to adopt Council conclusions on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings on the basis of the EU action plan and including trafficking in connection with major international events, with specific reference to the 2006 football World cup. There will also be a presentation on the implementation of the EU external relations strategy, which was again agreed under the UK presidency.

The presidency will be seeking to make progress, following attempts in 2004, on agreement of a list of safe countries of origin with regard to asylum claimants. The UK has already seen the benefits of working closely with countries which are generally safe, as this can act to deter unfounded asylum claims. The Government will support the presidency in its efforts to agree an EU list, but it will of course be important to ensure that the right countries are on the list.

I understand that the presidency has invited Peter Sutherland, the United Nations Secretary-General's special representative, to make a short presentation to the Council on the UN high-level dialogue on international migration and development. I am pleased that there will be this opportunity for discussion as the Government believe that migration can be a positive force for development.

Rome II, law applicable to non-contractual obligations, is on the agenda for political agreement on all articles. The UK will support this but certain concerns remain and political agreement in the Council is unlikely to be the end of the negotiations. The effect on the law of defamation is not yet finally resolved although it was clear from discussion at the JHA Council in February that excluding defamation from the scope of Rome II was the only realistic way of securing political agreement on this issue. We regard this as acceptable and can support it in the Council. The UK has concerns about the scope of Rome II and it is likely that we shall reiterate these concerns during the Council. The UK will also continue to urge further improvements on product liability and unfair competition.

The document on judicial co-operation in civil matters will be presented in order to raise awareness among justice ministers. The Committee on "Civil Law Matters" is tasked with ensuring uniformity and coherence in European Community legislation in the area of civil law particularly those covered by articles 65 and 293 of the EC treaty. This is just an item for the Council to take note of. The UK supports the Civil Law Committee Opinion.

The Council is being invited to open formally the new N-Lex system and to take note of the presentation on the new EUR-Lex system. The UK fully supports these two initiatives in increasing access to justice across the EU and in allowing European citizens to have direct access to the law of every member state in electronic form.

It is clear from negotiations up to this point that the framework decision on procedural rights as it is currently drafted will not be agreed by the Council. The presidency has proposed the creation of an ad hoc working party to explore alternative approaches. The UK will support the presidency's proposal for this working party when it is discussed at the Council.

The presidency will seek to have a discussion on some of the outstanding issues on the European Evidence Warrant (EEW). The UK is broadly content with the framework decision as it is currently drafted, having made a great deal of progress on it during the UK presidency, and we believe it will be an important part of the mutual recognition agenda. However, concern has been expressed about the clarity of the definitions of those offences to which the principle of dual criminality would not apply. The UK feels that the same principle should apply in this measure as in the European arrest warrant and that a more strict definition of these offences is not necessary. There are also likely to be discussions of whether data retained under the Directive on the Retention of Telecommunications Data should be included in the scope of the EEW. All member states agree that it is too soon to apply mutual recognition principles to this area of judicial co-operation, and are therefore content to leave this to the second stage EEW (which is due in 2007).

There will also be a discussion of one of the remaining issues on the framework decision on the enforcement of sentences. The presidency has suggested a compromise that would mean that double criminality would not be required for the majority of cases for the purposes of prisoner transfers, but would allow those member states that wish to continue to apply the principle to do so. The Government believe this provides an effective compromise as a basis for further discussions.

We expect the Council to reach a general approach on the agreement between the EU and Norway and Iceland on a surrender procedure, subject to final consideration of the form to be used for requesting extradition. The UK supports enhanced extradition arrangements with Norway and Iceland along the lines of the EAW model and therefore supports the presidency's efforts to bring this negotiation to a close.

We expect the presidency to seek to reach a general approach on the Council framework decision on the fight against organised crime.

Finally, there is likely to be a presentation by the presidency regarding a high level political dialogue between the Council, Commission and European Parliament on the fight against terrorism, which was agreed as part of the EU counter-terrorism strategy in December.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Independent Monitoring Commission

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Peter Hain): I have received the 10th report of the Independent Monitoring Commission (IMC). This report has been made under articles four and seven of the International Agreement that established the Commission. I have considered the content of the report and I am today bringing it before Parliament. I have placed copies in the Library of the House.

The Commission have provided an assessment of ongoing levels of paramilitary activity and criminality.

In respect of the Provisional IRA, the report states that

"it remains our absolutely clear view that the PIRA leadership has committed itself to following a peaceful path. It is working to bring the whole organisation fully along with it and has expended considerable effort to refocus the movement in support of its objective".

The report also observes that

"in the last three months this process has involved the further dismantling of PIRA as a military structure".

The report notes that progress with regards to other paramilitary groups remains

"extremely uneven".

It further notes that

"dissident republicans remain determinedly committed to terrorism and deeply engaged in other crime, but they are not always capable of fulfilling their paramilitary ambitions and have recently been foiled by successful police operations. The indications on the loyalist side that some would like to wean the paramilitary groups from violence to community and other lawful activities have still to bear significant fruit."

The report recognises that some organised crime continues, and is an issue for both republican and loyalist paramilitaries. However, it notes:

"we have found signs that PIRA continues to seek to stop criminal activity by its members and to prevent them from engaging in it. We believe that some senior PIRA members may be playing a key role in this. This seems to us to be in accordance with the publicly articulated strategy. We believe that volunteers who had previously engaged in illegal fundraising have been told to refrain from doing so."

The report observes that some members of PIRA remain involved in organised crime but categorises them

"as distinct from the organisation itself".

On the issue of arms, the report states that

"we did not say three months ago that the PIRA leadership had in any way given instructions to retain arms. Indeed, our present assessment is that such of the arms as were reported to us as having been retained, would have been withheld under local control despite the instructions of the leadership. We note that, as reported by the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning (IICD), the leadership claimed decommissioned all the arms 'under its control'. The relevant points are that the amount of unsurrendered material was not significant in comparison to what was decommissioned and that these reports do not cast doubt on the declared intention of the PIRA leadership to eschew terrorism and to follow the political path. We will continue to monitor the position."

On the issue of intelligence gathering, the report notes that

"though PIRA has access to people in positions in public and private organisations who could provide them with sensitive information on individuals which might be of use to them, we have no indication that people are currently being tasked to supply such information. While PIRA continues to receive information from members and sympathisers we do not know of information being proactively sought."

The report goes on to state that

"we are currently not aware of intelligence-related activity which is outside the aims of the July statement."

The Government believe that this report provides further evidence of the direction of movement that PIRA and its leadership are taking in accordance with its commitments on 28 July 2005. The report is positive in that respect and the Government believe that it should make a helpful contribution to the rebuilding of trust and confidence in Northern Ireland which is necessary for a return to full devolution.

Once again, I am grateful to the Commission for their submission of this report and for its careful analysis.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Competitiveness Council

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Barry Gardiner): I attended the informal meeting of the Competitiveness Council on Saturday 22 April, hosted by the Austrian presidency in Graz. My ministerial colleague, Lord Sainsbury, attended the Council on Friday 21 April.

At the morning session on 21 April, Austrian Minister for Education, Science and Culture, Elisabeth Gehrer, chaired a discussion on the breakdown for the EU's research budget for the 7th Framework Programme 2007–13 (FP7).

Commissioner Potocnik presented the principles behind the Commission's revised breakdown for the budget for 2007–13 following agreement on the overall EU budget. The budget for FP7 would see a 60 per cent. increase over current levels to an average of €7.8 billion per annum as opposed to €4.8 billion per annum under the 6th Framework Programme, but this was still a reduction on the Commission's original proposal in 2005. Ministers were unanimous in stating that the Commission's revised breakdown represented a good basis for negotiations, but all put forward suggestions for changes.

The presidency hoped that this discussion would allow the Competitiveness Council to agree a general approach on FP7 on 29–30 May 2006. This would give them the basis with which to negotiate with the European Parliament, which expects to complete its first reading of FP7 in June.

The afternoon session on 21 April was on "The Opportunities of Globalisation". There were presentations from Vice-President Verheugen on "Competitiveness Through Innovation"; Commissioner Kroes on "Less and Better State Aid for Growth and Jobs"; French Minister Francois Loos on "Competitiveness Clusters"; and Helmut List, CEO AVL List, on "Centres of Competence".

Ministers showed general support for clusters as useful initiatives. Some member states thought EU cooperation on clusters was important, and a number have drawn up a national map of clusters. There was general support for Commissioner Kroes's plans to introduce some additional flexibility to EU rules on state aid for innovation. Member states were also supportive of improving access to risk capital for SMEs.

At the morning session on 22 April I participated in a discussion based on the Commission's revised proposal on the services directive. Austrian Minister for Labour and Economics, Martin Bartenstein, chaired the discussion, inviting Ministers to agree that the revised Commission proposal, based largely on the European Parliament's first reading text, should be swiftly agreed as an overall "package" with the aim of reaching political agreement at the Competitiveness Council on 29–30 May. Member states expressed support for moving forward quickly on the basis of the Commission's revised proposal but noted that important issues remained to be discussed.

TRANSPORT

Romford and Havering

The Minister of State, Department for Transport (Dr. Stephen Ladyman): In my answer of 30 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1125W to a written parliamentary question (UIN 63004) from the hon. Member for Romford (Andrew Rosindell), I stated that the information requested was available from Essex county council and the London borough of Havering, and made no reference to Highways Agency roads. Contrary to my original answer, Essex county council is not in fact a local highway authority for the area in question. The two local highway authorities are Transport for London and the London borough of Havering.

The Highways Agency is not responsible for any roads in the town of Romford; however, there is a 12.4 km section of the M25 motorway in the London borough of Havering, which is their responsibility. Whilst the Agency does not hold financial records based on local authority boundaries, it is possible to estimate the proportion of spend for this section of the motorway from the total maintenance budget for the M25, in the last five financial years:

2001: £2.04m

2002: £2.17m

2003: £2.30m

2004: £2.45m

2005: £2.61m

There is no information available from which to estimate expenditure for the financial years before 2001.

Written Ministerial Statements

Thursday 27 April 2006

CABINET OFFICE

Fast-stream Recruitment

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Cabinet Office (Mr. Jim Murphy): The 2005 fast-stream recruitment report was published on-line at http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk today. It summarises the results of the civil service fast-stream recruitment competitions completed in the year ending November 2005, and also describes some significant developments in the fast-stream selection process during the same period.

Entry into the fast-stream remains highly attractive and competitive. Key facts and figures from the report are as follows.

All vacancies in the graduate fast-stream scheme, and 94 per cent. of fast-stream vacancies overall, were filled.

The proportion of successful female candidates rose to 43.7 per cent., improving slightly from 41.5 per cent. in 2004.

The proportion of successful candidates from ethnic minority backgrounds rose to 7.1 per cent., from 5.4 per cent. in 2004.

The proportion of applicants with a declared disability fell slightly to 2.5 per cent., from 3.2 per cent. in 2004.

The fast-stream selection process itself is subject to continuous review, and the results are monitored in detail to ensure no adverse impact on any particular groups of applicants. We shall continue to work to improve fast-stream recruitment from the point of view of both applicants and employing departments.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Political Parties (Loans)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Bridget Prentice): My right hon. and noble Friend the Secretary of State and Lord Chancellor (Lord Falconer of Thoroton) has made the following written ministerial statement today.

"In my statement of 20 March 2006 to the House I announced that the Government intended to amend the Electoral Administration Bill, currently before this House, to make it compulsory for political parties to disclose any loans that they receive. Yesterday I tabled amendments for that purpose.

The amendments provide for loans to political parties to be governed by a similar regime of transparency and permissibility to that set out for donations to parties in the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA). The amendments of course take account of the differences that exist between donations and loans. The amendments take the form of a new Part 4A of and Schedule 6A to PPERA.

The main features of the scheme are as follows:

1. Details of all loans to a political party of over £5,000 (and thereafter each additional £1,000 from the same lender) will be required to be reported to the Electoral Commission.
2. The reports are to be made at quarterly intervals, and weekly during the period before a general election.
3. A party would only be permitted to take out loans from the same sources as are permitted to donate to a political party.
4. Details of all loans existing at the time that the provisions come into force will have to be reported to ensure full transparency, but loans existing at that date would not be subject to the permissibility requirements.

The amendment provides for the provisions to be brought into force by order. The Government consider it important that the new regime should be brought into force as soon as possible and will seek to take steps to ensure that that is the case.

A more detailed description of the scheme is set out below.

Scope

The regime will not differentiate between loans taken out on commercial terms and those on non-commercial terms. The latter would currently be required to be treated as donations. In future, however, all loans will fall within the loans regime, thus avoiding double reporting.

The regime will apply to loans of money, not things. Transactions for property, services and facilities on commercial terms will not have to be reported. It would be unduly burdensome to require a political party to report any significant commercial transaction into which it entered. However, where such transactions are at less than commercial terms, they will still be regarded, as they are at present, as reportable donations.

The amendments therefore regulate—

1. a loan of money to a party;
2. the provision of a credit facility to a party (for example, an overdraft facility);
3. any form of guarantee or security given in respect of a political party, by a third party.

These are referred to in the amendments as "regulated transactions".

Trade credit, that is where a supplier permits deferred payment to be made in respect of goods or services, is not included in the definition of a regulated transaction. Trade credit can only be offered by a person or company that is in a position to supply to a political party the particular goods or services it needs at a particular time. It is to be distinguished from the flexibility provided by a loan of money, which provides the party with the means to acquire whatever it needs at any point in time. Trade credit is a commonplace feature of commercial transactions, and there is no evidence to suppose that a problem exists with the provision of trade credit. Where trade credit is being offered on terms which go beyond the commercial norm, such a transaction is and will continue to be treated as involving the making of a donation.

Permissibility

The amendments provide that a party must not enter into a regulated transaction with anyone other than an "authorised participant", these being the same individuals and organisations that are already defined in PPERA as permissible donors. In sum, these are individuals on the electoral roll or organisations with a sufficient connection to the United Kingdom. A company, in addition to satisfying other requirements, must actually carry on business in the United Kingdom before it will be an authorised participant. The permissibility requirements will not apply to loans existing at the time that these provisions come into force.

The amendments provide for the enforcement of the permissibility requirements principally by creating criminal offences which may be committed by the party and the party's treasurer where the party enters into regulated transactions with unauthorised participants. The political party is also required to pay back any moneys it might receive from an unauthorised participant as soon as is practicable. As an ultimate fallback, the Electoral Commission may apply to the court to make such an order as it thinks fit to restore (so far as is possible) the parties to the transaction (that is, the political party and the lender) to the position they would have been in if the transaction had not been entered into.

Reporting regime

A party will be charged with making a transaction report to the Electoral Commission in respect of the following quarterly periods each year—

1. January to March;
2. April to June;
3. July to September;
4. October to December.

The transaction report must be delivered to the Commission within 30 days beginning with the end of the reporting period to which it relates. During a general election period (that is, from dissolution of Parliament to polling day) reports are to be required to be submitted at weekly intervals. The duties relating to these reports will be the responsibility of the party's treasurer.

A relevant loan will have to be recorded in a report where the overall value of the loan is more than £5,000 or if, when it is added to any other relevant loan, the aggregate amount of the loans is more than £5,000. Thereafter loans from the same authorised participant must be reported when a threshold of £1,000 is exceeded. The same is the case for other regulated transactions.

The Electoral Commission will be required to take receipt of the reports and maintain a register of the loans, which is to be required to be made available to the public. It is the Commission's current practice to make the donations registers available on their website. There will be a number of criminal offences relating to the late filing of reports, and the provision in them of inaccurate information, replicating those in relation to the reporting of donations.

Details to be reported

The new schedule 6A sets out the details which have to be recorded by the party in a transaction report. These are:

1. the name and address of the lender;
2. the nature of the transaction;
3. the value of the transaction;
4. the transaction date (that is, the date on which the transaction was agreed); and
5. certain other particulars of the transaction (for example, in the case of loans, the date on which the loan is to be repaid and the interest to be charged).

Regulated transactions can of course be varied after they have been initially agreed (for example, the parties could agree to reduce the interest payable on a loan). To take account of this, a continuing reporting requirement is imposed on political parties. Where any of the details initially required to be reported to the Electoral Commission change, the political party is obliged to make a further report in respect of the transaction. The political party is also required to report when the transaction comes to an end (for example, when a loan is paid off). However, parties are not required to make a report each time they make a repayment of part of a loan in accordance with the terms of the loan.

The value of the transaction to be recorded is, in the case of a loan, the value of the capital advanced; in the case of a credit facility, the maximum amount that may be advanced under the facility; and, in the case of a security agreement, the maximum contingent liability assumed by the person who gives the security. The interest to be paid on any capital advanced will not need to be included in the process of valuation".

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Big Lottery Fund

The Minister for Sport (Mr. Richard Caborn): The National Lottery Bill, which is currently before Parliament, will establish the Big Lottery Fund as a new lottery distributing body, replacing three of the existing distributing bodies, the Community Fund, the New Opportunities Fund and the Millennium Commission. We consider there are strong reasons of public interest to begin the process of recruiting the board of the Big Lottery Fund while the Bill is still before Parliament. Parliamentary approval for additional resources of £33,200 for this new service will be sought in the main estimate for the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. Pending that approval, urgent expenditure estimated at £33,200 will be met by repayable cash advances from the Contingencies Fund.

DEFENCE

Falklands Conflict (25th Anniversary)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Don Touhig): I am pleased to announce that the 25th anniversary of the Falklands conflict will be commemorated in the United Kingdom in June 2007. The commemorations, which will be designated "South Atlantic 25", will begin with the annual service of remembrance in the Falkland Islands memorial chapel at Pangbourne college, which will take place on Thursday 14 June. The main event will take place on Horse Guards Parade in the afternoon of the following Sunday, 17 June, and will consist of a parade, drumhead service and march past. The focus will be on the veterans of the campaign, and they will be supported by a tri-service band and serving members of the armed forces and merchant navy representing the ships, units and squadrons which took part in the operation. Families of the veterans will be invited to attend.

The armed forces will also participate in local commemorations being planned by the Falkland Islands Government.

The Ministry of Defence will be working with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the veterans' organisations to plan the events in the United Kingdom, and will be liaising with the Falkland Islands Government. Further details will become available in due course and will be passed to the veterans' organisations and posted on the Veterans Agency website.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Certification Monitor's Report

The Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Nationality (Mr. Tony McNulty): My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary has today placed in the Libraries of both Houses the second annual report of the Independent Monitor of the Certification of Claims as

Clearly Unfounded under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum (NIA) Act 2002 (the Monitor), and the Government response to the report and its recommendations.

PRIME MINISTER

Senior Salaries Review Body

The Prime Minister (Mr. Tony Blair): I have appointed Paul Williams and Michael Langley as members of the Senior Salaries Review Body (SSRB), initially for a three-year term. They will take up their post with immediate effect.

The other members of the SSRB are:

John Baker CBE (Chair)
Mark Baker CBE
Mary Galbraith
Professor David Greenaway
Mei Sim Lai OBE
Jim McKenna
Sir Peter North CBE, QC
Richard Pearson

Written Ministerial Statements

Tuesday 2 May 2006

TREASURY

Public Expenditure

The Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Des Browne): I announced on 17 March, *Official Report*, column 114WS that the Treasury planned to publish PESA 2006 on 2 May. Publication has been delayed by production difficulties and will now take place on Monday 15 May.

HEALTH

NHS Foundation Trusts

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health (Mr. Liam Byrne): The chairman of Monitor (the statutory name of which is the independent regulator of NHS foundation trusts) announced on 28 April that, in accordance with section 6 of the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003, Monitor had decided to authorise the following NHS mental health trusts to operate as NHS foundation trusts from 1 May 2006:

Oxleas NHS Trust

South Essex Partnership NHS Trust

South Staffordshire Healthcare NHS Trust

Monitor's announcement marks the first group of mental health trusts becoming authorised as NHS foundation trusts and will enable these trusts to take advantage of the new freedoms available to them to improve services for their communities and innovate new approaches to patient care.

A fourth applicant, North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust, has deferred its application at this time. Monitor will remain in contact with the trust although ultimately it is for the trust to decide when it wishes to return to Monitor's assessment process.

Monitor's announcement brings the total number of NHS foundation trusts to 35. A copy of Monitor's press notice has been placed in the Library.

The Government remain committed to offering all NHS acute and mental health trusts the opportunity to apply for foundation status as soon as practicable.

A further six trusts are being considered by Monitor for authorisation by 1 June 2006 and a further 14 trusts are being considered for authorisation by 1 August. This will complete the second wave of foundation trust applications.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Passports

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Andy Burnham): Further to the statement of 21 December 2004 by the right hon. Des Browne, then Minister of State for the Home Office, announcing the proposed introduction from late 2006 of interviews for adult first-time passport applicants, I have placed a document in the Libraries of both Houses of Parliament setting out the plans to establish 69 new offices in which interviews will take place.

The document sets out the planned 69 locations for the interview offices, however exactly where the offices will be located within the 69 towns and cities will not be known until the acquisition process is completed. The document also outlines the new procedures for the applications concerned, and the consultation and design process undertaken by the Identity and Passport Service in deciding on the locations. It also describes the work in progress to establish arrangements for those living in remote areas.

A further statement on arrangements for bringing the requirement for interviews into effect will be made in due course.

Prevention of Terrorism Act

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Charles Clarke): In accordance with section 14(3) and 14(5) of the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005, Lord Carlile of Berriew QC prepared a report on the operation of the Act in 2005, which I laid before the House on 2 February 2006.

I am grateful to Lord Carlile for his detailed report and I have given close consideration to his recommendations. Following consultation within my Department and with other relevant agencies, I am pleased to place my response to Lord Carlile's recommendations in the House Library today.

Written Ministerial Statements

Wednesday 3 May 2006

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Avian Influenza

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Mr. Ben Bradshaw): On 27 April the House was informed of the finding of avian influenza in samples from chickens on a poultry farm near Dereham in Norfolk. The strain was confirmed as low pathogenic H7N3 on 28 April. The Veterinary Laboratories Agency (VLA) are carrying out further investigation before the presence of the high pathogenic strain in the flock can be completely ruled out.

The Veterinary Laboratories Agency on 29 April reported to DEFRA positive results for avian influenza in free range chickens on two further poultry farms near Dereham, Norfolk. Further testing has confirmed the low pathogenic H7N3 strain.

On all three premises the birds have been culled and disposed of, and cleansing and disinfection is being carried out. A 1km restricted zone is in place around each of the premises. Movements of poultry and poultry products may only take place under licence from the state veterinary service. The necessary surveillance is being carried out within the restriction zones and movements and contacts are being traced.

A preliminary epidemiological report has been produced which has been published today, and copies have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses. It sets out our current understanding of the source and spread of the disease based on the evidence available. The report concludes that it is not possible to say at this stage whether any of the three flocks was the index case—other premises may be involved. It is also not possible to determine yet whether they were infected by a common source—wild birds and other possibly infected premises are being investigated. However, the report does explain that it is likely that the first free range flock was infected around 20 March, some 11 days later the virus infected the second free range flock, and the housed poultry flock was infected between 15 and 18 April. Any links or movements between the premises involved are being investigated.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Health Estates Corporate Plan 2006–07

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Shaun Woodward): The targets, which have been set for 2006–07, are based on the strategic aim and objectives of the agency as set out in section 4 of its corporate and business plan. The targets are in line with the Department's policy of seeking to improve the service provided to the agency's clients in terms of both quality and value for money and I am satisfied that they present a demanding challenge for the agency. A copy of the corporate and business plan will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

The targets are as follows:

QUALITY

1. Some 95 per cent. of the service provided by the agency's client support staff to external clients to be regarded as satisfactory, of which 35 per cent. of the service to be regarded as either very good or excellent.

2. Some 95 per cent. of the service provided by the agency's project management staff to external clients to be regarded as satisfactory, of which 35 per cent. of the service to be regarded as either very good or excellent.

3. Some 95 per cent. of the service provided by the agency's trust consultancy support staff to external clients to be regarded as satisfactory, of which 35 per cent. of the service to be regarded as either very good or excellent.

4. Some 95 per cent. of the service provided by the agency's specialist engineering staff to external clients to be regarded as satisfactory, of which 35 per cent. of the service to be regarded as either very good or excellent.

THROUGHPUT/SERVICE DELIVERY TARGETS

5. Complete the review of health estates decontamination testing services with the objective of presenting a draft regional strategy for decontamination testing services to the Departmental Management Board by 30 November 2006.

6. Issue all Medical Device/Equipment Alerts with an "Immediate Action" level of urgency designated initiated by the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) within three working days on receipt of final MHRA Alert (provided that no further consultation is involved).

7. Issue all Medical Device/Equipment Alerts with an "Action" level of urgency designation initiated by the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) within five working days on receipt of final MHRA Alert (provided that no further consultation is involved).

8. To take the appropriate steps to ensure substantive levels of compliance with the Controls Assurance Standard on Environmental Cleanliness by 31 March 2007.

9. Establish by March 2007 an appropriate delivery model to enable an independent and regular external audit of environmental cleanliness standards to be undertaken across HPSS facilities.

10. Establish in association with the Beeches Management Centre and HSS Trusts, specialist operational training for the safe management, operation and maintenance of High Voltage (HV) Systems, Low Voltage (LV) Systems and Medical Gas Pipeline Systems (MGPS) by 31 March 2007.

RESOURCE AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT TARGETS

11. Ensure the agency meets its commitment to "Fit for Purpose" and its target of a reduction of 13 posts by 31 March 2008.

12. Ensure that the agency lives within its running cost allocation for the year.

13. Demonstrate that the full costs of the agency are recouped, on a notional basis, through the Service Level Agreement with the Department.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Independent Living Funds

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mrs. Anne McGuire): I am today announcing my intention to engage a consultant to conduct a strategic review of the Independent Living Funds, in the context of the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit report "Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People". This is in line with our aim to regularly review the functions, organisation and management of all non-departmental public bodies.

The Independent Living Funds enable thousands of severely disabled people to live independently and we need to consider the future direction of the funds in the light of our goal of equality for disabled people and the wider context of proposed changes in social care outlined by the Department of Health White Paper: "Our health, Our care, Our say".

The consultant will supply independent expert advice and carry out a public consultation in order to provide recommendations as to the future direction of the funds. The Independent Living Funds will discharge £263 million of public funds during 2006–07 so it is essential that we have an independent and informed review of their role.

I am placing a copy of the terms of reference for the review in the Library. The consultant will be asked to report to Ministers by the end of December 2006.

Written Ministerial Statements

Thursday 4 May 2006

TREASURY

ECOFIN Agenda 5 May 2006

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Gordon Brown): Items on the agenda are as follows:

DRAFT GENERAL BUDGET 2007—Presentation on the Commission's annual Budget proposals for 2007.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT—Presentation on the Commission action plan towards an integrated internal control framework.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY—Contributing to preparations for the June European Council.

VAT—On-going discussion of the presidency's package of proposals, including on place of supply.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Foreign Compensation Commission

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Jack Straw): I will today lay before Parliament the Annual Report of the Foreign Compensation Commission for 2004–05. This is the 50th such report.

Copies will be placed in the Library of the House and the Vote Office. A copy will also be available on the Foreign Compensation Commission's website at: www.fcc.gov.uk.

The report provides an account of the Commission's activities during the financial year 2004–05 and includes a statement of account for that period. It also includes summaries of expenditure for the preceding years when, owing to extended vacancies for a large part of that time, no annual reports were produced. The Commission was not engaged in any active distribution programmes during the periods in question and operates on a care and maintenance basis.

Darfur Peace Talks

The Minister for Trade (Ian Pearson): I commend the tireless efforts of the African Union (AU) mediation in Abuja to reach a peace deal for Darfur, and welcome their tabling, on 25 April, of compromise proposals for a Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA). My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Development has been at the Abuja talks since 2 May. He is supporting the AU in its efforts to get the parties to agree a deal.

I welcome the fact that the Government of Sudan are willing to sign the DPA. But I was extremely disappointed to hear that the rebel movements have rejected the first draft. They must realise that no deal will meet their full requirements; but this agreement is a fair and just one. It offers them participation in government and a political platform from which they can influence Darfur's future. I agree with the AU chief mediator's assessment that any future negotiations are likely to be less favourable to the movements.

The pressure is now on the rebel movements to agree the deal. The international community will not understand if they fail to take this opportunity to bring peace to Darfur and security to its people. We have already made clear that those who impede the peace process will face sanctions under United Nations Security Council Resolution 1591. The rebel movements need to understand that this is their opportunity for a just settlement and such an opportunity is unlikely to recur.

Darfur now stands at a critical juncture. Its people have suffered for far too long and it rests on the parties to the Abuja talks to give them the opportunity to rebuild their lives.

Written Answers to Questions

The following answers were received between Friday 31 March and Thursday 13 April 2006

DEFENCE

Air Accidents

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what rights of appeal are available to parties to the Board of Inquiry into the USAF F-15 accident in Scotland on 26 March 2001. [62826]

Mr. Touhig: Normally the findings of a Board of Inquiry are not open to appeal and there is no statutory appeal mechanism within the Air Force Act 1955. However a person subject to air force law who thinks himself wronged in relation to any matter relating to his Service may, by virtue of section 180 Air Force Act 1955, submit a Redress of Complaint through the chain of command to the Air Force Board acting as the Defence Council. Any airman so affected, by the findings of a Board, could lodge such a Redress but the complaint must normally have been lodged within three months of the commission of the wrong complained of. A decision of the Air Force Board is susceptible to judicial review proceedings in the High Court.

Secondly, and extra-regulationally, if new and significant evidence became available, in relation to an accident, which might have a bearing on issues of causation, and at the sole discretion of the Convening Authority, it would be open to the Convening Authority to re-open the BOI for the Board to reconsider its findings in the light of any new and compelling evidence.

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the reason was for the amount of time taken for completion of the Board of Inquiry into the USAF F-15 accident on 26 March 2001. [62827]

Mr. Touhig: Completion of the Board of Inquiry was delayed awaiting the outcome of Court Martial proceedings and to allow the air traffic controller to fully exercise his rights under Queens Regulations 1269 to comment on the Board report.

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence on what date briefing of the next-of-kin of the pilots on the contents of the Board of Inquiry into the USAF F-15 accident in Scotland on 26 March 2001 commenced; and upon what date it was completed. [62828]

Mr. Touhig: At the express request of the next of kin, no briefing was given but copies of the complete Board of Inquiry were passed to them through their solicitor in December 2005.

Army

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many infantry *(a)* reserve forces, *(b)* tanks, *(c)* armoured vehicles and *(d)* helicopters are (i) available to and (ii) deployable by the Army; and what the equivalent numbers were in 2000. [42630]

Mr. Ingram: The following tables set out both personnel and equipment available to the Army as at January 2006 and shows the figures for 2000. In principle the equipment and personnel could be deployed in the appropriate circumstances.

Equipment	*2000*	*2006*
Combat Vehicle Reconnaissance Tracked (CVR) (T) All variants	1,557	1,226
Fighting Vehicle 430 (FV430) Series	1,721	1,492
Warrior Infantry Fighting Vehicle (All variants)	794	794
Challenger 2 Main Battle Tank (C2 MET)	309	385
SAXON	622	622
Lynx	128	104
Attack Helicopter (Apache)	0	67
A109	4	4
Gazelle	136	72

Personnel	*2000*	*2006*
Regular Army Total Trained Infantry Strengths	25,140	24,350
Territorial Army (TA) Strengths	45,590	37,500
of which:		
are OTC	5,090	5,690
of which:		
are Mobilised TA personnel	690	1,080

Notes:

1. Regular Army Trained Infantry Strengths include all trained officers and soldiers who are Infantry capbadged and exclude all personnel who are posted to the Infantry.
2. TA Strengths exclude NRPS and FTRS.

a. UKTAP (UK Trained Adult Personnel)—UKTAP includes those on Long Service List (LSL) engagement. UKTAP posts can be filled by Full Time Reserve Service, but the strength figures do not include FTRS. However, FTRS figures can be provided on request.

b. MTM—Manning and Training Margin. The MTM provides liability cover to prevent gaps being left in units when personnel become unavailable for certain manning and training reasons (DCI(A) 54/03).

3. Equipment includes only that equipment operated by Army personnel.

Army Training

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what army regulations determined the obligation of the army to complete basic training for servicemen referred to in his Department's answer of 7 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 215W. [61881]

Mr. Touhig *[holding answer 28 March 2006]:* The requirement for National Servicemen to complete basic training was set out in the War Office booklet Regulations for National Service Men in the Army.

Capita Group

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much business his Department has placed with *(a)* Capita Group plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries in each of the last five years; what the total value is of outstanding contracts placed with Capita Group plc and its subsidiaries by his Department; for which current tenders issued by his Department (i) Capita Group plc and (ii) its subsidiaries have been invited to bid; and whether (A) Capita Group plc and (B) its

subsidiaries have seconded staff (1) temporarily and (2) on a longer-term basis to (X) his Department and (Y) its agencies. [61087]

Mr. Ingram: The following table provides the information requested on the value of business and outstanding contracts that the Ministry of Defence has with Capita Group plc and its subsidiaries for the last five financial years. Contract information has been taken from the centrally held Defence Bills Agency database and tender information from the MOD Defence Contract Bulletin (DCB) and The *Official Journal* of the European Union (OJEU). This centrally held data (which captures information on proposed contracts over approximately £100,000 in value) records no current invitations to tender with Capita Group plc or its subsidiaries.

On the question of secondments from Capita to the MOD, the MOD Interchange Programme sets out the broad policy direction for industry secondees but does not hold detailed personal information about secondees working in the MOD. Accordingly, while we can provide information concerning the reported total number of civilian staff seconded to MOD over the last three years, we are unable to identify whether the secondments are from Capita Group plc or its subsidiaries. This level of information could be obtained only at disproportionate cost from local budget holders across the MOD.

(a) Financial year/ (b) Contract awarded to	*(c) Contract value (£)*	*(d) Outstanding contract value (£)*
2005–06		
The Capita Group Plc	18,649	18,649
Capita Symonds Ltd.	460,000	460,000
Capita Symonds Business Services Ltd.	10,350	10,350
2004–05		
Capita Symonds Ltd.	2,000,000	0
Capita Resourcing Ltd.	700,000	700,000
Capita Resourcing Ltd.	12,306	0
Capita Symonds Ltd.	925,196	925,196
Capita Business Services Ltd.	120,000	120,000
2003–04		
Capita Business Services Ltd.	65,800	0
Capita Business Services Ltd.	70,011	0
Symonds Group Ltd.	42,354	0
2002–03		
Capita Business Services Ltd.	36,220	0
Capita Health Solutions Ltd.	7,500,000	7,500,000
Capita Business Services Ltd.	47,991	0
Symonds Group Ltd.	30,591	0
Symonds Group Ltd.	82,344	0
2001–02		
Capita RAS	34,891	0
Symonds Group Ltd.	159,900	0
Total	12,316,603	9,734,195

Note:
Column *(d)* does not give the value of outstanding payments due to the company; it gives, as requested, the value of contracts not yet complete. So, for example, the contract value of £7.5 million in 2002–03 has to date had payments of £3.6 million made against it.

James Brokenshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what the value of contracts held by his Department with *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries was in the last three financial years; [61441]

(2) how many tenders *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries has submitted to his Department in each of the last three years; and how many tenders were successful; [61442]

(3) how many contracts his Department holds with *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries which have a potential duration of five years or more. [61443]

Mr. Ingram: The following tables provide the information requested on value and duration of contracts held by Ministry of Defence with the Capita Group Plc and its subsidiaries for the last three financial years, along with information about the numbers of tenders invited and the number of tenders won. There are no current contracts that have a potential duration of five years or more.

Contract information has been taken from the centrally held Defence Bills Agency database and tender information from the MOD Defence Contract Bulletin (DCB) and The Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU).

Where advertising in the DCB and the OJEU is not a requirement we have no central record of tenders invited and it would amount to disproportionate cost to collate such information.

Financial year	*Contract awarded to*	*Contract value (£)*	*Contract end date*
2005–06	The Capita Group Plc	18,649	December 2010
	Capita Symonds Ltd	460,000	May 2008
	Capita Symonds Business Services Ltd	10,350	March 2007
2004–05	Capita Symonds Ltd	2,000,000	Nov 2004
	Capita Resourcing Ltd	700,000	April 2009
	Capita Resourcing Ltd	12,306	April 2005
	Capita Symonds Ltd	925,196	October 2007
	Capita Business Services Ltd	120,000	March 2006
2003–04	Capita Business Service Ltd	65,800	February 2006
	Capita Business Service Ltd	70,011	February 2006
	Symonds Group Ltd	42,354	February 2006
Total	—	4,424,666	—

Financial Year	*Tenders invited*[1]	*Contracts awarded*
2005–06	4	3
2004–05	8	5
2003–04	6	3
Total	18	11

[1] *Source:*
DCB and OJEU[1]

Colombia

John Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what evaluations of UK military aid and training to Colombia have been undertaken; and what criteria have been applied in them. [62701]

Mr. Ingram: The United Kingdom's limited military training to Columbia is evaluated in a number of ways, including: on the ground monitoring for the duration of training; post-training assessment; progress analysis for long-term projects; academic evaluation of participants on UK courses; and follow-up contact with UK trained individuals. The criteria applicable to the evaluation will differ according to the type of training under consideration. We keep the level and nature of our assistance under regular review.

Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. [62871]

John Reid: The United Kingdom has ratified the first four Protocols of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and signed Protocol V in November 2003. We are committed to the ratification of Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War and aim to do so at the earliest opportunity.

Defence Munitions Centre (Crombie)

Willie Rennie: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his Written Statement of 28 February 2006, Official Report, columns 9–10WS, on Defence Munitions Centre Crombie, what assessment he has made of the impact of downgrading Defence Munitions Centre Crombie on the potential for future defence contracts in Rosyth. [62485]

Mr. Ingram: The study into the Future Role of Crombie established that the structural and business changes at Defence Munitions Centre Crombie will not impact on Rosyth's ability to compete for Defence contracts.

Willie Rennie: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his Written Statement of 28 February 2006, *Official Report*, columns 9–10WS, on Defence Munitions Centre Crombie, what discussions his Department has had with *(a)* local councils, *(b)* the Scottish Executive and *(c)* Bear Scotland on the road freight implications of downgrading the Defence Munitions Centre Crombie. [62486]

Mr. Ingram: No discussions have taken place with local councils, the Scottish Executive or Bear Scotland. Following the changes at Crombie, Defence Storage and Distribution Agency Sites in Cumbria and Dunbartonshire will take responsibility for the transport of munitions to training centres across Scotland. The study into the future role of Crombie concluded that the increase in the volume of traffic on any one route was insufficient to give concern.

Willie Rennie: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his Written Statement of 28 February 2006, *Official Report*, columns 9–10WS, on Defence Munitions Centre Crombie, what assessment his Department has made of the likely change in his Department's transport costs after the proposed downgrading of the Defence Munitions Centre Crombie in Dunfermline West. [62487]

Mr. Ingram: An assessment of the impact on the transportation of munitions was carried out as part of the study into the future role of Crombie. This concluded that there would be a net increase in transport costs of £24,700 per year. Overall, the restructuring of the site will, however, result in savings of approximately £18 million over the next ten years.

Departmental Finance

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his Department's target is for paying invoices to contractors; and what percentage of bills were paid on time in the last period for which figures are available. [60578]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the Written Ministerial Statement made by my it hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Alan Johnson) on 8 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 14WS.

Departmental Staff

Jim Sheridan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* part-time and *(b)* full-time staff are employed by his Department in Scotland. [62452]

Mr. Touhig: The number of civilian part-time and full-time staff employed by the Ministry of Defence in Scotland as at 1 January 2006 is:

	Headcount
Full time	6,660
Part time	440
Total	7,100

1. Civilian totals include Non Industrial, Industrial, and Trading Fund personnel, but excludes Royal Fleet Auxiliary Personnel.
2. Civilian totals are rounded to the nearest 10.

Service data are published quarterly in Tri-Service Publication 10; the most recent publication shows the numbers of Service personnel at 1 January 2006. Copies of TSP 10 are available in the Library of the House and also on www.dasa.mod.uk.

Far East Prisoners of War

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many claims for the far east prisoner of war ex-gratia payment have been rejected on the grounds that the claimant was not interned in a qualifying camp. [62538]

Mr. Touhig *[holding answer 30 March 2006]:* 62 claims for payment under the Civilian Internee part of the scheme have been rejected on the basis that the claimant had not provided evidence to confirm internment. This includes both those who could not provide the evidence required to demonstrate that they had been among those held in an internment camp, and those who claimed to be held in locations that did not qualify as internment.

Hercules Aircraft

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1)what plans he has to fit the new K model Hercules aircraft with *(a)* the latest generation defensive aids suite and *(b)* foam in the wing tanks; and if he will make a statement; [57110]

(2) which J model Hercules aircraft have been fitted with *(a)* the latest generation defensive aids suite and *(b)* foam in the wing tanks; and what plans he has to equip the remaining aircraft. [57111]

Mr. Ingram: Both C-130K and C-130J aircraft are fitted with varying combinations of the following defensive aids:

Countermeasures Dispensing System

Directional Infra Red Counter Measures

Flight Deck Armour

Lamp Infra Red Counter Measure

Missile Approach Warning Receiver

Radar Warning Receiver

We have decided, subject to final contract negotiations, to fit some of our C-130s with Explosion Suppressant Foam, and expect the first aircraft fitted to be ready for operational tasking within the next few months.

I am withholding information on the specific defensive aids and survivability measures employed on each C-130K and C-130J airframe because it would risk prejudicing the security of our armed forces.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent research he has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the effectiveness of (i) the latest generation defensive aids suite and (ii) foam in the wing tanks of Hercules aircraft; and what conclusions he has drawn. [57154]

Mr. Ingram: The Air Warfare Centre continually assesses the effectiveness of current defensive aid suites against current and emerging threats. Specific research looking at the threats to our aircraft, options for protection and air platform survivability measures, is also under way and will, among other issues, review the effectiveness of foam in aircraft fuel tanks. The details of these programmes cannot be released as this would be likely to prejudice the capability, effectiveness and security of our armed forces.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when each of the Mk 3 Hercules was fitted with associated defensive aids systems. [57158]

Mr. Ingram: All Hercules C-130K Mk 3 aircraft are equipped with infra-red defensive counter-measures and have been since the early 1990s. In 2003 a number of Hercules C-130K Mk 3 aircraft were fitted with a range of additional defensive aid systems and flight deck armour. The actual number of aircraft so equipped is being withheld as information on the precise combination of defensive aids employed on individual airframes could prejudice the security of the UK armed forces.

HMS Kent

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the co-ordinates were of the location of HMS Kent on 26 January; whether there were any other vessels operating in this area at the same time; and whether anti-submarine sonar was being used. [62704]

Mr. Ingram: The co-ordinates of HMS Kent on 26 January 2006 were:

At 0400 hours (Local)—located 35 degrees, 49.7 minutes North by 4 degrees, 32.7 minutes West;

At 0800 hours (Local)—located 35 degrees, 49.0 minutes North by 4 degrees, 37.0 minutes West; and

At 1700 hours (Local)—located alongside at Gibraltar.

There were two other Royal Navy vessels in this area at the same time. HMS Scott, a survey ship was alongside in Gibraltar and HMS Roebuck, another survey ship, arrived in Gibraltar. No anti-submarine sonar was being used by any of the vessels.

Human Rights Act

Mr. Moore: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the Human Rights Act 1988 applies at UK bases used by United States forces, including bases in UK Overseas Territories. [62243]

Mr. Ingram: The Human Rights Act 1998 does apply at bases made available to the United States Visiting Force (USVF) in the UK. However, whether the Act applies in any specific case will depend on whether the acts of a public authority are being challenged. The USVF is not a public authority under the Act.

The Human Rights Act does not apply to UK overseas territories. The European Convention on Human Rights applies to UK overseas territories if Her Majesty's Government notifies the Secretary General of the European Council. Remedies for any breach of the Convention would be provided under local law or before the European Court of Human Rights.

Iraq

Mr. Moore: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many munitions containing depleted uranium were deployed by UK forces in Iraq in *(a)* 2002, *(b)* 2003 and *(c)* 2004. [56462]

Mr. Ingram: Depleted uranium is not widely used in munitions employed by United Kingdom Land Forces. Only the kinetic armour piercing ammunition used by our Challenger 2 Main Battle Tanks is DU-based. For reasons of operational security, we do not publicise the precise amounts deployed in preparation for operations, but they comprise a very small percentage of the overall ammunition deployed to Iraq. For information on the use of weapons containing depleted uranium used in Operation Telic I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 24 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1354W to the former Member for Blaenau Gwent (Llewellyn Smith).

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his reply of 13 March 2006, *Official Report* column 1947W, tabled by the hon. Member for Carmarthen East and Dinefwr, whether United States armed forces personnel have shared with him evidence of the use of Beretta semi-automatic pistols by the Iraqi insurgency. [59360]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 17 March 2006]*: British armed forces personnel have not received any evidence from US armed forces personnel of Iraqi insurgents using the Beretta semi-automatic pistol in Iraq.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether co-operation has been restored between British forces in Multi-National Sector (South-East) and council officials in Basra and Maysan provinces in Iraq. [61841]

John Reid: British officials continue to discuss re-engagement with Basrah and Maysan provincial council in an attempt to restore normal working relations as soon as possible. Co-operation between Maysan

Provincial Council and British forces was restored soon after publication of the News of the World story but has since been unofficially suspended again. In the meantime, Multi National Forces continue to co-operate at all levels with the local Iraqi authorities including the Iraqi police and army in order to continue their valuable work on security sector reform.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many security internees are being held by *(a)* Multi-National Forces and *(b)* British forces in Iraq. [61845]

John Reid: As of the 27 March 2006 there were 14,580 security internees in Iraq in Multi-National Force custody and 51 security internees in UK custody.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate he has made of the number of al-Qaeda operatives in Iraq. [61848]

John Reid: It is not possible to estimate with any accuracy the number of al-Qaeda operatives in Iraq.

Iraqi Combat Battalions

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence by what date he expects all Iraqi combat battalions to be capable of carrying out independent operations. [62224]

Mr. Ingram: The Iraqi security forces are becoming increasingly capable. There are currently 112 combat battalions in the Iraqi Army and 60 of these are capable of taking the lead in counterinsurgency operations, with coalition forces only providing support as necessary. By the end of 2006, we expect most of the 10 divisions of the Iraqi Army to be taking the lead in areas of their responsibility, albeit with coalition support such as planning and logistics. Work to develop these capabilities will continue, so that coalition support will diminish over time, and Iraqi forces become capable of operating fully independently.

MAN ERF

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assurances were given to the MAN ERF workforce at Middlewich in relation to the operation of his Department's contract with MAN and MAN ERF UK. [61589]

Mr. Ingram: *[holding answer 27 March 2006]:* As a result of the Ministry of Defence placing a contract with MAN ERF UK Ltd, the company estimated that approximately 400 jobs would be created or sustained in the United Kingdom. The specific geographical location of these posts is however a matter for the company.

Missile Defence

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the last occasion was on which ministers in his Department discussed missile defence with counterparts in other countries; what aspects were discussed; and if he will make a statement. [62484]

John Reid: Defence Ministers have had no recent bilateral discussions on missile defence. Government Ministers attended the NATO Heads of State and Government Summit in June 2004 which directed that work on theatre ballistic missile defence should be taken forward by NATO. Subsequent meetings of NATO Defence Ministers have noted progress reports on theatre and territorial missile defence without substantive discussion.

Nuclear Deterrent

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what publication he plans to produce to inform the national debate he initiated in 2005 on the potential replacement of the UK's nuclear deterrent. [62414]

John Reid: The Ministry of Defence provided an initial memorandum to the House of Commons Defence Committee, which was published on 20 January 2006. While work to prepare for decisions on the future of the United Kingdom's nuclear deterrent has now started, it is still at an early stage and Ministers have not yet begun to consider the position in any detail. It is therefore premature to speculate on the nature of any future publications in this area.

Pakistan

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on co-operation with Pakistan on defence issues. [62403]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 30 March 2006]:* Pakistan is critical to achieving many of HMG's international objectives, including counter-terrorism, counter-narcotics, counter-proliferation, regional stability, managed migration, human rights and engagement with the Islamic world. Allied to this is the United Kingdom's commitment to the international security assistance force in Afghanistan, which is dependent on Pakistani support for the provision of a logistical line of communication from Karachi, as well as permission for RAF overflights.

Traditionally, the UK has enjoyed a warm defence relationship with Pakistan and this has deepened in recent years. In 2005–06 we provided in the region of £750,000 of defence assistance by way of training and liaison opportunities as part of the Defence Relations Activity Programme. Much of this activity, which includes meetings in Pakistan between senior Ministry of Defence and Pakistani officials, is facilitated by the defence adviser in our high commission in Islamabad.

Finally, the Ministry of Defence provided substantial assistance to the Government of Pakistan following the disastrous earthquake in Northern Pakistan and Pakistan-administered Kashmir in October 2005. Included in a package of assistance was three Chinook heavy lift helicopters deployed for one month to deliver much needed humanitarian aid to remote areas, and a Royal Marines commando engineer squadron deployed from November 2005 to February 2006 to build shelters for those whose homes had been destroyed. Both missions received much praise and recognition from the Pakistani Government and those affected by the earthquake.

Pensions

Mr. Leech: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence why his Department discounts flying pay for flight lieutenants as pensionable pay in the final reckoning of service pension paid to qualified pilots. [62570]

Mr. Touhig: Pension benefits paid under the Armed Forces Pension Schemes, like other public sector pension schemes, are calculated on basic pay only. Any additions, such as specialist pay or allowances are not included because these are earned intermittently, rather than all the way through an individual's career.

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what criteria were used in deciding not to make a dedicated pension scheme available to members of the reserve forces. [61540]

(2) if he will consider allowing members of the reserve forces to have the option of contributing their annual bounty payment into a reserve forces pension scheme. [61539]

Mr. Touhig: Members of the reserve forces who serve on a full time reserve service commitment or an additional duties commitment are pensioned in accordance with administrative arrangements made under the Armed Forces Pension Scheme 75 or the Reserve Forces Pension Scheme. Aside from mobilised service, volunteer reserve service does not attract entitlement to an armed forces pension because the terms and conditions of service are entirely different from those of the regulars. It attracts payment of an annual bounty in recognition of the different nature of the commitment. Volunteer reserves have an option to make pension savings through the Armed Forces Stakeholder pension scheme.

Royal Ordnance Establishments (Chemical Licences)

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the existing chemical licences at *(a)* Royal Ordnance Chorley and *(b)* Royal Ordnance Bridgewater will expire. [61599]

John Reid: BAE Systems Land Systems has had frequent dialogue with the Environment Agency regarding its chemical licenses. There is an agreed process to revoke the chemical licenses for sites and this will be undertaken in line with the company's decommissioning programmes for the Chorley and Bridgwater sites.

Sonar (Marine Mammals)

Mr. Goodwill: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the effect of the use of low frequency active sonar by naval and survey ships on marine mammals. [63049]

Mr. Ingram: The low frequency active sonar operated by the Royal Navy is known as Sonar 2087. The Ministry of Defence has conducted environmental impact assessments of marine habitats in which Sonar 2087 might operate. These assessments indicated that the use of Sonar 2087, as with underwater sound generally, has the potential to impact on the marine environment. A range of rigorous mitigation measures have been developed to minimise this and they are integral to Royal Navy operating procedures. There have been no recorded incidents of harm being caused to marine life by Sonar 2087. We continue to support a sustained programme of research into the effects of active sonar.

Copies of the environmental analysis reports relating to the Sonar 2087 sea trials conducted in 2002 and 2004 have been released to interested parties and placed in the Library of the House.

Territorial Army

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) if he will break down by rank the 900 personnel reduction in Territorial Army infantry; [62639]

(2) what the new establishment figure is for the Territorial Royal Army Medical Services. [62637]

Mr. Touhig *[holding answers 30 March 2006]:* The new rank structure of the TA infantry has yet to be agreed. I will write to the hon. Member when this information is available.

The new establishment figure for the Territorial Army Medical Services will be 5,268. This excludes the Officer Training Corps and Full Time Regular Service, Non Regular Permanent Staff and Regular Army personnel.

Tours of Duty

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many tours each regiment of the Royal Armoured Corps has undertaken in the last five years; what the *(a)* location and *(b)* length was of each; and what the length of time was between each deployment. [57476]

Mr. Ingram: The following table contains information on the tour intervals between unaccompanied regimental or formed sub-unit level operational deployments by the Royal Armoured Corps (including the Household Cavalry Regiment) in the past five years.

The deployments and the length of time (intervals between each deployment for each royal armoured corps regiment in the past five years—1 March to 28 February 20 06

Regiment	*Deployment*	*Interval*	*Deployment*	*Interval*	*Deployment*	*Interval*	*Deployment*	*Interval*
The Household Cavalry Regiment	Bosnia (sub-unit) October 2001 to September 2002	3 months	Iraq (sub-unit) February to July 2003	2.5 months	Bosnia (sub-unit) October 2003 to March 2004	0.5 month	Iraq (Regt minus) April to October 2004	—
1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards	Bosnia (sub-unit) October 2000 to September 2001	16 months	Iraq February to June 2003	1 6 months	Iraq November 2004 to April 2005	—	—	—

The deployments and the length of time (intervals between each deployment for each royal armoured corps regiment in the past five years—1 March to 28 February 2006

Regiment	*Deployment*	*Interval*	*Deployment*	*Interval*	*Deployment*	*Interval*	*Deployment*	*Interval*
The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards (Carabiniers and Greys)	Iraq February to June 2003	26 months	Iraq November 2005 to date	—	—	—	—	—
The Royal Dragoon Guards	Iraq November 2004 to April 2005	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
The Queen's Royal Hussars (The Queen's Own and Royal Irish)	Kosovo (Regiment minus) November 2001 to April 2002	n/a	Kosovo (sub-unit) May to October 2002	12 months	Iraq November 2003—April 2004	—	—	—
9th/12th Royal Lancers (The Prince of Wales' s)	Kosovo (sub-unit) March to June 2001	21 months	Bosnia (sub-unit) April to October 2003	1 months	Iraq (Regt minus) November 2003 to April 2004	1 8 months	Iraq November 2005 to date	
The King's Royal Hussars	Northern Ireland December 2002 to July 2003	21 months	Iraq May to October 2005	—	—	—	—	—
The Light Dragoons	Bosnia (sub-unit) October 2002 to March 2003	4 months	Iraq August to October 2003	1 8 months	Iraq May to October 2005	—	—	—
The Queen's Royal Lancers	Bosnia (sub-unit) May to October 2001	15 months	Kosovo May to October 2002	12 months	Iraq May - October 2004	—	—	—
2nd Royal Tank Regiment	Kosovo March to June 2001	19 months	Iraq (sub unit only from June to November) February to November 2003	1 3 months	Kosovo (sub-unit) May to November 2005	—	—	—

CABINET OFFICE

Cabinet Office Strategy Board

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will list the membership of the Cabinet Office Strategy Board; and what its current work programme is. [63126]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The Cabinet Office Strategy Board was replaced by a new Cabinet Office board in November 2005. These changes were made to provide better governance and leadership in order to help create a more effective Department. The current board membership is:

Sir Gus O'Donnell (Chair)—Head of the Cabinet Office, Cabinet Secretary and Head of the Home Civil Service

Sir Richard Mottram—Security and Intelligence Co-ordinator

Howell James—Permanent Secretary, Government Communications

Ian Watmore—Permanent Secretary and Head, Prime Minister's Delivery Unit

Kim Darroch—Head, European Secretariat

William Sargent—Executive Chair, Better Regulation Executive

Anne-Marie Lawlor (to be replaced by Gill Rider on her arrival in the Department)—Corporate Development Group

Paul Britton—Head, Economic and Domestic Secretariat

Prime Minister's principal private secretary

Liz Woodeson—Director of Change and Operations

Jerry Page—Finance Director

The Chief Policy Adviser to the Prime Minister (David Bennett) and the Cabinet Office Minister's private secretary also attend. David Bennett does not attend for staffing discussions.

Karen Jordan, chair of the Department's Audit and Risk Committee is a non-executive member. The board is currently considering what further non-executive membership is needed.

The board's role is to steer and manage the business of the Department in accordance with ministerial priorities. It routinely considers HR, finance issues. Its current and future work programme includes consideration of business continuity planning, risk, leadership within the Cabinet office, the future direction of the Cabinet Office, performance management. Its responsibilities include:

To recommend a business plan and resource allocation, and strategy for achieving the Department's business objectives to Ministers;

Monitor and improve the Department's performance against these;

Ensure that risks are identified and effectively managed;

Oversee the Better Cabinet Office Programme;

Ensure that standards and values within the Cabinet Office support the aims of the Department, and good government more generally;

Safeguard and enhance the Department's standards and values.

The Board will continue to keep under review its work programme and membership to ensure that it is fully effective.

Capita Group

Chris Grayling: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how much business his Department has placed with *(a)* Capita Group plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries in each of the last five years; what the total value is of outstanding contracts placed with Capita

Group plc and its subsidiaries by his Department; for which current tenders issued by his Department (i) Capita Group plc and (ii) its subsidiaries have been invited to bid; and whether (A) Capita Group plc and (B) its subsidiaries have seconded staff (1) temporarily and (2) on a longer-term basis to (X) his Department and (Y) its agencies. [61091]

Mr. Jim Murphy: This information requested for the Cabinet Office is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Centre of Government Guide

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster whether he plans to issue an updated version of the "Guide to the Centre of Government". [63125]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The Government do not plan to issue another version of the guide. The information contained in the "Guide to the Centre of Government" has been incorporated into the central departments' public websites which can be accessed via www.pm.gov.uk. www.treasury.gov.uk and www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk. The information on the websites is regularly updated.

Hannington Radio Station

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster pursuant to the answer of 17 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 2550W, on Hannington radio station, if he will list the *(a)* public and *(b)* private sector companies and organisations engaged in broadcasting and associated activities. [63084]

Mr. Jim Murphy: Public and private sector companies and organisations engaged in broadcasting and associated activities at Hannington radio station are as follows.

BBC
National Grid Wireless
Arqiva
Hutchinson 3G
T-Mobile
O_2
Orange
Vodaphone
Airwave

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster when he will answer question 43872 tabled by the hon. Member for Portsmouth, South on 16 January on local authority pandemic plans. [62665]

Mr. Jim Murphy: I have responded to question 43872 today. I have written to the hon. Member today to apologise for the delay in responding to his question.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Bail

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what percentage of *(a)* male and *(b)* female defendants charged with offences triable either way did not receive police bail but subsequently received court bail in the latest year for which figures are available; [62535]

(2) what percentage of *(a)* male and *(b)* female defendants charged with summary only matters did not receive police bail but subsequently received court bail in the latest year for which figures are available. [62532]

Bridget Prentice: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested is currently held in over 50,000 court records and cannot be obtained without incurring disproportionate cost.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Carbon Emissions

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what percentage of UK carbon emissions were attributable to *(a)* electricity generation, *(b)* aviation and *(c)* road transport in each year since 1990. [60907]

Mr. Morley: I have been asked to reply.

UK Carbon dioxide emissions attributable to electricity generation, aviation and road transport are shown in the table. A separate column has been provided for international aviation because, under the rules agreed for reporting to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, emissions from international aviation are recorded as memorandum items in the national greenhouse gas inventories, but are not added in to national totals.

Figures are consistent with the UK Greenhouse gas inventory 1990–2004, released on the Defra website in January and to be published in April.

CO_2 emissions as a percentage of UK total

Percentage

	Energy industries	*Domestic aviation*	*International aviation*	*Road transport*
1990	34	0.2	2.6	19
1991	34	0.2	2.6	18
1992	33	0.2	2.9	19
1993	30	0.2	3.2	20
1994	30	0.2	3.4	20
1995	30	0.2	3.7	20
1996	29	0.3	3.7	20
1997	27	0.3	4.1	21
1998	28	0.3	4.6	21
1999	27	0.3	5.1	22
2000	28	0.4	5.5	21
2001	30	0.4	5.3	21
2002	30	0.4	5.3	22
2003	31	0.4	5.3	21
2004	31	0.4	5.9	21

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Agricultural Workers

Mr. Meale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether foreign

workers employed in the agricultural sector are entitled to NHS treatment; and to what statutory employment rights such workers are entitled. [62960]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I have been asked to reply.

Entitlement to free National Health Service hospital treatment is based on whether someone is ordinarily resident in the United Kingdom. Anyone who is not ordinarily resident is subject to the National Health Service (Charges to Overseas Visitors) Regulations, 1989, as amended and will be charged for any treatment they receive unless considered exempt by the hospital providing the treatment under one of several exemption categories in the regulations.

One exemption category is for anyone who, at the time of treatment, is working lawfully in the UK for an employer who is based in the UK or is registered in the UK as a branch of an overseas employer, or anyone who is self employed.

Legal migrant workers in the UK have the same employment rights and recourses as their indigenous equivalents.

Mr. Meale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her most recent estimate is of the number of people in illegal employment in the agricultural industries. [62962]

Mr. McNulty: I have been asked to reply.

No estimate has been produced by Home Office. No government has ever been able to produce an accurate figure for the number of people who are working in the country illegally. By its very nature it is impossible to quantify accurately, and that remains the case.

Bees

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent progress has been made in seeking to exempt bee medicines from the prescription only medicine requirement of Council Directive 2001/82/EC. [62743]

Mr. Bradshaw: Officials at the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) are well aware of the concerns expressed by beekeepers and horticulturists. The VMD recently invited the Chairman of the British Beekeepers Association to speak to a meeting of regulatory scientists and Commission officials organised as part of the UK Presidency to ensure they were aware of the UK's concerns.

The European Commission consulted on a proposed Commission Decision on the prescription only medicine (POM) exemption criteria from 9 February until 17 March 2006. The draft is available on the Commission website at http://pharmacos.eudra.org/F2/pharmacos/new.htm. The proposal exempts products that have a recognised level of safety including those containing substances that have been entered into Annex II of Council Regulation EEC/2377/90. Although the proposal does not mention any species specifically, most medicines authorised to treat bees in the UK would be included under them and therefore be exempt from the POM requirements. The proposal and the comments received were discussed during a meeting of the Commission's Veterinary Pharmaceutical Committee on 27 March. However, the Commission has not given any indication of how they will revise their proposal.

UK officials at the meeting pressed the Commission to bring forward the Decision in good time before the 31 December deadline.

Officials at the VMD have also continued discussions with the beekeepers on alternative arrangements should the U K not succeed in being able to exempt all bee medicines under the criteria. New distribution categories for the UK have been introduced that include tiered categories of prescription only medicines. The new distribution categories are contained in the Veterinary Medicines Regulations 2005. The Regulations comply with the Directive's provisions while allowing veterinary medicines for food-producing animals that were previously available in the UK without prescription to be supplied by pharmacists or suitably qualified persons working in pet shops, agricultural merchants or saddlers without the need to involve a veterinary surgeon.

Bovine TB

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps the Government are taking to prevent the spread of bovine tuberculosis among cattle; and if she will make a statement. [63058]

Mr. Bradshaw: Under EU legislation, routine TB testing is carried out annually or biennially in parishes with a historically higher number of bovine TB incidents in cattle. This is reduced to testing every four years in parishes with historically low or no TB incidents. TB reactors are removed for slaughter and the owner is compensated using a new table-based valuation system, which was introduced on 1 February. The rest of the herd are placed under movement restrictions.

In addition, we introduced compulsory pre-movement testing of cattle in England on 27 March, which will help to reduce the risk of spreading TB through cattle movements. The legislation applies to cattle over 15 months of age moving from one and two-year tested herds. It will be extended to movements of cattle over 42-days-old on 1 March 2007.

Improved diagnosis of TB in cattle is a major objective of Defra's wide-ranging research programme. The laboratory-based gamma-interferon test is not sufficiently specific to replace the TB test but use of the two tests in parallel has the potential to significantly increase the detection of infected cattle in herds where TB has been confirmed. Preparations are being made for wider use of the gamma interferon test in prescribed circumstances.

In this country, the main wildlife reservoir of bovine TB is in badgers. A public consultation on both the principle and method of a badger culling policy in areas of high TB incidence in cattle was launched on 15 December 2005. This has now closed and we received more than 35,000 responses. These responses will be analysed carefully over the coming weeks to inform decisions alongside other available evidence.

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what research the Government have conducted into links between badgers and the spread of tuberculosis to cattle; and if she will make a statement. [63064]

Mr. Bradshaw: DEFRA has commissioned several research projects to explore these links. Details are available on the DEFRA website at:

http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/tb/research/projects.htm

The evidence for a link between bovine TB in badgers and bovine TB in cattle was reviewed in 1997 by the Independent Scientific Review Group, led by Professor John Krebs. The Group concluded that

"the sum of evidence strongly supports the view that, in Britain, badgers were a significant source of infection in cattle".

The Executive Summary of the Group's findings and recommendations is available on the DEFRA website at:

http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/tb/publications/krebs.htm

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will commission research into the effect of boosting the selenium and iodine intake of badgers on their resistance to tuberculosis. [62421]

Mr. Bradshaw: There is no persuasive scientific evidence which either confirms or refutes the theory that some animals with mineral deficient diets might have increased susceptibility to tuberculosis, particularly those in areas where soils are deficient in trace elements such as selenium. Defra has not dismissed the possibility of a nutritional link but feels that, given the resources available for research, the link is not of sufficient priority for research funding.

Cement Kilns

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions *(a)* she and *(b)* her Department has held with the (i) energy and (ii) cement industries on the use of waste as a power source for cement kilns; and if she will make a statement. [59767]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 20 March 2006]:* The Government recognises the value of Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF) as a positive energy source. Therefore the Governments Waste Implementation Programme ("WIP") commissioned RPS consultants in September 2005 to approach industrial intensive energy users to establish interest in using solid recovered fuel ("SRF") as an alternative energy source to compete with current fuels. A workshop was held in London on 17 January 2006 attended by ten industrial companies and a potential SRF supplier at which the benefits and relative economics of this approach were presented and discussed.

Phase 2 work is about to be commissioned involving the preparation of a more detailed "generic" proposal describing possible development and financing structures along with refined economics.

With regard to *(b)* (ii), WIP is aware of discussions between developers of mechanical and biological treatment ("MBT") plant and cement companies with the aim of securing outlets for SRF. This outlet route is not well developed and contracts are usually of short duration for limited tonnages. For this reason, WIP is endeavouring to stimulate alternative RDF outlets with intensive energy users or in purpose built energy recovery facilities.

Chewing Gum

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to extend the chewing gum pilot schemes to the rest of England and Wales; and what estimate she has made of the costs of so doing. [63097]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Chewing Gum Action group announced on 2 March 2006 that it would be working with 15 local authorities across England to launch a series of chewing gum litter campaigns between May and September this year which would build on the success of the pilot campaigns in 2005. The action group is funding the poster advertising for these campaigns using the 'Thanks for binning your gum' message that was piloted in Preston, Manchester and Maidstone. The action group has invested £600,000 in the 2006 campaigns.

Any decision on the scope, focus and funding of future campaigns will be made jointly by the Chewing Gum Action Group later this year, and will be informed by analysis of the 15 campaigns.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what private sector funding her Department has received towards the cleaning up of chewing gum in public streets and buildings. [63099]

Mr. Bradshaw: Local authorities receive Government funding for street cleansing services through the yearly settlement in the Environment, Planning and Cultural Services (EPCS) block.

The chewing gum industry has contributed funding for influencing behavioural change through the Government's Chewing Gum Action Group since its inception in 2003.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she has received from Wrigley UK Ltd. regarding Government-sponsored chewing gum cleaning campaigns. [63100]

Mr. Bradshaw: Wrigley are a member of the Chewing Gum Action Group, which Defra chair and have been heavily involved in the formulation and funding of the Group's work since its inception in 2003.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of how much local government spent on cleaning up chewing gum *(a)* in 2005 and *(b)* in the last 10 years. [63101]

Mr. Bradshaw: These figures are not available. However, a recent survey by ENCAMS—the environmental charity which runs the Keep Britain Tidy Campaign—received 66 responses from local authorities on gum removal. The spending by these

authorities on removing gum ranged from £0 to £200,000 per annum, with an average per authority of £12,792.

Circus Animals

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she expects to start the consultation into prohibiting the use of certain animal species in travelling circuses; whether the consultation will be open for public comment; if she will list the organisations she plans to consult; and which species she plans to include in proposals for the consultation. [62673]

Mr. Bradshaw: Discussions with industry, welfare organisations and other Government departments on the content of draft regulations will be given high priority once the Animal Welfare Bill becomes law. All non-domesticated species will be considered.

Consideration is still being given to the organisations which will be invited to participate in initial discussions. Proposals will be subject to public consultation before being laid before Parliament.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she will reply to the letter to her dated 23 January from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, with regard to Mr. G. Sherriff. [55761]

Mr. Bradshaw: I apologise for the delay. A reply will be sent to my right hon. Friend within the next 10 working days.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she will reply to the letter dated 31 January from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, with regard to Mr. S. Serayet. [58112]

Mr. Bradshaw: I apologise to my right hon. Friend for the delay in replying. A reply will be sent within the next 10 working days.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she will reply to the letter dated 31 January from the hon. Member for Banff and Buchan regarding a constituent Mr. K. C. Sandison of Aberchirder. [60495]

Mr. Bradshaw: I apologise for the delay. A reply was sent on 22 March 2006.

Demography

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what estimate she has made of the rat population in *(a)* Southend, *(b)* Essex and *(c)* England in each of the last 15 years for which information is available; [62887]

(2) what steps her Department *(a)* has taken and *(b)* plans to take to reduce the rodent population in (i) Southend, (ii) Essex, (iii) Greater London and (iv) England. [62888]

Mr. Bradshaw: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given on 17 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 2508W.

The problem of rat infestation and general pest control is left to the discretion of individual borough councils.

Advisory leaflets are available on the Defra website, which deal with a range of wildlife problems and ways to resolve them, including the control of rats. These can be found at:

http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/vertebrates/leaflets.htm.

The Environmental Health Group at Southend-on-Sea borough council provides a free service for the treatment of rats. An appointment for a Pest Control Officer to visit can be made by ringing (01702) 215811.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many and what proportion of *(a)* staff and *(b)* new staff employed in (i) her Department and (ii) each of the agencies for which she has responsibility were registered as disabled in each of the last three years for which data are available. [61380]

Jim Knight: The Cabinet Office collects and publishes annually statistical information on the civil service by Department. These include data on the number of staff in Departments who have declared a disability.

Declaration of a disability is voluntary.

The latest available information at April 2004 is available in the Library and on the civil service website and the following addresses:

http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management/statistics/publications/xls/disability_apr04_4nov04.xls

for data relating to 1 April 2004, and

http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management/statistics/archive/index.asp

for previous reporting periods.

Domestic Rubbish

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her Department's policy is on citizens being fined for placing small quantities of domestic rubbish in municipal rubbish bins; and what the Government's definition is of domestic rubbish. [60110]

Mr. Bradshaw: There is a range of powers available to local authorities to ensure waste is dealt with legitimately and not illegally dumped. Government are encouraging authorities to make best use of the 'toolkit' of powers available to them but local authority enforcement policies will also be based on local priorities.

Sections 46 and 47 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 enable local authorities to serve notices on occupiers of domestic premises and business prescribing the kind and number of waste receptacles where the waste needs to be placed. The notice can specify, for example, the size of the receptacles or where the receptacles must be placed to facilitate waste collection. The notice could also be used to prescribe that household waste be placed in receptacles provided by the council.

People who fail to comply with a notice issued under sections 46 and 47 can be prosecuted through the courts, facing a maximum fine of £1,000. From 6 April 2006 local authorities will be able to issue £100 fixed penalty notices to householders and businesses that do not comply with such a notice.

There is no legal definition of 'domestic rubbish' but section 75 of the 1990 Act sets out the meaning of controlled waste and defines "household waste" as waste from—a domestic property; a caravan, a residential home; premises forming part of a university or school; and premises forming part of a hospital or nursing home etc.

Electric Shock Collars

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what research her Department has undertaken into the use of electric shock collars on animals in the UK; and if she will make a statement. [62672]

Mr. Bradshaw: While we have not funded any research in this area to date, it remains a priority for the future.

In August 2005 we published an open call for research proposals to examine the effects of electronic and non-electronic training aids on the welfare of dogs, including the use of static pulse training systems and citronella sprays. We received one proposal, but this was rejected after formal peer review.

The Department is currently re-examining the position, and it is possible that new evidence in this area may soon be available to inform our thinking. We will then decide whether to re-advertise our research call through a different process, or if the specification should be redesigned. Any research we do commission will be detailed on the Defra website.

Energy Efficiency

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with *(a)* other Government departments and *(b)* other public authorities on reducing the heating of publicly-owned buildings to save energy. [59659]

Mr. Morley: The Cabinet Sub-Committee of Ministers responsible for sustainable development on the Government Estate has had recent discussions on actions that can be taken, within their own Departments and wider estates, on reducing demand and improving energy efficiency including the management of building controls for heating and ventilation.

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to increase energy efficiency within her Department; and if she will make a statement. [60340]

Mr. Morley: Energy consumption at all Defra and Executive agency sites is continually monitored against benchmarks to drive down consumption and facilitate appropriate reaction to increases. Defra has signed an agreement with the Carbon Trust to run a Carbon Management Programme, which will identify the scope for significant savings in energy consumption and related carbon emissions. Funding has been made available for capital investments that will improve energy efficiency.

An energy efficiency campaign—the Big Switch—is running throughout the department and its Executive Agencies during January, February and March, to focus attention on energy saving actions by building managers and by staff. This work on awareness raising will be reinforced as part of the Carbon Management Programme.

Within Defra we are also increasingly managing these issues a local level through site specific Environmental Management Systems, accredited to ISO 14001.

The Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate is the main vehicle for systematically assessing, reporting and improving Government performance in managing its own land and buildings sustainably. It sets cross-Government targets in all key operational areas including energy. The Framework is currently under review and challenging energy targets are being developed.

Farm Subsidies

Mr. Osten: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the written statement of 16 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 104–05WS, on the single payment scheme, whether the outgoing chief executive of the Rural Payments Agency will receive a payment on leaving his post. [62548]

Jim Knight: *[holding answer 30 March 2006]:* The immediate priority for the Department was to change and strengthen the leadership team in the RPA. Therefore for the foreseeable future the outgoing chief executive of the RPA is taking a period of paid leave of absence. Discussions regarding his future are yet to take place.

Fixed Penalty Notices

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many unpaid fixed penalty notices for environmental offences there were in each Government office region in each year for which figures are available. [60113]

Mr. Bradshaw: There were no unpaid fixed penalties for noise offences in those years for which figures are available. The figures are as follows.

Litter

Region	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
East Midlands	0	0	0	0	2	4	14	363
East of England	0	7	11	25	7	85	132	365
London	75	2,168	1,324	855	4,333	6,275	772	3,587
North East	0	1	24	36	110	163	670	481
North West	0	0	4	8	19	198	324	599

Litter

Region	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
South East	0	2	3	23	61	95	143	233
South West	0	6	1	2	0	4	2	198
West Midlands	0	0	0	44	262	679	749	254
Yorkshire and the Humberside	0	5	25	5	28	203	346	654

Dog fouling

Region	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
East Midlands	0	3	5	16	13	11	19	10
East of England	0	20	15	11	9	30	18	19
London	0	2	13	11	34	7	3	31
North East	1	16	16	26	18	22	98	108
North West	0	82	85	36	99	54	337	231
South East	4	32	28	23	38	61	40	27
South West	6	44	60	58	41	65	48	17
West Midlands	2	1	2	7	9	30	25	15
Yorkshire and the Humberside	2	14	36	22	33	56	91	85

Graffiti

Region	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
East Midlands	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0
East of England	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0
London	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0
North East	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1
North West	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0
South East	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0
South West	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0
West Midlands	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	10
Yorkshire and the Humberside	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0

n/a = Not applicable.

Fly-posting

Region	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
East Midlands	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0
East of England	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	5
London	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0
North East	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2
North West	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0
South East	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0
South West	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0
West Midlands	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2
Yorkshire and the Humberside	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0

n/a = Not applicable.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many fixed penalty notices for *(a)* littering and *(b)* dog fouling were issued in each year for which figures are available. [60114]

Mr. Bradshaw: The figures are as follows:

Litter

Region	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
East Midlands	0	0	0	0	2	4	14	363
East of England	0	7	11	25	7	85	132	365
London	75	2,168	1,324	855	4,333	6,275	772	3,587
North East	0	1	24	36	110	163	670	481
North West	0	0	4	8	19	198	324	599
South East	0	2	3	23	61	95	143	233
South West	0	6	1	2	0	4	2	198
West Midlands	0	0	0	44	262	679	749	254
Yorkshire and the Humberside	0	5	25	5	28	203	346	654

Dog fouling

Region	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
East Midlands	0	3	5	16	13	11	19	10
East of England	0	20	15	11	9	30	18	19
London	0	2	13	11	34	7	3	31
North East	1	16	16	26	18	22	98	108
North West	0	82	85	36	99	54	337	231
South East	4	32	28	23	38	61	40	27
South West	6	44	60	58	41	65	48	17
West Midlands	2	1	2	7	9	30	25	15
Yorkshire and the Humberside	2	14	36	22	33	56	91	85

Fly-tipping

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many incidents of fly-tipping have *(a)* been reported and *(b)* led to a prosecution in (i) North East Lincolnshire and (ii) North Lincolnshire since April 2004. [62656]

Mr. Bradshaw: Defra has worked with the Environment Agency to establish a national database on fly-tipping (Flycapture) which has been operational since April 2004. No national data were previously available on illegal waste disposal or fly-tipping. Flycapture collects data at local authority level only.

It is important to note that the data are probably an underestimate and will increase as authorities get better at collecting and reporting the data.

North East Lincolnshire Council reported 1,653 incidents of fly-tipping between April 2004 and March 2005 (average of 138 per month) and 1,116 between April 2005 and February 2006 (average 101 per month). During the same time periods, the Environment Agency investigated three and one incidents respectively.

Prosecution data are only available from April 2005 to February 2006. During this period no prosecutions were reported by North East Lincolnshire Council or the Environment Agency.

North Lincolnshire Council reported 3558 incidents of fly-tipping between April 2004 and March 2005 (average of 297 per month) and 3,956 between April 2005 and February 2006 (average 360 per month). During the same time periods, the Environment Agency investigated five and two incidents respectively.

No prosecutions were reported between April 2005 and February 2006 by North Lincolnshire Council or the Environment Agency.

Forestry Commission

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) if she will make a statement on her plans to integrate the Forestry Commission with Natural England; [62422]

(2) what research she has commissioned into the implications of the integration of the Forestry Commission with Natural England for *(a)* Crown holding of and *(b)* delivery of grant support for private woodlands; and if she will make a statement. [62424]

Jim Knight: There are currently no plans to integrate the Forestry Commission England with Natural England, and no formal research has, therefore, been commissioned into these aspects. However, Defra is working with the Forestry Commission in England and the Natural England Partnership to identify opportunities for greater collaborative working between those two bodies by aligning their activities and services, including management of the public forest estate, in order to provide a better service for their customers and the environment.

On the delivery of grants, we are working to bring together into a single 'Environmental Land Management Fund' all the funding streams for the protection and enhancement of our countryside, woods and forests, including the Forestry Commission's grants for private woodlands and those grants that are currently delivered by the Natural England confederate partners. The fund will provide a clearer and simpler framework for applicants that will be better targeted to maximise outcomes. As part of this project, we are reviewing all current schemes, run by the two bodies, to ensure a good fit with the new funding framework.

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the future of the Forestry Commission. [62423]

Jim Knight: As set out in the Rural Strategy 2004, Defra is working to identify opportunities for greater collaborative working between the Forestry Commission in England and Natural England. The two organisations will align their activities, in order to provide more effective and efficient delivery of environmental outcomes and public benefits with improved customer service.

Free Newspapers

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what regulations govern the distribution of free newspapers on the street; and what guidance she has produced for local authorities on this issue. [62305]

Mr. Bradshaw: As of 6 April this year, the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 will enable principal-litter authorities to control the distribution of free literature on their own land or highways by inserting a new section 94B and schedule 3A to, the Environmental Protection Act 1990. The regime allows local authorities to designate, by order, areas in which the distribution of free literature, including free newspapers, is permitted only with their consent, where such distribution is causing defacement of the land. Anyone caught distributing free literature in a designated area, or commissioning or paying for it, without consent, commits an offence punishable by a

fine of up to level 4 (currently £2,500) on the standard scale or a fixed penalty notice. Detailed guidance on these controls is available on Defra's website.

Policy on parish precepts is a matter for my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister.

Institute of Grassland and Environmental Research

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what assessment she has made of the likely effects of reductions in funding on service provision at the Institute of Grassland and Environmental Research at *(a)* Aberystwyth and *(b)* North Wyke; [54609]

(2) what assessment her Department has made of the potential impact of reductions in funding to the Institute of Grassland and Environmental Research on *(a)* livestock grazing research and *(b)* rural management. [54611]

Jim Knight: The Institute of Grassland and Environmental Research (IGER) is a Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) research institute. Therefore, levels of service provision at *(a)* Aberystwyth and *(b)* North Wyke are matters for BBSRC and the institute.

However, as a customer for the services provided by IGER, Defra has an interest in the maintenance of service provision as related to our present and developing needs. The Department's needs for scientific evidence and, therefore, the expertise required within the scientific community to service these needs, are changing.

IGER is, and will continue to be, a very important research partner for Defra. This is reflected in my department's continuing significant investment; we are committed to investing over £5 million in research programmes at IGER in financial year 2006–07. No active programmes at IGER are being terminated early and we remain confident that IGER will deliver its ongoing research obligations. It is for BBSRC and the institute to decide on the numbers and make-up of staff needed to deliver IGER's mission, including meeting its contractual obligations to Defra.

Invasive Top Mouth Gudgeon

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her Department's response was to the report on the dispersal of the invasive top mouth gudgeon, Pseudorasbora parva, in the UK: a vector for an emergent infectious disease published in 2005 by the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology and the Environment Agency. [61570]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 27 March 2006]:* Defra is concerned about the potential threat that the non-native top mouth gudgeon may pose to native species. Under Section 30 of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975, persons wishing to introduce fish into inland unenclosed waters in England and Wales require the consent of the Environment Agency; such consent is never given in respect of top mouth gudgeon. In addition, persons wishing to keep these fish in enclosed waters require a licence to do so, issued under the terms of the Prohibition of Keeping or Release of Live Fish (Specified Species) Orders made under the Import of Live Fish Act 1980. The licences are issued by the Fish Health Inspectorate at Cefas, Weymouth and enforced by them and by the Environment Agency. We recognise that tighter controls are necessary but their introduction would require primary legislation on which work is currently in hand.

The Environment Agency, through its fisheries monitoring programmes, surveys some 1,400 freshwater sites annually and enlist the help of anglers to establish the presence of non-native species including the top mouth gudgeon. They also operate eradication programmes to remove non-native species where this is practical and the fish concerned pose a threat to native populations.

Defra is funding research at Cefas into the infectious disease known as the "rosette-like agent" under an emerging aquatic diseases risk and awareness project. We have commissioned a further three year research project at the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology on the prevalence and impact of the rosette-like agent.

Landfill Sites

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the minimum permitted distance is for a landfill site from residential properties in England; and what the shortest distance is that a landfill site is situated away from such properties. [62841]

Mr. Bradshaw: Where an application for a new landfill site is made after 16 July 2001, Regulation 5 and Paragraph 1(1) of Schedule 2 to the Landfill (England and Wales) Regulations 2002, place a specific responsibility on Waste Planning Authorities to consider the site location. This takes account of the distances from the boundary to residential and recreational areas, waterways, water bodies and other agricultural or urban sites.

Decisions on land-use planning matters are the responsibility of the Local Planning Authority (LPA). Where there is a proposal for development within 250 metres of a landfill site, the LPA is likely to consult the Environment Agency. In these cases, the Environment Agency's advice is that the LPA requests risk assessment and risk management proposals.

Map Modification Register

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many local authorities have a register of definitive map modification order applications as specified by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000; when each authority that does not have such a register plans to introduce one; and why each has not yet introduced one. [62615]

Jim Knight: Local highway authorities are responsible for the management of rights of way and all information relating to modification orders is held by the authorities, rather than central Government. This information could be gathered only at disproportionate cost.

However, local highway authorities had a duty to set up and keep a register under section 53B of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 by the 31 December 2005. We will carry out a review of the implementation of section 53B in due course.

Mini-Motorcycles

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will take steps to tackle noise pollution caused by mini-motorcycles. [62022]

Mr. Bradshaw: Under Part III of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, local authorities have a statutory duty to inspect their areas for existing, potential and recurring statutory nuisances from time to time; to take reasonable and practicable steps to investigate complaints of statutory nuisance; and to issue an abatement notice where it is satisfied that a statutory nuisance exists, or may occur or recur. Local authorities may also seize noise-making equipment.

Noise from mini-motorcycles on premises is capable of being a statutory nuisance. Premises can include land and beaches, and, in the case of vehicles, streets. Mini-motorcycles can also be seized as noise-making equipment.

A statutory nuisance is such that it materially affects someone's reasonable use of their home and/or is prejudicial to their health, as assessed by the local authority on a case-by-case basis. It is not a tool for addressing noise pollution in general.

Mini-motorcycles ridden illegally or in a careless or anti-social manner (that is causing or likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress) may be seized by the police under section 59 of the Police Reform Act 2002 powers. A new guidance document was published in November 2005 and sent to all Chief Police Officers.

Mobile Telephones

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on her Department's strategy for minimising the environmental impact of the disposal of unwanted mobile telephones. [62856]

Mr. Bradshaw: Mobile phones are a good example of widely used products where much has already been done—by producers and consumers—to reduce waste. However, more can and should be done to reduce the impacts of waste disposal at each stage of the product cycle. This is consistent with the direction we are proposing in our recent consultation document on a revised waste strategy for England.

Defra is working closely with the DTI on the implementation of the EU Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive, which will make producers financially responsible for the treatment and recycling of electronic equipment, including mobile phones, when it becomes waste. In particular, Defra are taking forward the development of Regulations transposing the treatment and permitting requirements of the Directive, which are intended to improve the environmental performance of operators directly involved in the treatment of WEEE.

In addition, Defra are also working with DTI on the implementation of the EU RoHS (Restriction of the use of certain Hazardous Substances in electrical and electronic equipment) Directive. From 1 July 2006, the RoHS Regulations will restrict the use of six substances in the manufacture of mobile phones and other electrical and electronic equipment, meaning that they will be easier to treat and recycle when they become waste.

I am delighted that the Science Museum has recently launched, with Defra support, an exhibition, 'Dead Ringers', which is highlighting the waste impacts of mobile phones and what can be done to reduce them.

Packaging

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which companies have been given Government grants to make their packaging more environmentally friendly; and how much each was given. [62831]

Mr. Bradshaw: While the Government have not given any grants to businesses directly, the Government funded Waste Resources Action Programme (WRAP), set up an £8 million Waste Minimisation Innovation Fund in November 2004 to support research and development projects that focus on reducing the impact of packaging on the environment, for example, by reducing the amount of packaging that goes to landfill.

To date 28 projects have been approved for funding and £4.1 million has been distributed. Funding has been awarded to companies such as Tesco, Sainsbury's, Argos, Coca-Cola, Proctor and Gamble, Marks and Spencer, Britvic and Heinz to run.

Trials to research new and existing opportunities for biodegradable packaging and investigate the use of re-usable packaging are currently underway. Other trials aim to minimise the amount of plastic used in containers, glass in bottles and metals in cans and to look at ways of incorporating recycled plastic into drinks containers. It has been estimated that over 500,000 tonnes of packaging could be prevented each year if the research proves successful and the initiatives are taken up across the retail sector.

The projects are set-up in such a way to ensure that WRAP maintains all intellectual property rights on the findings, ensuring no competitive advantage is gained by participants in the scheme and that any innovations that are developed can be made available to all.

Additionally WRAP are currently conducting a technical advice programme, looking at opportunities for so called "pack-less packaging" which, among other things, will explore the potential for refill and self-dispensing systems in the retail sector. Such initiatives could offer significant benefits in terms of packaging reduction as well as financial savings for both customers and retailers.

Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of members of the principal civil service

pension scheme in her Department joined the scheme before the age of *(a)* 20, *(b)* 25, *(c)* 30, *(d)* 35, *(e)* 40, *(f)* 45 and *(g)* over 45 years old. [62013]

Jim Knight: The Department could provide this information only at disproportionate cost.

Recycling

Jessica Morden: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much central funding has been allocated to local authority recycling in each year for which figures are available. [61300]

Mr. Bradshaw: The main source of funding for local authorities' waste management services is the Environmental, Protective and Cultural Services (EPCS) block of annual Government grant. It is for the local authorities to decide what proportion of the block is invested in waste management services, including recycling. Funding is also provided from a variety of other sources to support recycling, the amounts allocated are set out in the following table.

£ million

	2002–03	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06*	*2006–07*	*2007–08*
Waste Minimisation and Recycling Fund (WMRG)	40,333,748	50,033,748	96,324,667	45,000,000	—	—
Waste Performance and Efficiency Grant	—	—	—	40	105	110
Grant to Relieve Spending Pressures on Waste	—	—	20	—	—	—
Household Incentives Pilots Scheme	—	—	—	5	—	—
PFI						
Direct Consultancy Support	—	—	[1]0.046	[1]0.053	—	—
New Technologies Support Fund	—	—	—	—	—	—

[1] As part of North London Waste Authority spanning project.
Note:
WMRF Figures include London allocations.

Roadside Car Sales

Mrs. James: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what *(a)* legislation exists and *(b)* steps are being taken to prevent vehicles from being parked and advertised for sale in parking rest areas and waste land adjacent to A roads. [60806]

Mr. Bradshaw: Section 3 of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 makes it an offence to expose two or more vehicles for sale within 500m of each other on a road or roads as part of a business. This legislation was commenced in June 2005 and can be enforced by local authority officers. The penalty for this offence is a fine not exceeding level 4 on the standard scale, currently £2,500, or liability can be discharged through the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice of £100, from the 6 April 2006.

The definition of a road will cover any carriageway that a person can use to get from A to B and is likely to include grass verges, waste land adjacent to roads and parking bays lining a road.

Soil Guideline Values

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to her Answer of 22 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 444W, on soil guideline values, when officials from her Department met officials from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister over the last 12 months to discuss the issue; what meetings are planned for the next six months *(a)* with and *(b)* without representatives of the Environment Agency and the Health Protection Agency; and when she expects to come to a decision regarding soil guideline values for the compound benzo*(a)* pyrene. [62561]

Mr. Morley: My officials are following up on the work of the Soil Guideline Values Task Force. Other Departments and Agencies are and will be involved at the appropriate time. A meeting was held recently which ODPM officials were unable to attend. They attended a technical workshop of the Task Force on 27 March. There will be further meeting opportunities on the follow-up work, with any appropriate attendance by other organisations.

Surplus Wine

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make representations to the European Commission for the distribution of surplus wine to pensioners rather than its conversion to bio-fuel. [61562]

Mr. Morley: We have no plans to make representations to the EU on this issue. In particular, the uses to which surplus EU wine is put, such as distillation to alcohol for use as bio-fuel, is a matter for European Commission competence. Furthermore, the distribution of surplus wine to pensioners would not be an economically viable method of disposal. The practicalities of establishing and running such a system would be complex and carry considerable costs entailing a framework of controls to avoid abuse.

Travelling Circuses

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate her Department has made of the number of travelling circuses in the UK. [63072]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department is aware of seven travelling circuses in Great Britain that have animals, three of which have 'wild' or 'exotic' animals. We do not hold numbers of travelling circuses in Northern Ireland.

Waste

Mr. Dunne: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she plans to update the guidance on the definition of waste to reflect decisions by the European courts and national courts since the guidance was issued in 1994. [59351]

Mr. Bradshaw: The definition of waste in force in the UK is that in Article 1(a) of the Waste Framework Directive (as amended). When the definition was brought into force in May 1994 guidance on its interpellation was provided in DOE Circular 11/94 (Annex 2). That guidance was provided in the absence of case law and since its publication there have been several binding judgments by the European Court of Justice (ECJ) on its interpretation.

The Department is now preparing revised guidance on the principles deriving from the ECJ's judgments with the aim of enabling our "competent authorities" and industry to determine with a higher degree of certainty when a substance is waste and when it has been fully recovered and ceases to be waste. We intend to engage with external stakeholders on a draft of the revised guidance before it is formally published.

It has been necessary for the Department to concentrate its staff resources on the adoption of the legislation necessary to comply with the ECJ's adverse judgment of December 2004 on infraction proceedings against the UK on compliance the Waste Framework Directive (Case C-62/03); and the negotiations on the revised Waste Framework Directive published by the European Commission in December 2005. The former has now been addressed in the Waste Management (England and Wales) Regulations 2006 (S.I. 2006 No. 937) which were laid before the House on 30 March 2006. It will be necessary for the Department also to publish guidance on the 2006 regulations and as soon as this has been done resources will be allocated to the completion of the revised guidance on the interpretation of the definition of waste. Our aim, therefore, is to engage with external stakeholders on the revised guidance on the definition of waste later in the spring.

Waste and Resources Action Programme

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much funding the Waste and Resources Action Programme has received from the Department in each year since its creation. [62832]

Mr. Bradshaw: In 2001–02, the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) received £6,325,723 from Defra. This increased to £10,473,250 in 2002–03. In 2003–04, Defra provided £29,732,547 and in 2004–05 £45,708,474. WRAP'S final outturn against Defra payments in 2005–06 will be £68,205,250. For the financial year 2006–07, Defra have offered WRAP up to £65,505,000.

Waste Incinerators

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the annual volume of water typically required to enable a household waste incinerator to operate. [63153]

Mr. Bradshaw: Most municipal waste incinerators in England use a semi-dry gas scrubbing system. Technical Guidance published by the Environment Agency estimates that these typically use between 250–350 litres of water per tonne of waste incinerated. The remainder use dry gas scrubbing systems which do not use significant quantities of water.

Water Company Privatisation

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the *(a)* real term price and *(b)* percentage increases in water rates on the previous year have been for each water company in each year since privatisation. [58699]

Mr. Morley: Ofwat is the economic regulator for water and sewerage services in England and Wales and sets price limits for each water company at price reviews. At privatisation price limits were set by the Secretaries of State for the Environment and Wales.

Water and sewerage bills and price limits are a matter for Ofwat. I have obtained this information and it has been placed in the Library of the House.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what real terms funding for infrastructure each water company has made in each year since privatisation. [58700]

Mr. Morley: The Office of Water Services (Ofwat) publishes in its "Financial Performance and Expenditure of the Water Companies in England and Wales" each water and sewerage companies' investment to maintain its assets. This includes investment in both below ground assets such as pipes and sewers (termed as infrastructure by Ofwat) and above ground assets such as treatment works (termed as non-infrastructure by Ofwat) Determination of the amount of investment to maintain companies' assets is a matter for Ofwat. I have obtained this information and it has been placed in the Library of the House.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many times *(a)* her Department and *(b)* Ofwat has (i) approved and (ii) not approved increases in water rates charges in each year since privatisation. [58703]

Mr. Morley: Water companies fix their own charges within set price limits. In 1989 the Secretaries of State for the Environment and Wales set the original price limits that allowed increases in bills between 1990 and 1995. Since 1990 Ofwat has had responsibility for setting price limits in England and Wales. Ofwat has carried out three reviews of price limits and at each review has set a price limit for each company for each of the following five years. Ofwat set price limits in 1994 and 2004 that allowed increases in the two five-year periods that followed, but it set price limits at the 1999 review that required companies to reduce prices in 2000. Ofwat last set price limits in December 2004, allowing price rises for the five years 2005 to 2010.

Ofwat has also adjusted price limits by interim determinations between price reviews.

Determination of price limits is a matter for Ofwat. I have obtained this information and it has been placed in the Library of the House.

Water Saving Group

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on how many occasions the Water Saving Group has met since October 2005. [61335]

Margaret Beckett *[holding answer 27 March 2006]:* The establishment of the Water Saving Group fulfils a Government manifesto commitment to work with the water industry and others to establish a water savings body. Its purpose is to bring together key water industry stakeholders to promote the efficient use of water in households as part of the wider effort to ensure the long term sustainability of the water supply. It is not a response to the shorter term problems of drought in the South East, but seeks to contribute to demand management in the long term.

The Water Saving Group had its first meeting on 20 October 2005. It is chaired by my hon. Friend the Minister of State for Climate Change and the Environment and it will meet again on 18 May. Between meetings, work is co-ordinated and assessed by a working group of representatives of all the Group members. The working group is led by the Director, Water in Defra and has met twice since last October.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

1911 Census

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether the National Archive has given reasons for the application of exemption 41 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to extracts of the 1911 census; and whether an internal review of the decision to apply the exemption has been carried out. [63305]

Bridget Prentice: In consultation with the Office for National Statistics, The National Archives has applied the S.41 exemption, relating to information provided in confidence, to requests for information in the 1911 census returns. This is in accordance with the Government's policy that census returns should become open only after 100 years, in order to maintain the public's trust in the confidentiality assurances on census forms. Internal reviews have been carried out by The National Archives in relation to specific requests, and, after careful consideration, it has been concluded that the original decision to apply the S.41 exemption is correct.

Burial Grounds

Tony Baldry: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs when her Department's survey of burial grounds will be published; and what assessment she has made of the cost of carrying out the survey. [62392]

Ms Harman: The responses to the survey are currently being processed and it is hoped to make available the findings from this exercise in October. The cost of carrying out the survey has been estimated at £50,000.

Capita Group

Chris Grayling: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much business her Department has placed with *(a)* Capita Group plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries in each of the last five years; what the total value is of outstanding contracts placed with Capita Group plc and its subsidiaries by her Department; for which current tenders issued by her Department (i) Capita Group plc and (ii) its subsidiaries have been invited to bid; and whether (A) Capita Group plc and (B) its subsidiaries have seconded staff (1) temporarily and (2) on a longer-term basis to (X) her Department and (Y) its agencies. [61083]

Ms Harman: The value of known contracts placed over the last three financial years is as follows:

£

	(a) Capita Group plc	*(b) Capita subsidiaries*
2005–06	0	1,267,379
2004–05	0	498,678
2003–04	0	12,250
2002–03	0	17,165
2001–02	0	3,800

The value on these outstanding contracts is as follows:

(a) Capita Group plc: £0

(b) subsidiaries: £74,400

There is one current tender in which a subsidiary of Capita Group plc has been invited to bid—provision of an authorised pensions administration centre for the Department.

No staff have been seconded from Capita Group plc or its subsidiaries to my Department or its agencies, either temporarily or on a longer-term basis.

My Department does not hold a central register of contracts. The information on known contracts with Capita Group plc and its subsidiaries has been given above. However, it may not be comprehensive. This is chiefly because the Department inherited a large number of contracts at the time that HMCS was created in April 2005. The Capita Group plc has many subsidiaries, some of which have no obvious connection to the holding company and it is possible that a relevant contact may not have been identified as such. Confirming the complete list of contracts with Capita Group plc and its subsidiaries could be achieved only at disproportionate cost.

James Brokenshire: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the value of contracts held by her Department with *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries was in the last three financial years. [61432]

Ms Harman: The value of known contracts placed over the last three financial years is as follows.

£

	(a) Capita Group plc	(b) Capita subsidiaries
2005–06	0	1,267,379
2004–05	0	498,678
2003–04	0	12,250

My Department does not hold a central register of contracts. The information on known contracts with Capita Group plc and its subsidiaries has been given above. However, it may not be comprehensive. This is chiefly because the Department inherited a large number of contracts at the time that HMCS was created in April 2005. The Capita Group plc has many subsidiaries, some of which have no obvious connection to the holding company and it is possible that a relevant contact may not have been identified as such. Confirming the complete list of contracts with Capita Group plc and its subsidiaries could be achieved only at disproportionate cost.

James Brokenshire: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many tenders *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries has submitted to her Department in each of the last three years; and how many tenders were successful. [61433]

Ms Harman: Records of lists of tenderers are not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. Information is held centrally on the award of some contracts but may not be complete. This is chiefly because the Capita Group plc has many subsidiaries, some of which have no obvious connection to the holding company and it is possible that a relevant contact may not have been identified as such. Confirming the complete list of contracts awarded to the Capita Group plc and its subsidiaries could be achieved only at disproportionate cost. The number of known contracts awarded to Capita Group plc and its subsidiaries is shown as follows:

	Capita Group plc	Capita subsidiaries
2005–06	0	30
2004–05	0	8
2003–04	0	1

James Brokenshire: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many contracts her Department holds with *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries which have a potential duration of five years or more. [61434]

Ms Harman: My Department does not hold a central register of contracts. Some information is held centrally, but it may not be comprehensive. This is chiefly because the Department inherited a large number of contracts at the time that HMCS was created in April 2005. The Capita Group plc has many subsidiaries, some of which have no obvious connection to the holding company and it is possible that a relevant contact may not have been identified as such. Confirming the complete list of contracts with Capita Group plc and its subsidiaries could be achieved only at disproportionate cost.

Known details of contracts with a potential duration of five years or more are as follows:

(a) Capita Group plc: none

(b) Capita subsidiaries: one.

Coroners' Services

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will add coroners services to the list of public authorities covered by the Freedom of Information Act 2000; and if she will make a statement. [62440]

Ms Harman: Coroners inquests are not covered by the FOI Act. This is consistent with the position of other courts. There are, at present, no plans to make coroners inquests subject to the FOI Act.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many of the *(a)* special and *(b)* routine post mortems carried out by the Haringey Coroners' Service have later been subject to a public inquest in each of the last five years. [62441]

Ms Harman: The information requested is not recorded. The North London coroner assesses that *(a)* about 70 routine post-mortem examinations and *(b)* about 25 to 30 special post-mortem examinations performed at Hornsey led to inquests being opened in each of the past 5 years.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many pathologists were employed by Haringey Coroner Services to carry out post-mortems in 2005. [61873]

Ms Harman: Six pathologists provided a service for the North London coroner at Hornsey Public Mortuary in 2005.

Court Hearings (Transport)

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs who determines the location of a hearing in court for a criminal hearing; what assessment is made of transportation needs for such a hearing; what criteria are used to determine the location of a hearing; and what account is taken of the costs incurred. [62783]

Ms Harman: Magistrates courts hearings are heard either at a court within the local justice area in which the offence is alleged to have been committed or where the person charged with the offence resides. Magistrates courts may change the location of a hearing if it is more convenient for witnesses to attend elsewhere. To this extent courts consider transportation needs.

The following criteria is applied by magistrates to determine the location for Crown court hearings when committing a person for a trial *(a)* the convenience of the defence, prosecution and witnesses *(b)* the expediting of the trial, and *(c)* any direction given by or on behalf of the Lord Chief Justice with the concurrence of the Lord Chancellor. The location of a Crown court hearing can be altered at judicial discretion. Reasons for altering locations include ensuring that individual cases progress at a faster rate and to enable cases to be heard where there is the appropriate judicial expertise.

No specific account is taken of the costs incurred when determining the location of criminal hearings in criminal courts but locality and convenience are normal criteria courts take into consideration.

Criminal Justice System

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what progress has been made towards her Department's targets for the modernisation of the criminal justice system. [45204]

Ms Harman: The Department for Constitutional Affairs has no PSA targets related to the modernisation of the Criminal Justice System.

However, specialised courts have been set up to deal with these cases. For example, two pilot Drug Courts were launched in December 2005 at West London and Leeds magistrates courts.

The Community Justice Centre in Liverpool showcases another approach, bringing the criminal justice agencies (including the police) and voluntary service providers together in one building to work with local people to tackle the problems that blight their community. At Salford magistrates court we are looking at how the lessons we are learning in Liverpool can be extended into the mainstream magistrates court system.

DCA is committed to making the best use of available technology to support the work of the criminal justice system. We are nearing completion of a programme to install a modern IT infrastructure in the Crown court which will provide the platform to deliver new IT systems as part of the HMCS modernisation programme. The first IT system to run on the new infrastructure is XHIBIT (exchanging hearing information by internet technology), which sends hearing information from the courtroom to victims, witnesses, and other criminal justice organisations within minutes. This system is on target to be rolled out to all Crown court centres by March this year. A new audio-visual system is now under trial in Liverpool. This is able to present audio and visual evidence in court from any source, analogue or digital. The system can also handle several tasks at once, allowing it to videoconference between courtroom and a witness while simultaneously displaying evidence to both.

Custody Deaths

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the average time between a death in custody and the *(a)* commencement and *(b)* conclusion of the coroner's inquest was in each county in each year since 1997. [62774]

Ms Harman: The information required is not collated centrally and could be obtained only at a disproportionate cost.

Departmental Policies (Islington, South and Finsbury)

Emily Thornberry: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will set out, with statistical information relating as directly as possible to Islington, South and Finsbury constituency, the effects on Islington, South and Finsbury of her Department's policies and actions since 2 May 1997. [60728]

Ms Harman: The Department for Constitutional Affairs is the Government Department responsible for upholding justice, rights and democracy. The Department's aim is to provide for effective and accessible justice for all, to ensure the rights and responsibilities of the citizen, and to modernise the law and constitution.

Currently, the Department has four strategic objectives, which cover the delivery of justice, civil and administrative law, protecting the vulnerable, modernising the constitution, increasing consumer choice and working in partnership with the independent judiciary. The Department also has five public service agreement targets to help deliver its strategic objectives, three of which are shared with the other criminal justice departments and agencies.

It will be clear that the range of the Department's policies and actions is wide and the statistical information relating to it is not normally collected on a constituency basis. Consequently, the information requested in the question cannot be provided in the form requested except at a disproportionate cost. However, general statistical information about the Department's activities can be found at: http://www.dca.gov.uk/statistics/statfr.htm.

An example of the information available on this site is statistical data on the speed with which persistent young offenders are brought to justice. The average number of days from arrest to sentence for persistent young offenders sentenced during the period from October to December 2005 was 86 days in the Metropolitan police force area, and 72 days in the Islington Basic Command Unit (BCD) area. These figures compare with 160 days in the Metropolitan police force area in the 1997 calendar year.

Electoral Administration Bill

Mr. Benyon: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment she has made of the viability of amending the Electoral Administration Bill so that voters who currently opt to appear on the edited version of the register could block third parties using personal details which appear on historic registers which were published only as full versions without the choice to appear on an edited version. [63664]

Bridget Prentice: The Representation of the People Regulations 2002 provide that electors may opt out of the edited version of the register of electors if they do not want their details to be sold to anyone for any purpose. Any attempt to use legislation to impose a retrospective ban on the use of information derived from pre-2002 electoral registers, though, is likely to be impracticable and unenforceable since this may be provided by commercial organisations based outside of the UK against whom the sanctions of UK law cannot be applied. Electors who do not want their details to be used by commercial organisations may wish to approach the mailing or telephone preference services requesting deletion from company records or publicly

available websites or otherwise make a request directly to an individual organisation. If an organisation fails to comply with such a request an elector may pursue the issue with the Information Commissioner's Office.

Electoral Registration Officers

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs pursuant to her answer of 22 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 456W, on the electoral register, what advice is given to electoral registration officers (EROs) on prosecuting those failing to return an electoral registration form; and if she will ascertain from EROs whether any prosecutions have been brought. [63586]

Bridget Prentice: No advice is issued centrally to EROs on prosecuting those who fail to return an electoral registration form. The independent Electoral Commission has within its remit a general duty to issue advice and guidance to electoral administrators. EROs are aware of their powers under electoral law to initiate prosecutions against those who commit the offence of failing to give, or providing false, information required for the purposes of maintaining registers of parliamentary and local government electors. As this is a matter for local discretion, records of such prosecutions are not held centrally and therefore the information relating to prosecutions could be obtained only at a disproportionate cost.

Grievance Procedures

David Simpson: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many grievance procedures have been initiated in her Department in each of the last three years. [63542]

Ms Harman: There are no figures available for the number of grievances initiated in my department, save for the numbers of grievances involving equality and diversity issues.

Harassment

David Simpson: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many complaints of *(a)* bullying and *(b)* sexual harassment have been investigated in her Department in each of the last three years; and how many complaints have been upheld. [63543]

Ms Harman: The numbers of these types of complaints investigated by the department over the last 3 years is as follows:

	Cases	*Upheld*	*Dismissed*
Bullying behaviour			
2003–04	12	2	10
2004–05	12	6	6
2005–06	21	13	8
Sexual harassment			
2003–04	2	1	1
2004–05	—	—	—
2005–06	1	1	—

Sexual Harassment

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many cases of sexual harassment were brought in the West Midlands in which the defendant was subsequently acquitted of all charges in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by criminal justice area. [62682]

Ms Harman: Information regarding the number of cases of sexual harassment is not specifically recorded and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost to the Department.

James Collinson

Pete Wishart: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the cost was of the coroner's inquest into the death of James Collinson. [62156]

Ms Harman: The cost of this inquest is not yet available. I shall write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my reply in the Library of the House when the costs of the inquest are known.

Land Disputes

Mark Williams: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many civil cases related to neighbourhood land disputes have been taken to the courts in each of the last 10 years. [63958]

Ms Harman: Information about the number of civil cases related to neighbourhood land disputes is not separately collected and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost to the Department.

Legal Aid (Recoupment)

Paul Rowen: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many *(a)* cases and *(b)* firms of solicitors are expected to be affected by the Legal Services Commission (LSC) recouping legal aid payments in financial years (i) 2005–06 and (ii) 2006–07; what average amount firms of solicitors owe; what average payment solicitors have made; and after what period of time the LSC would assess a case as being too old to merit recovery of legal aid funds. [61601]

Ms Harman: The information requested is not available. However, firms of solicitors do have a duty to report accurately to the LSC at the end of each case so that financial matters can be settled. Additionally, the LSC runs ongoing initiatives to identify those cases which have concluded but where the solicitors have not reported this to them. There is no period of time after which the LSC would consider a case being too old to merit the recovery of legal aid funds.

Ministerial Visits

Keith Vaz: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many EU member states she has visited on official business since her appointment. [61008]

Ms Harman: I have visited one EU member state since my appointment, which was Ireland. The Department for Constitutional Affairs Minister responsible for EU policy, Baroness Ashton of Upholland, has visited 14 EU member states. These are listed as follows:

Austria
Belgium
Czech Republic
Estonia
Finland
France
Hungary
Ireland
Lithuania
Luxembourg
The Netherlands
Poland
Slovakia
Sweden

National Archives

Richard Burden: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what representations she has received on the charging of broadcasters to use National Archive footage for transmissions. [62483]

Ms Harman: I have not received any representations on this issue.

Richard Burden: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs when National Archives introduced charging for the use of footage by broadcasters. [62582]

Ms Harman: The National Archives has operated a commercial Image library for about the last 10 years, and throughout that time it has had a policy of charging production companies a reproduction fee for broadcasting images of its files or documents, or showing close-up footage of its files or documents in commercially produced programmes.

Richard Burden: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on the use of proceeds received by National Archives from broadcasters using footage for transmissions. [62583]

Ms Harman: Any revenue above operating costs generated by the National Archives Image library is retained within the National Archives as a contribution toward running costs or is used to fund new projects.

Richard Burden: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what guidance is given to broadcasters regarding charges for the use of footage from National Archives. [62584]

Ms Harman: The National Archives' policy of charging for the use of footage is clearly stated under 'reproduction fees' on the relevant page on the website http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/news/press/filming.htm

When broadcasters visit the National Archives, they are explicitly advised that a reproduction fee will be payable in respect of the footage used in the broadcast version of the programme, and that they will be required to provide the National Archives Image library with the details required for a fee to be calculated.

Richard Burden: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what income her Department has received from fees paid by broadcasters using footage from National Archives for transmission in each of the last five years. [62585]

Ms Harman: It is not possible to distinguish income received by the National Archives through the use of footage filmed by broadcasters from the reproduction fees of static images paid by commercial production companies without incurring disproportionate cost. Total income from these sources over the last five years is as follows:

	Amount (£000)
2000–01	80
2001–02	118
2002–03	86
2003–04	84
2004–05	90

Richard Burden: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether her Department plans to re-examine the charging of broadcasters for use of footage from National Archives for transmissions. [62586]

Ms Harman: This is an operational matter for the National Archives, which has no plans to review the policy of charging for the reproduction of footage of documents from the National Archives in commercial television productions.

Parliamentary Candidates (Interests)

David Simpson: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will bring forward proposals to require declaration of parliamentary candidates' interests. [63540]

Bridget Prentice: The Government have no plans to bring forward proposals to require candidates at a parliamentary election to declare their interests.

Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what proportion of members of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme in her Department joined the scheme before the age of *(a)* 20, *(b)* 25, *(c)* 30, *(d)* 35, *(e)* 40, *(f)* 45 and *(g)* over 45 years old. [62003]

Bridget Prentice: The Pension records for the Department are not maintained in a format which enables this data to be easily extracted. The information requested can therefore only be provided at a disproportionate cost.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the current employer contribution rates to the Principal Civil

Service pension scheme are; what assumed rate of return underlies those contribution rates; and what the contribution rate would be if the assumed rate of return was in line with current redemption yield on index-linked gilts. [62004]

Bridget Prentice: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given to him by my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Secretary for the Cabinet Office on 29 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1031W.

Sexual Offences

Ben Chapman: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment she has made of the effect of adverse publicity on defendants who are subsequently acquitted in sex offence cases. [62026]

Paul Goggins: I have been asked to reply.

No such assessment had been made as defendants in sex offence cases and other defendants are treated equally, in accordance with the principle of open justice.

Ben Chapman: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment she has made of the human rights implications for people accused of sex offences and subsequently acquitted who suffer adverse publicity as a result of media identification. [62173]

Paul Goggins: I have been asked to reply.

Article 6(1) of The European Convention of Human Rights does not confer a right of anonymity on defendants. The Government regards open justice as a fundamental principle of our Criminal Justice System.

Summary Trials

Lady Hermon: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what percentage of *(a)* trials on indictment and *(b)* summary trials in (i) Northern Ireland and (ii) England and Wales that collapsed did so because (A) the defendant changed his plea, (B) witnesses did not attend and (C) the defendant pleaded guilty to a lesser offence in the latest period for which figures are available. [63387]

Ms Harman: Figures showing the number and percentage of cases listed for trial in the Crown court and magistrates courts in England and Wales where the trial cracked on the day for the reasons requested are provided in the following table. The figures cover the six-month period September 2005 to February 2006.

	Trials on indictment (Crown court)	*Summary trials (magistrates court)*
(A) Change of plea		
Number cracked	4,728	16,342
Percentage	64.1	49.0
(B) Prosecution witness non-attendance		
Number cracked	1,257	4,772
Percentage	17	14.3
(C) Guilty plea to lesser offence		
Number cracked	380	2,073
Percentage	5.2	6.2

Note:
Percentage figure is percentage of total cracked trials.

Relative figures for Crown trials listed in Northern Ireland in the same period are detailed in the table. This information is not collected centrally for magistrates court trials and can be provided only at disproportionate cost to the Department.

	Trials on indictment (Crown court)[1]
(A) Change of plea	
Number	166
Percentage	31
(B) Prosecution witness non-attendance	
Number	15
Percentage	3
(C) Guilty plea to lesser offence	
Number	30
Percentage	6

[1] Total number of trials = 533.

Note:
Percentage figure is percentage all cases listed.

Woolwich Crown Court

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on the *(a)* use of and *(b)* available capacity at Woolwich Crown court. [62775]

Ms Harman: Woolwich Crown court has available seven courtrooms one of which has recently been upgraded to accommodate high security trials bringing the number suitable to hear high security cases to three.

Increasingly, Woolwich is the preferred site in SE England to hear high security cases, which often require the deployment of armed police protection. Additionally it has the capacity to hear cases committed to the Crown from neighbouring magistrates courts.

One courtroom is also suitable to hear magistrates cases as and when required.

There are five permanent circuit judges based at the courthouse with visiting district judges and magistrates. Woolwich's sitting day profile—the number of days available for judges to sit and hear cases—was 1,271 days for the year 2005–06.

The sitting day profile schedule for 2006–07 is 1,481 days.

TRANSPORT

A21

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what status the A21 upgrade has under the South East England Regional Assembly's recommendations on regional priorities; and if he will make a statement. [62575]

Dr. Ladyman: We are currently considering the South East region's advice on their priorities for major transport schemes including improvement schemes on the A21. We are planning to announce our response to

the region's advice later this year. The advice can be viewed at: http://www.southeast-ra.gov.uk/our-work/advocacy/rfa.html

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received from the Highways Agency on public consultations on the proposed A21 upgrade between Flimwell and Robertsbridge. [62577]

Dr. Ladyman: I wrote to the hon. Member on 27 January 2006. Attached to that letter was a summary from the Highways Agency, of the main proposals from those attending the A21 Flimwell to Hurst Green interest group 'surgery' which was held on 7 December 2005.

The Highways Agency will continue to meet and have discussions with individuals, key stakeholders and local interest groups, as requested.

Aerotoxic Syndrome

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will publish the Porton Down report on engine oil and Aerotoxic Syndrome affecting pilots during flight. [59354]

Derek Twigg: The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) has two research reports from the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory, Porton Down on the subject of engine oil contamination of cabin air. These are:

"The toxicity of aircraft lubricant pyrolysis products related to Cabin Air Quality Incidents", by J Jenner, B Jugg, J Scawin, N Osmond and P Rice, dated December 2001, and,

"Analysis of aircraft air-conditioning duct contaminants", by J Jenner and B Muir, dated July 2003.

These reports contributed to the CAA paper 2004/04 "Cabin Air Quality" which was published on the CAA's website in 2004. I am informed by the CAA that the technical content of these two reports appears in its entirety in the CAA's paper. The CAA, which has copyright, has no plans to publish these reports separately.

In addition to these two research reports the CAA has a review document:

"A Review of Three Reports on the Toxicology of Aviation Lubricant Constituents", by J Jenner, B Jugg and J Scawin, dated May 2002"

I am informed by the CAA that this paper is a critique of other scientific work, and was prepared for CAA internal use only. The CAA has no plans to publish this paper and the Department does not have a copy of it.

Aircraft Noise

John Penrose: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment his Department has made of the difference between peak and mean aircraft noise levels near British airports. [60786]

Derek Twigg: The Department has not made any specific assessment of the difference between peak and mean aircraft noise levels. This is because the suitability of what measurement is used will depend on the type of noise situation being addressed.

The Department uses various measures of aircraft noise levels. The departure noise limits at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted relate to peak noise[1] and aircraft noise events at the fixed noise monitors (where the limits apply) are measured accordingly.

Since 1990, the Department has used equivalent continuous noise level—effectively an averaging out of noise energy over a given period—as the measure of average aircraft noise exposure[2].

Mean peak aircraft noise levels are not assessed on a routine basis but would be considered if appropriate and reported in technical studies carried out by the Environmental Research and Consultancy Department of the Civil Aviation Authority. For example, CS Report 9539 "Review of the Departure Noise Limits at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted Airports" includes statistics broken showing the reference mean levels, standard deviations and other statistical information relating to the peak noise of actual flights. A copy of this report was placed in the House Library.

[1] Measured in L_{max} dBA

[2] This entails the calculation of L_{eq}, logarithmic average sound exposure levels (SEL) for each aircraft type

Airports (Alternative Fuelled Vehicles)

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps are being taken to encourage the use of alternative fuelled vehicles at airports. [61743]

Derek Twigg: The UK aviation industry has developed and published "A Strategy Towards Sustainable Development of UK Aviation". This includes a commitment to deliver continued improvements in airport ground vehicles, along with improvements in supply of ground power services, operational practices and the availability of cleaner fuels. The industry is committed to reporting on progress with this commitment by the end of 2006.

British Railways Board

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what property, including railway structures, is owned by the British Railways Board (Residuary) Ltd.; and where the property is located. [56373]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 6 March 2006]:* As at 31 March 2005 BRB(R) Limited owned 735 pieces of non operational railway land and property. Details of their location are available on the company's website at www.brbr.gov.uk. This website will be updated in the next two months. The company also has leasehold interests in the following buildings:

Birmingham, Axis
Birmingham, Meridian
Crewe, Rail House
Croydon, Southern House
Croydon, Stephenson House
Liverpool, Rail House
London N1, Whittles House
London SE1, Friars Bridge Court
Manchester, Rail House
Nottingham, Furlong House

Orpington, Nightingale House

Southampton, Overline House

York, Hudson House

These leases were taken out by the British Railways Board prior to the privatisation of the railway in the 1990's and are of a long-term and onerous nature. As such it was not considered appropriate to transfer them to the private sector at privatisation. BRB(R) will routinely exit its obligations under these leases as and when the opportunity arises and where such an exit provides good value for money for the taxpayer.

BRB(R) also owns and is responsible for the upkeep of some 4,000 structures, details of which have been placed in the Libraries of the House.

Congestion Charging

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which cities have applied for funding to establish a congestion charging scheme. [62691]

Dr. Ladyman: I refer the right hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Meriden (Mrs. Spelman) on 6 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 802W.

Defective Vehicles

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate his Department has made of the number of vehicles driving with defective *(a)* brakes, *(b)* brake lights, *(c)* head lights, *(d)* tail lights and *(e)* side lights; and if he will make a statement. [62878]

Dr. Ladyman: Vehicle and Operator Services Agency's latest assessment of vehicle defects, including lamps, is published in their effectiveness report which is available online at www.vosa.gov.uk

Drink-driving

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many drink-driving accidents there were in *(a)* Romford and *(b)* Havering in each of the past 10 years. [62991]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is not available. Estimates of drink drive accidents in Great Britain as a whole are published each year in an article in "Road Casualties Great Britain—Annual Report". Estimates below Government office region level are not available.

Energy Efficiency

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps he is taking to increase energy efficiency within his Department; and if he will make a statement. [60330]

Derek Twigg: The Department is committed to improving energy efficiency. We will undertake a number of actions to improve energy efficiency on our estate.

Greater Western Franchise

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will place in the Library a copy of the document SLC2 relating to the Greater Western Franchise. [61544]

Derek Twigg: A copy of the Greater Western SLC2 will be placed in the Library when it becomes a public document. SLC2, together with the Greater Western franchise agreement with which it needs to be read, is currently going through the statutory exclusions procedure in the Railways Act 1993 (as amended). This must be carried out before SLC2 can be made public by being placed in the Department for Transport's public register.

Heritage Railways

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the implications for heritage railways of the EU directive on Railway and Other Guided Transport Systems (Safety) Regulations 2006; and what representations he has received on this matter. [62430]

Derek Twigg: I laid before Parliament on 17 March 2006 the proposed Railways and Other Guided Transport Systems (Safety) Regulations (ROGS) which implement the safety management aspects of EU Directive 2004/49/EC. An Explanatory Memorandum, Transposition Note and Regulatory Impact Assessment for all sectors of the railway, including heritage railways, accompany the proposed regulations. A copy has been placed in the House Library. Before laying the proposed regulations, I had a constructive meeting with representatives of heritage railways and representatives of the tramway industry on 1 March.

Hit and Run Incidents

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how many hit and run incidents have been recorded in each of the last eight years, broken down by police force area; [61278]

(2) how many *(a)* deaths, *(b)* serious injuries and *(c)* injuries have been recorded as a result of hit and run incidents in each of the last eight years, broken down by police force area. [61279]

Dr. Ladyman: Tables showing *(a)* the number of personal injury road accidents which involved one or more hit and run drivers or riders and *(b)* the resulting fatalities, serious and all injuries resulting from these accidents, for the years 1997–2004 (the latest year for which figures are available), broken down by police force, have been placed in the Libraries of the House.

Imported Cars

Mr. Burrowes: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps the Government are taking to deal with imported cars licensed in EU countries displaying out of date number plates and thereby avoiding enforcement action after road traffic offences. [62744]

Dr. Ladyman: Overseas registered vehicles that are temporarily brought into the United Kingdom are usually exempt from registration and licensing rules for six months, provided they remain properly registered and taxed in their home state.

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) is aware that some drivers of overseas registered vehicles may not be aware of their obligations and that some are deliberately breaking the rules.

The DVLA has established agreements with several EU partner organisations to obtain information about the licensing and registration status of vehicles registered abroad. DVLA is also conducting a programme of education to raise awareness of the requirements among the users of foreign registered vehicles and to encourage their licensing and registration in the UK where appropriate.

Those that continue to flout the law will be subject to enforcement action including the wheel clamping and impounding of the vehicle.

Long-distance Trains

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps the Government have taken to increase speeds on long-distance rail trips in order to reduce travel time. [62993]

Derek Twigg: Travel time on long-distance rail services have been improved through a variety of infrastructure and timetable initiatives including the West Coast Route Modernisation programme, which has upgraded much of the infrastructure to 125 mph and introduced modern trains with a significant reduction in journey times for travellers between Scotland and London.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps the Government have taken to increase the proportion of long-distance trains that run on time. [62968]

Derek Twigg: Long-distance operator's punctuality has improved to 82.2 per cent. in February 2006, an increase of 9.2 percentage points in the last two years.

Under the Future of Rail White Paper 2004, Network Rail is accountable for performance and for co-ordinating rail industry planning and operational management. As a result of this change, they and the train operators now work more closely.

In addition, the Department holds regular meetings with Network Rail, and industry representatives to discuss further performance improvement.

LPG Vehicles

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport why vehicles converted to run on liquefied petroleum gas prior to 2001 are not eligible to be classified as low emissions vehicles by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency. [62431]

Dr. Ladyman: Only cars registered on or after 1 March 2001 can be licensed under the graduated vehicle excise duty scheme.

M1

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the average number of vehicles using the M1 each day was in the last period for which figures are available; and how many vehicles the M1 was originally designed to carry. [63000]

Dr. Ladyman: Average daily traffic flows during the twelve months to the end of December 2005 are available at several locations on the M1.

Flows on the M1 vary according to the location along the motorway. Between junctions 1 and 2, within the M25, there are 50,000 vehicles per day (vpd) rising to 155,000 vpd between junctions 8–9 near St Albans and Luton and reducing again to 65,000 vpd between junctions 43 and 44 in Leeds.

The original predicted flows for the first section of M1, between Watford and Rugby, were forecast to be between 11,000 and 26,000 vpd in 1960. There were no predictions for flows in other future years.

M6

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when a decision will be reached on *(a)* widening the existing carriageway on the M6 and *(b)* building a new adjacent expressway. [61284]

Dr. Ladyman: In December 2002 the Highways Agency was instructed to evaluate widening concepts for the M6. This was followed in July 2005 by instruction to consider the additional concept of an expressway. The findings are due to be reported this summer following which a decision will be made regarding both concepts.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the cost of *(a)* widening the existing carriageway on the M6 and *(b)* building a new adjacent expressway. [61285]

Dr. Ladyman: The Highways Agency are currently considering widening and expressway concepts for the M6. Costs are being considered as part of that study which I expect to receive this summer.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects work *(a)* to begin and *(b)* to be completed on improving capacity on the M6 between Birmingham and Manchester. [61286]

Dr. Ladyman: The Highways Agency are currently considering widening and expressway concepts for the M6. Programming is being considered as part of that study which I expect to receive this summer.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when his Department began consulting on improving capacity on the M6 between Birmingham and Manchester. [61287]

Dr. Ladyman: The public were first consulted on proposals to widen this section of the M6 in the early 1990's.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much his Department spent *(a)* on planning, *(b)* on consulting and *(c)* in total on

(i) improving capacity on the M6 between Birmingham and Manchester and (ii) the Midlands to Manchester multi-modal study. [61289]

Dr. Ladyman: In the period since our response to the west midlands to north west conurbations multi-modal study in December 2002, approximately £4.5 million has been spent on preliminary design work, stakeholder engagement and other planning activities on improving capacity on the M6 between Birmingham and Manchester. It is not possible to provide a detailed breakdown of the total at the present time.

The total cost of the west midlands to north west conurbations multi-modal study was £2 million. This figure includes costs relating to public consultation exercises that were undertaken as part of the study.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations his Department has received on improving capacity on the M6 between Birmingham and Manchester. [61290]

Dr. Ladyman: In the summer and autumn of 2004 the Department undertook a consultation, 'M6: Giving motorists a choice', on the concept of building a new tolled expressway to run parallel with the M6, as an alternative to widening the existing M6 between Birmingham and Manchester (junction 11A to junction 19).

The consultation sought views on whether the Government should ask the Highways Agency to carry out more detailed development work and a feasibility study on the option of an expressway. Approximately 9,500 responses were received from a range of stakeholders. The responses were carefully analysed and a breakdown was placed in the Library of the House on 19 July 2005, when I announced the outcome of the initial consultation and the Secretary of State's decision to ask the Highways Agency to undertake further work in parallel on both the expressway and widening options.

As part of the option evaluation work currently in progress, the Highways Agency has been engaging with a wide range of representative stakeholder bodies, including the statutory environmental agencies. The Agency has organised eight meetings with stakeholders since the beginning of the year, including three well attended seminars, and two further meetings are currently planned for April. The discussions and written feedback will form part of the data to be used to inform a ministerial decision on the option to be taken forward. Formal public consultation would form part of the next stage of scheme development.

In addition to comments made during discussions, a total of 141 representations in the form of feedback sheets, letters and e-mails have been received from stakeholders to date.

Nottingham East Midlands Airport

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what submissions he has received from the independent consultative committee on Nottingham East Midlands Airport in relation to the airport authority's 10-point plan to reduce noise from its operations. [62602]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 30 March 2006]:* As indicated at the time of the Government's decision not to designate NEMA for noise control purposes, progress on delivery of the '10-point plan' has been reviewed with the consultative committee and the airport. Additional proposals in the draft masterplan have now overtaken the '10-point plan'. However, I understand that the independent consultative committee intends to forward a submission on this issue after its next environmental meeting in June.

Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his Department's employer contribution rates to the Principal Civil Service pension scheme are; what assumed rate of return underlies those contribution rates; and what the contribution rate would be if the assumed rate of return was in line with current redemption yield on index-linked gilts. [61902]

Derek Twigg: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given to him by my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State for the Cabinet Office (Mr. Murphy), on 29 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1030–31W.

Public Transport

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps the Government has taken to reduce automobile use and increase the use of public transportation. [62995]

Dr. Ladyman: The ability to travel offers real benefits, underpinning the competitiveness of the economy and helping to build an inclusive society. It is therefore the Government's policy to meet the challenges of a growing economy and the increasing demand for travel so caused while minimising the negative impacts on society and the environment.

We are spending c. £87 million a week on the national rail network—which has seen reliability rise to above 85 per cent. and usage rise to a level not seen since the 1960s. We also contribute over £1 billion a year to improving London Underground services.

Local and central Government's funding support for bus services is £1.7 billion a year and bus patronage in England has risen by nearly 8 per cent. since 2000–01. In addition, off-peak bus travel will be free for those aged 60 and over and for disabled people at local authority level from April this year, with a national scheme due to begin in April 2008.

We have also made available £200 million p.a. from 2008–09 to 2014–15 within the Transport Innovation Fund to support schemes which tackle local congestion through a combination of demand management, including road pricing, and improved public transport.

Railways

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations his Department has received from Arriva Trains Wales on the consultation on the First Great Western Trains proposed December 2006 timetable. [60823]

Derek Twigg: The Department has received no representations from Arriva Trains Wales on the consultation on the First Great Western Trains proposed December 2006 timetable.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many railway crashes there have been in each of the last 10 years. [63001]

Derek Twigg: The details of all railway crashes for the last 10 years are published in the Health and Safety Executive's annual rail safety reports, copies of which are available from the House Library.

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what proportion of railway expenditure has been derived from *(a)* passenger fares and *(b)* taxation for each year since 1994; and if he will make a statement. [49566]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 8 February 2006]:* The information is not available in the form requested. Annual spend on the railway cannot be directly attributed to revenue generated from fares and Government support generated from taxation. However, passenger revenue and total government support for the railway for each year are as follows:

	Passenger revenue (£ million)	*Total Government support (£ million)*	*Total expenditure (£ million)*	*Passenger revenue as percentage of spend*
1992–93	2,259	2,171	4,430	51
1993–94	2,232	1,627	3,859	58
1994–95	2,171	1,697	3,868	56
1995–96	2,388	431	2,819	85
1998–99	3,089	1,586	4,675	66
1999–2000	3,368	1,418	4,786	70
2000–01	3,369	1,214	4,583	74
2001–02	3,533	1,826	5,359	66
2002–03	3,706	2,588	6,294	59
2003–04	3,918	3,622	7,540	52
2004–05	4,192	3,222	7,414	57

Note

Because of changes in reporting requirements comparable data on passenger revenues are not available for 1996–97 and 1997–98.

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the work of HM Railway Inspectorate. [60812]

Derek Twigg: The activities of the Health and Safety Executive's HM Railway Inspectorate (HMRI) include securing compliance with relevant health and safety legislation through a programme of planned inspection and through the provision of advice. Additionally, and where appropriate, they also take enforcement action to ensure future compliance and raise health and safety standards. These activities are governed by the need to ensure the most effective use of their time and public money. Their activities are prioritised to tackle the areas of greatest risk and to ensure the delivery of their key aims.

Robert Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will include proposals for reconstructing double-tracking and new loop construction on the Waterloo to Exeter line west of Salisbury in the invitation to tender (ITT) for the new South Western franchise *(a)* as part of the base specification and *(b)* as a price option; and when he will issue the ITT. [62488]

Derek Twigg: The Invitation to Tender (ITT) for the South Western franchise was issued to bidders on 31 March 2006. Bidders will be asked to provide a priced option for operating an hourly service between London and Exeter and/or an hourly shuttle between Exeter and Axminster. Bidders have been asked to assume that the infrastructure necessary to enable these services will be funded from separate sources.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many train stations are operated *(a)* by each train operating company, *(b)* by Network Rail and *(c)* by other operators. [61738]

Derek Twigg: The information requested can be found in the 8th edition of "Comprehensive Guide to Britain's Railways", published by Rail Magazine.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many stations on the rail network in England are unmanned at night, broken down by police authority area. [62628]

Derek Twigg: Details of the hours during which stations are staffed are available at www.nationalrail.co.uk.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many penalty fare schemes have been approved for operation on trains in each of the last eight years. [61201]

Derek Twigg: The following new penalty fares schemes were approved in each year:

	Number
1998–99	12
2000	2
2001	0
2002	0
2003	3
2004	8
2005	2
2006	2

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much money was spent on repairing railways in *(a)* Romford and *(b)* Havering in each of the last 10 years. [63005]

Derek Twigg: These are operational matters for Network Rail and I have asked them to reply directly to the hon. Member.

Road Safety

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment his Department has made of the extent to which driving while smoking is dangerous. [63128]

Dr. Ladyman: Specific research has not been undertaken. However, the Department is aware that any distraction, such as eating and drinking or smoking while driving, can be dangerous.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many road deaths have been attributed to drivers *(a)* using their mobile phones, *(b)* smoking, *(c)* speeding and *(d)* not wearing seatbelts in each year since 1997. [63129]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is not available.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what measures the Department takes to identify drivers who drive while *(a)* on mobile phones, *(b)* not wearing seatbelts and *(c)* speeding. [63130]

Dr. Ladyman: The enforcement of road traffic laws is a matter for the police, working in partnership with local authorities and other local enforcement agencies. Drivers who commit offences are identified by various means. Police also use the powers of section 172 of the Road Traffic Act 1988. This requires the registered keeper of a vehicle or any other person to identify a driver suspected of an offence.

Road Traffic Regulations

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the operation of the *(a)* Motorways Traffic (England and Wales) Regulations 1982, *(b)* Motor Vehicles (Speed Units on Motorways) Regulations 1973 and *(c)* Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences) Regulations 1996. [62876]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is as follows.

(a) The Motorways Traffic (England and Wales) Regulations 1982 comprise a concise set of well established provisions to facilitate safe and efficient driving and behaviour on motorways. The requirements within the regulations are conveyed to road users in simple terms in the Highway Code. In response to changing circumstances, these regulations have been subject to periodic amendment.

(b) The Motor Vehicles (Speed Limits on Motorways) Regulations 1973 specify speed limits for certain classes of vehicles when being driven on the motorway.

(c) The Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences) Regulations 1996 implemented Directive 91/439/EEC on Driving Licences. The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency ensures the operation of the regulations by issuing licences compliant with the directive specification for EC harmonised categories, and by applying to applicants in Great Britain agreed European standards of medical fitness to drive.

Road User Legislation

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received on amending *(a)* the London Local Authority Act 2000 and *(b)* the Road User (Charges and Penalty) Regulations 2001; and if he will make a statement. [62695]

Dr. Ladyman: Ministers and officials have engaged with a range of key stakeholders in considering changes to the London Local Authority Act and the Road User Regulations, including Transport for London and the British Vehicle Leasing Association (BVLA).

The Department for Transport will be taking forward regulations to implement the provisions in Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 concerned with bus lanes and moving traffic offences which should rectify the problems within the London Local Authorities Act.

Royal Travel

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will report on the environmental impacts taken into account by the royal family in determining their mode of transport in the annual report on the grant-in-aid for royal travel by air and rail. [63140]

Derek Twigg: In deciding the appropriate mode of travel for any journey which is official travel, the royal household are required to have regard to the following key criteria:

safety,

security,

value for money,

length of journey,

transport which is consistent with the requirement and dignity of the occasion,

which represents the most effective use of the royal family's time,

and which minimises disruption to others.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to page 103 of the grant in aid for royal travel by air and rail, annual report 2004–05, how many and what percentage of the royal household were of ethnic minority origin in 2004–05; and what positions each held. [63141]

Derek Twigg: The Department does not hold any diversity or ethnicity information about staff employed by the royal household.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the Government's policy is on the use of the Queen's helicopter by members of the royal family for private purposes. [63145]

Derek Twigg: The royal helicopter is not permitted to be used by members of the royal family for private purposes.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the occasions in 2004–05 when the royal train was used other than by members of the royal family. [63147]

Derek Twigg: None. All journeys made by the royal train in 2004–05 were made by HM the Queen, HRH the Duke of Edinburgh or HRH the Prince of Wales.

Seat Belts

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the seat belt wearing rate was in *(a)* Southend, *(b)* Essex and *(c)* the Metropolitan Police Area of London (i) in the last period for which figures are available and (ii) in each month since 1990. [62877]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department for Transport does not collect data on seat belt wearing rates on a monthly basis or by locality. TRL Ltd undertakes surveys on behalf of the Department twice yearly at selected sites and weighting is applied to produce a national figure. The most recently published report, LF2096, is available online at: TRL website at: http://www.trl.co.uk/store/report_detail.asp?srid=4977&pid=211

Small Firms

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what definition the Department uses of a small firm. [59276]

Derek Twigg: The Department does not provide a precise definition of a "small firm" in its guidance, but where appropriate, refers to the definition provided by the Small Business Service. In particular, the Department collects information about its suppliers for the Small Business Service using the following categories:

Between 1 and 50 employees

Between 51 and 249 employees

250 or more employees.

Sustainable Building

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what proportion of the Department's building programme budget was allocated to *(a)* energy self-generation and *(b)* water recycling measures in the last financial year. [58754]

Derek Twigg: The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency, an Executive Agency of the Department for Transport is planning to build a new print site in the Swansea area. Of the £12 million build costs, £15,000–£20,000 has been allocated for the inclusion of water recycling measures.

The Department will examine what scope there is for further action in this area as part of the review of the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate and once the revised targets have been published.

Traffic Congestion

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the change in the economic costs of traffic congestion in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [62689]

Dr. Ladyman: None.

UK Airports

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the cost has been of adding runways to UK airports in each of the last 10 years. [62994]

Derek Twigg: Manchester airport is the only UK airport with an additional runway added in the last 10 years. Its second runway opened in February 2001 and cost £172 million to construct.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many individuals flew out of each UK airport in each of the last 10 years. [63002]

Derek Twigg: Information on terminal (arriving and departing) passengers at UK airports is published by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and available on the internet at the following address:

http://www.caa.co.uk/docs/80/airport_data/2005Annual/Table_10_3_Terminal_Pax_1995_2005.pdf

Walking/Cycling

Steve McCabe: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when the Government will publish *(a)* updated guidance on cycle friendly infrastructure and *(b)* final versions of the planned local transport notes on walking and cycling. [60825]

Derek Twigg: We intend to consult on the updated guidance on cycle friendly infrastructure by summer this year, and expect to publish by the end of the year. The local transport notes will follow in due course.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Arts Council England

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether it is Government policy that the Arts Council England introduce a continuous peer review process for those in receipt of funding; and if she will make a statement. [54677]

Tessa Jowell: Arts Council England (ACE) operates at arm's length from the Government. ACE continuously monitor their Regularly Funded Organisations to ensure public money is well spent and that their objectives are met. In doing this, ACE has sought to minimise administrative burdens.

British Museum

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pursuant to the answer of 16 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 2196W, on the British Museum, what the reasons were for the changes in spending between 2001 and 2005. [63135]

Mr. Lammy: The changes in British Museum expenditure on acquisitions in the years indicated arose as a result of donations and bequests of items and collections from third parties. These were:

£ million

	Total value of acquisitions	*Of which donated/ bequeathed items*
2000–01	[1]9.725	7.81
2001–02	17.847	14.25
2002–03	2.238	0.95
2003–04	6.578	2.75
2004–05	1.163	1.13

[1] This figure replaces the one of £9.275 million which was given in the answer of 16 February 2006.

The major donated/bequeathed items, in terms of their valuations, were:

2000–01—a collection of jewellery;

2001–02—a collection of Nubian lithics, ceramics and burial remains, a bronze trident and image, a calligraphy collection, a collection of jewellery, a coin collection;

2002–03—a ceramic art collection and a collection of etchings and drawings;

2003–04—a collection of modern prints and drawings.

Further descriptions of these items may be found in the British Museum Annual Reports and Annual Reviews, which are on the Museum's website: <http://www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/corporate/index.html>

Capita

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what contracts her Department has signed with Capita Group plc in each year since 1997. [62710]

Mr. Lammy: DCMS has placed the following contracts with Capita Group plc:

2001—Framework agreement for consultancy services to support quinquennial reviews of NDPBs

2005—Healthcare Services with Capita Health Solutions following acquisition of BMI Health Services

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what meetings *(a)* she and *(b)* Ministers in her Department have held with directors and senior executives of (i) Capita Group plc and (ii) its subsidiaries since 1 January 2004; and whether *(A)* Capita Group plc and *(B)* its subsidiaries have provided input (1) in writing and (2) in person to policy discussions in her Department since 1st January 2004. [61090]

Mr. Lammy: Capita Group plc has a large number of trading subsidiaries and this information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Casinos

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list the dates of her meetings with foreign casino operators and their representatives. [62711]

Mr. Caborn: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given on 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 2655–56W, to the hon. Member for North-East Cambridgeshire (Mr. Moss). Relevant meetings were listed in the earlier reply. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has had no further meetings with overseas casino operators since then.

Children's Hospices

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many children's hospices received lottery funding in each of the last five years; and if she will make a statement. [62722]

Mr. Caborn: Since 2001 24 children's hospices have received funding from the Big Lottery Fund, which is the operating name of the National Lottery Charities Board and the New Opportunities Fund, working jointly together.

Digital Television

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the procedure is for setting up a television channel on the digital network; and if she will make a statement. [61775]

James Purnell: To set up a television channel on a Digital Terrestrial Television Multiplex, a Digital Programme Service licence is required from Ofcom. To set up a channel on a digital cable network or a satellite platform, a Television Licensable Content Service Licence is required. The licence holder then has to negotiate with one of the platform operators for carriage of the channel.

Energy Efficiency

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps she is taking to increase energy efficiency within her Department; and if she will make a statement. [60345]

James Purnell: The Department is committed to achieve the targets under the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate Part E Energy. The targets include energy efficient measures and energy clauses in estate management contracts.

In order to achieve these targets the Department has developed an energy strategy. This identifies potential savings through effective procurement; monitoring and targeting our consumption by analysing data; carrying out energy surveys of usage; capital investment in energy saving measures such as time controls; and an awareness campaign amongst staff led by the Department's team of environmental champions.

The Department is also taking advantage of the planned refurbishment of its Cockspur Street offices to incorporate energy efficient measures such as passive infra red lighting controls.

The Department is supplied by 100 per cent. renewable energy and is seeking energy efficiency accreditation through The Carbon Trust.

Engagements

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many properties *(a)* owned and *(b)* managed by English Heritage (i) the Secretary of State, (ii) the Minister for Sport, (iii) the Minister for Culture and (iv) the Minister for Media and Tourism have visited in an official capacity in the last five years. [62712]

Mr. Lammy: Due to the heavy pressure on her diary, my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State, has not been able to visit an English Heritage property in an official capacity. She has visited Kenwood House in a private capacity. This property is owned and managed by English Heritage.

As Minister for Culture, I have visited five properties managed by English Heritage. My hon. predecessor, Lord McIntosh of Haringey, visited five properties managed by English Heritage between 2005 and 2003. Between 2003 and 2001, Baroness Blackstone, Minister of State for the Arts, visited four properties managed by English Heritage. Of these one is also owned by English Heritage.

As yet, the Minister for Sport, and the Minister for Creative Industries and Tourism have not had the opportunity to visit any property owned or managed by English Heritage in their official capacities.

Licensing

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many new licences have been granted in Swindon under the Licensing Act 2003; and what percentage were 24-hour licences. [62252]

James Purnell: This information is held by local licensing authorities.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether it is her policy that premises granted grandfather rights under the Licensing Act 2003 should be guaranteed extended New Year's

Eve opening hours notwithstanding the implementation of the Licensing Act 2003 (Consequential Amendments) Order 2005; and if she will make a statement. [61694]

James Purnell: Those premises which, prior to 6 August 2005, applied to convert their old licence into a licence under the Licensing Act 2003, were permitted to carry over automatically such extended trading hours as were previously permitted under that licence. For those businesses and clubs engaged in the supply of alcohol for consumption on the premises, apart from those where restriction orders were in force, this included an unbroken period of up to 36-hours from 11.00am on New Year's Eve, which formed part of "permitted hours" under the Licensing Act 1964.

However, where applicants also sought to vary the converted hours in such a way that they did not cover the 36-hour period, they should have included any additional hours for New Year's Eve in their application.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what guidance her Department has issued in relation to New Year's Eve opening hours since the implementation of the Licensing Act 2003 (Consequential Amendments) Order 2005; and if she will make a statement. [61695]

James Purnell: Since the Licensing Act 2003 (Consequential Amendments) Order 2005 came into force on 24 November 2005, no specific guidance has been published by the Department on this matter. However, my officials have taken steps to alert the trade to the possible use of Temporary Event Notices (TENs) where these can assist with particular needs.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether premises which have opened since the implementation of the Licensing Act 2003 (Consequential Amendments) Order 2005 are required to request in their premises licence application extended licensing hours for new year's eve; and if she will make a statement. [61696]

James Purnell: Those premises which, prior to 6 August 2005, submitted applications for a licence to carry out licensable activities, and which sought 'grandfather rights' for extended new year's eve opening hours, are guaranteed those extended new year's eve opening hours after the coming into force of the Licensing Act 2003 (Consequential Amendments) Order 2005 on 24 November 2005.

However, with effect from 6 August 2005, any new application under the Licensing Act 2003 would need to include all of the hours for which the applicant would wish to undertake licensable activities, including the sale of alcohol during new year's eve.

London Bombings Memorial

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport who will design the memorial for the victims of the 7 July bombings in London; and when it is scheduled to be erected. [62502]

Tessa Jowell: The Government are committed to providing a fitting memorial for the victims of the 7 July bombings in London. We are currently consulting bereaved families about the sort of memorial they would like.

Once we know their views, we will go through a tendering process to recruit a designer and will work with that designer to establish a timescale for the erection of the memorial.

National Lottery

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment has been made of availability of Lottery funding and grants for projects not related to the Olympics for each year up to 2012 for each London borough; and if she will make a statement. [63104]

Mr. Caborn: Lottery funding is awarded in response to external applications, and distributors will not yet know the number of applications from London boroughs up to 2012, nor the amount that might be sought. It would not, therefore, be possible to carry out such an assessment.

We expect the non-Olympic good causes to receive up to 5 per cent. less in Lottery income, as a result of sales diversion over the eight-year period from 2005 to 2013, than they might otherwise have received. In addition, a total of up to £410 million may be needed from the proceeds of non-Olympic Lottery games between 2009–10 and 2012–13.

National Sports Foundation

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much private investment has been secured for the establishment of the National Sports Foundation; and if she will make a statement. [62932]

Mr. Caborn: The National Sports Foundation will be launched in April and will be tasked with leveraging new private investment to match that allocated by the Exchequer. No private investment has yet been secured.

Olympic Games

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans the Government have to improve transport access to the 2012 Olympic site; and what funding will be required to do so. [63006]

Mr. Caborn: The London 2012 Candidature File submitted to the International Olympic Committee in November 2004 set out the plans for transport provision in connection with the proposed site of the Olympic Park.

Provision has been made within the £2.375 billion public sector funding package to fund Olympic related transport schemes.

Olympic Sports (Sponsorship)

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the total value of the

corporate sponsorship of Olympic sports has been at *(a)* elite and *(b)* grassroots level in the UK in each year since 1997; and if she will make a statement. [62941]

Mr. Caborn: The National Governing Bodies for Olympic sports have raised, and continue to raise, commercial sponsorship to benefit their elite and grassroots programmes and activities. The Government do not hold this information centrally.

In addition to the commercial sponsorship generated by the sports themselves, Sportsmatch, which was established in 1992 and is Exchequer funded through Sport England, has raised commercial sponsorship for grassroots Olympic and non-Olympic sports. An estimate of the amount raised since 1997 for Olympic sports only is as follows:

	£ million
1997–98	1.8
1998–99	1.8
1999–2000	1.9
2000–01	2.2
2001–02	1.8
2002–03	1.9
2003–04	2.3
2004–05	1.9

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what estimate her Department has made of the total value of corporate sponsorship of Olympic sports at *(a)* elite and *(b)* grassroots level in the UK in each year until 2012; and if she will make a statement. [62942]

Mr. Caborn: The Department has not made any precise estimates of the total value of corporate sponsorship at elite and grassroots level. However, commercial sponsorship is expected to contribute in the region of £100 million between now and 2012 in supporting British elite athletes. Further discussions are taking place about how much of this will need to be raised each year to supplement the £200 million allocated to elite sport by the Exchequer, as announced in the Budget.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer also announced that the Government have allocated £34.5 million over the next two years to the National Sports Foundation (NSF) in England. This will play an important role in raising commercial sponsorship for grassroots sport. The NSF has been challenged to match the Government's allocation with private investment.

Sportsmatch, established in 1992 and Exchequer funded through Sport England, will continue to raise commercial sponsorship for grassroots projects, across Olympic and non-Olympic sports, to a maximum award of £50,000.

In addition, the National Governing Bodies for Olympic sports raise commercial sponsorship to benefit all aspects of their sport.

Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what her Department's employer contribution rates to the principal civil service pension scheme are; what assumed rate of return underlies those contribution rates; and what the contribution rate would be if the assumed rate of return was in line with current redemption yield on index-linked gilts. [62006]

Mr. Lammy: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given to him by my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State for the Cabinet Office (Mr. Murphy), on 29 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1030–31W.

Queen's Birthday

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps she is taking to obtain sponsorship for expenditure on events for the Queen's 80th birthday. [62963]

Mr. Lammy: DCMS is not organising any special events for the Queen's 80th birthday. As usual, DCMS will arrange for Union flags to be flown in the Mall for Trooping of the Colour (Queen's Birthday Parade) which marks the Queen's official birthday and the costs will be funded by the Department.

Schools Olympics

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport by what criteria the location of the annual Schools' Olympics will be determined; and if she will make a statement. [62937]

Mr. Caborn: Events in future years are planned to be held in Northern Ireland, Wales and the North, South and Midlands of England. It is envisaged that the likely location for the Games in 2011 will be London. The exact criteria have yet to be determined.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what sports will be included in the Schools Olympics; and if she will make a statement. [62938]

Mr. Caborn: The first UK School Games will be run by the Youth Sports Trust. They will include athletics, swimming, gymnastics, table tennis and fencing plus disability events in athletics and swimming. It is envisaged that more events will be added to the games after 2007.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans her Department has to reimburse schools competing in the Schools' Olympics for the costs of *(a)* travel, *(b)* accommodation and *(c)* subsistence arising from the event; and if she will make a statement. [62939]

Mr. Caborn: The Youth Sport Trust (YST) is responsible for staging the first UK School Games in Glasgow in September 2006. All travel, accommodation and subsistence for competitors and team officials will be fully covered and has been included in the budget for this event

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions her Department has held with representatives of *(a)* primary schools and *(b)* secondary schools on the (i) timing of and (ii) choice of sports to be included in the Schools' Olympics; and if she will make a statement. [62940]

Mr. Caborn: The Youth Sport Trust (YST) is responsible for staging the first UK School Games in Glasgow in September 2006. Therefore there have been no direct communications to date between schools representatives and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

Sports Facilities

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment her Department has made of the value for money of public private partnerships to regenerate grassroots sports facilities; and if she will make a statement. [62934]

Mr. Caborn: Access to good quality sports facilities is essential if we are to encourage people to lead healthier, more active lives. In ensuring that we meet the challenge, it is essential that we provide a climate in which the potential weight of private sector investment can be brought to bear, including through public private partnerships (PPP). In 2005, a total of £66.5 million was awarded in Private Finance Initiative (PFI) credits by DCMS for community facilities. To date a total of £182.17 million of PFI credits have been awarded to 14 local authorities for sport and leisure facilities. The 4ps are currently undertaking a project to evaluate the success of sport and leisure PFI projects. This is due to be published in May 2006. In addition, the Audit Commission has undertaken a study into local authority sports facilities management which, among other things, looks at the effectiveness of PPP in delivering local authority leisure services.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what representations her Department has received on public private partnerships to regenerate grassroots sports facilities; and if she will make a statement. [62935]

Mr. Caborn: Access to good quality sports facilities is essential if we are to encourage people to lead healthier, more active lives. In ensuring that we meet the challenge, it is essential that we provide a climate in which the potential weight of private sector investment can be brought to bear, including through public private partnerships. In 2005, 30 local authorities applied for PFI credits, 14 of which were for community ports and leisure facilities.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps her Department has taken to encourage *(a)* independent schools, *(b)* private companies and *(c)* other non-public bodies to allow the community use of their sports facilities; and if she will make a statement. [62936]

Mr. Caborn: There is already significant community access to privately owned sports facilities and the Government are keen to promote this further. Through the National School Sport Strategy, we are encouraging links between independent schools and the network of School Sport Partnerships. This includes, where appropriate, the sharing of facilities. Both Sport England and local authorities are looking at ways of building community access into their plans for sports facilities at the local level. Access to good quality sports facilities is essential if we are to encourage people to lead healthier, more active lives. This is why we have a commitment that people should be no more than 20 minutes away (walking distance in urban areas and driving distance in rural areas) from a range of good quality facilities. The Active Places database lists publicly available sports facilities across the whole of England covering both public and private sector facilities.

Sportsmatch

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much private investment has been secured for Sportsmatch for each year since its creation; and if she will make a statement. [62933]

Mr. Caborn: The following table details the amounts of private investment into sport each year through Sportsmatch since 1992.

The total of £45 million has been generated by approximately £35 million of awards from Sportsmatch funds.

The higher figures for 1993–94, 1994–95 and 1995–96 reflect that at that time Sportsmatch could co-fund, up to £75,000, capital as well as revenue projects and the commercial input was often substantially higher than the Sportsmatch award.

A reduction in grant to Sportsmatch in 1995 to 1996 led to an adjustment in their rules to reduce their maximum award to £50,000 and to focus on revenue rather than capital projects.

Commercial investment in each year has continued to exceed the value of Sportsmatch awards.

1 April to 31 March	*Amount of sponsorship (£)*
1992–93	1,278,884.07
1993–94	5,080,902.10
1994–95	4,066,344.36
1995–96	4,387,172.71
1996–97	3,186,843.24
1997–98	2,842,996.80
1998–99	3,678,694.89
1999–2000	3,381,687.38
2000–01	4,125,149.58
2001–02	3,224,956.37
2002–03	3,306,904.89
2003–04	3,875,343.81
2004–05	3,127,207.98

Windsor Castle

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans she has to increase tourism to Windsor Castle. [63028]

James Purnell: My Department funds the work of VisitBritain in promoting tourism, which includes Windsor Castle, to both the domestic and international markets.

VisitBritain promotes tourism to Windsor Castle as part of the rich historic landscape and as one of a number of attractions that Windsor itself has to offer.

Windsor Castle is ranked the first 'Must See' in Windsor on the visitbritain.com website and the first of 'things to see and do' on the enjoyengland.com website.

Windsor Castle, Windsor Great Park and the Royal Landscape are currently promoted domestically in the 'castles' pages of enjoyEngland's 'great ideas 2006' brochure.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many people visited Windsor Castle in each of the last eight years. [63029]

Mr. Lammy: The numbers of paying visitors to Windsor Castle Precincts for the past eight financial years are as follows:

	Number
1997–98	1,253,000
1998–99	1,439,000
1999–2000	1,224,000
2000–01	1,094,000
2001–02	876,000
2002–03	935,000
2003–04	858,000
2004–05	914,000

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Afghanistan

Mr. Moore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the level of compliance of Afghan criminal law with international human rights treaties. [63388]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: We have not made an independent UK assessment. However, the "Justice for All" Action Plan jointly drafted by the Government of Afghanistan and the international community provides the basis on which the Afghan government will reform and strengthen the justice sector over the next 12 years. This Plan is divided into five areas of activity: law reform, institution-building, access to justice programs, traditional justice and co-ordination. The UK and the international community will continue to monitor progress in this field as the plan is put into effect.

The UK has just contributed US $500,000 towards its implementation for financial year 2006–07.

The Action Plan is available at: http://www.af/resources/aaca/cg+adf/justice_cg/LT_Gap%20(l) .pdf.

Ascension Island

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 13 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1892W, on Ascension Island, what the reasons were for the changes in the numbers of entry permits granted between 1999 and 2005. [63137]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: There is no annual quota for entry permits to Ascension Island. Changes in numbers, year on year, are a combination of differences in the numbers of people entering Ascension Island, more people transiting to and from the Falklands and St. Helena, different numbers of cruise ship visitors and fluctuating employment with the users.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many fishery enforcement patrols were carried out in Ascension Island waters in *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2005; and what the results of the patrols were. [63680]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: No fishery enforcement patrols were carried out in Ascension Island waters in 2004 or 2005.

BAE Systems

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions *(a)* he has and *(b)* his officials have had with (i) the Attorney General and (ii) his officials regarding the Serious Fraud Office investigations into the activities of BAE Systems in Saudi Arabia. [63086]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: It would not be appropriate to comment on whether or not any such discussions have taken place.

Belarus

Mr. Moore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what estimate he has made of the number of political activists detained by authorities in Belarus. [63389]

Mr. Straw: We know of six political activists in long term detention in Belarus. The Belarusian authorities announced on 29 March that approximately 500 people had been detained following the elections. Of these: 288 were sentenced to 10 days administrative arrest; 112 sentenced to 15 days administrative arrest; 53 were minors released without charge: and 21 were foreign nationals, 14 of whom were sentenced from 3–14 days administrative arrest. Unofficial sources suggest however that the number of arrests may be significantly higher, with estimates for the total number of arrests ranging from 700–1200, possibly including foreign nationals. It is not clear how many of these remain in detention. This number includes Aleksander Kozulin (now released), an opposition leader and presidential candidate, political activists, members of non governmental organisations, journalists and members of the public who were protesting about the results of an election which was not free and fair. It is not clear how many of those recently arrested remain in detention.

British Diplomatic Posts

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs in which embassies and high commissions he is *(a)* reducing diplomatic and other staff and *(b)* deploying additional staff; and what the reasons for the changes in staff deployed are in each case. [58166]

Mr. Straw: I apologise to the hon. Member for the delay in replying. Resources at embassies, high commissions and other Foreign and Commonwealth Office posts overseas are regularly shifted in response to changing priorities. Changes may be made in response to local factors, but the overall approach is guided by the UK's International Priorities. This has led to increases in resources for visa and consular work and also a move of staff to key posts outside Europe, including China, India and Pakistan, while also meeting

new demands in Iraq and Afghanistan. We have deployed new region-wide advisers on issues such as conflict and energy.

A fairly crude but still time consuming analysis of posts showing a change in UK based staff numbers since 1 April 2005 indicates that 148 have had a net change in total staff. Other posts may also have had changes in staffing (i.e. increases in one area offset by reductions elsewhere) but these could not be picked up. I am sending the hon. Member a copy of the details available from this exercise and placing a copy in the Library. It should be emphasised that this data is provisional.

Camp Ashraf

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 29 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1028–9W, on Mujahedin-e Khalq, what the current international status is of members of the Mujahedin-e Khalq Organisation at Camp Ashraf in Iraq. [63888]

Dr. Howells: It would be necessary to consider the circumstances of individual residents at Camp Ashraf in Iraq to determine their current international status in Iraq. The Government have made no judgment on the international status of any individual at Camp Ashraf. The Mujahedin-e Khalq Organisation is, however, a proscribed terrorist organization in the United Kingdom.

Cantaxx

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he has received official hospitality from Canatxx Ventures Limited, Canatxx UK and its associated companies in the last four years. [61328]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 27 March 2006]:* No. The hon. Member might however wish to be aware that Canatxx was one of the sponsors of a dinner in April 2004 to mark my (then) 25 years as Member for Blackburn. My Department was not involved in any way in this event.

Capita Group

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what meetings *(a)* he and *(b)* Ministers in his Department have held with directors and senior executives of (i) Capita Group plc and (ii) its subsidiaries since 1 January 2004; and whether (A) Capita Group plc and (B) its subsidiaries have provided (1) in writing and (2) input in person to policy discussions in his Department since 1 January 2004. [61078]

Ian Pearson: There has been one meeting between myself and Veredus, a Capita subsidiary, on 17 October 2005 to discuss the recruitment of the new chief executive of UK Trade and Investment which they were managing on behalf of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department for Trade and Industry. We have no records of any other meetings with Ministers. Information on other contacts between the Department and Capita, or its subsidiaries, cannot be provided without incurring disproportionate cost.

China

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the treatment of Falun Gong members in China, with particular reference to Sujiatun Camp. [62517]

Ian Pearson: The Government have seen no evidence to substantiate the reports circulating about the treatment of Falun Gong practitioners in Sujiatun camp. The Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs has denied these allegations. We continue to raise our concerns about human rights abuses of Falun Gong adherents in other contexts.

Colombia

John Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the Government have asked the Austrian presidency to invite a representative of the Office of the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights in Colombia to make a presentation on that Office's recommendations to the EU Council of Ministers in advance of the UN Human Rights Commission meeting on that country. [62702]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Following a meeting between the British and Irish non-governmental organisation coalition, ABColombia (ABC), and Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) officials on 15 February, the FCO relayed to the Austrian presidency of the EU the ABC request for a senior official from the Colombia office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to be invited to attend a meeting of the EU Working Group on Latin America, Committee of the Council for Latin America (COLAT), or the Council of Ministers. The UK believes that there is merit in periodic briefings of this nature as an important means of informing COLAT's work, particularly in the run-up to significant events in the UN's human rights calendar.

John Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what *(a)* unilateral and *(b)* multilateral action the Government plan to take to encourage the Colombian Government to implement a legal framework which (i) conforms to international standards and (ii) is in line with UN recommendations. [62739]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: We have regular discussions with the Government of Colombia, both bilaterally and as part of the EU and other groupings, about these issues. We have consistently urged the Colombians to adopt a comprehensive legal framework for the process of disarmament, demobilisation and re-integration (DDK) of the illegal armed groups. In October 2005, the EU General Affairs Council concluded that the adoption by the Colombian Congress of the Justice and Peace Law was a significant development, since it provides an overall legal framework for DDK in Colombia. The Council noted that it had many concerns over the law, but it believed that if the law was effectively and transparently implemented it would make a positive contribution to the search for peace in Colombia. We will continue to work with our partners to help the Government of Colombia to address the challenges these issues present. For example, EU Missions in Bogota are currently examining their project assistance

to Colombia to ensure that it complements the aim of effective and transparent implementation of the Justice and Peace Law and is consistent with UN human rights recommendations.

John Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps he is taking to work with *(a)* civil society and *(b)* the Catholic Church to monitor the conduct of elections in Colombia, with particular reference to the Presidential elections in May. [62741]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Our Embassy in Bogota consulted with a wide range of civil society and other groups, including EU partners, in monitoring the lead up to and the conduct of the Colombian Congressional Elections on 12 March. We will continue to do so for the Presidential Elections in May, including engagement with the Catholic Church.

John Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps the Government have taken *(a)* while President of the EU and *(b)* subsequently to ensure mid-term monitoring of the implementation of the UN Commission on Human Rights' recommendations to the Colombian Government. [62745]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: As President of the EU, the UK was instrumental in drawing up the EU Ministerial Council Conclusions of October 2005 that encouraged the Government of Colombia to consider a mid-year review of progress in implementing the UN human rights recommendations with its partners. During our Presidency, our Embassy in Bogota organised meetings for EU Member States with the Colombia office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to review progress on all of its human rights recommendations arising from its annual reports. More recently, we and other partners have continued to meet with Government representatives to look at how efforts to implement these recommendations are being taken forward. We will continue to take this work forward with like-minded partners.

John Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps the EU is taking, further to the Council conclusions of 3 October 2005, to ensure close monitoring of the implementation of UN recommendations on Colombia. [62746]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The EU regularly engages with the Colombian Government and other partners, including the UN and civil society, over the need to ensure that the UN human rights recommendations are implemented. The EU is actively involved in a working group that has been established in Bogota for this purpose. The EU Council Conclusions set out EU policy and support to the Government of Colombia, and included reference to the implementation of the recommendations. The EU will continue to look for ways of achieving this, including re-aligning Commission and Member States's project assistance to match the recommendations. The EU will also keep progress in taking forward the Council Conclusions under regular review.

Contracts (Voluntary Sector)

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many contracts are let by his Department to voluntary sector organisations; how many of those are let on an annual basis; and how many of those had received finalised contracts for 2006–07 by 31 March. [63216]

Mr. Straw: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office's accounts system does not differentiate between voluntary sector organisations and other organisations in its supplier records. The information could therefore be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will seek to obtain from the Indian high commissioner in London replies to the letters sent to the high commissioner on 4 January 2006, 9 February 2006 and 7 March 2006 by the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, with regard to Mr. G.K. Singh. [62439]

Mr. Straw: The Indian high commission wrote directly to Mr. Singh on 8 March 2006 and sent the letter by recorded delivery. A copy of the letter will be sent by my officials to my right hon. Friend.

Cuba

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the contacts his Department has had with the Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba. [63030]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has had no contacts with the Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba.

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the *(a)* state of and *(b)* prospects for the UK's relations with Cuba; and what his present policy is on Cuba. [63032]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The UK's policy towards Cuba, which is shared by our EU partners, is set out in the EU Common Position of 1996. The Common Position seeks to encourage a peaceful transition to pluralist democracy in Cuba. We see a relationship based on constructive engagement as the best way to achieve this.

The UK co-operates successfully with Cuba in a number of fields, including anti-drug trafficking, tourism, trade and cultural affairs. However, we are concerned by Cuba's human rights record and we continue to raise our concerns with the Cuban authorities. My noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, who is responsible for relations with Cuba, most recently held discussions with Cuban Vice Foreign Minister Caballero on 6 March.

The UK's desire is to further develop our relations with Cuba, but full co-operation between the EU and Cuba is dependent on Cuba demonstrating measurable improvements in human rights and political freedoms.

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his position will be on Cuba in the European Union's review of its common position on that country. [63033]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The UK's policy towards Cuba, which is shared with our EU partners, is set out in the EU common position of 1996. The main objective of the common position is to encourage a peaceful transition to pluralist democracy in Cuba.

We will maintain a close dialogue with our EU partners ahead of the review of the EU common position in June. In that context, we will continue to monitor the political and human rights situation in Cuba closely and will seek a consensus view with our EU partners.

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps the Government have taken to promote closer cultural, sporting and trading links with Cuba. [63034]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: We maintain close co-operation in areas that encourage trade, tourism, education, sport, science and cultural links between the UK and Cuba. The Cuba Initiative continues to develop trade and investment links and undertook another successful mission to Havana in November 2005.

The British Embassy and the British Council in Havana recently hosted a successful British Film Festival in Cuba in November 2005. Plans are being drawn up for co-operation between Cuban and British athletes for the 2012 Olympic games. Since 2003, the UK and Cuba has had a bilateral sports memorandum of understanding, allowing for training visits and exchanges in boxing, judo and cricket.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans the EU has to send further troops to the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and what discussions he has had with other EU Foreign Ministers on this issue. [62515]

Ian Pearson: On 23 March the European Council approved the concept of an EU military operation to support the UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) during the electoral period in the DRC. The exact nature and structure of the EU force remains under discussion, although preliminary planning has begun.

We have discussed this issue frequently with EU colleagues, including among Foreign Ministers at the 20 March General Affairs and External Relations Council. We welcome the EU decision as part of wider efforts to ensure a secure and stable environment for free and fair elections.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. [62516]

Ian Pearson: The human rights situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) remains poor. Congolese civilians, particularly in eastern DRC, continue to suffer abuses committed by militias, foreign-armed groups and ill-disciplined and poorly controlled Congolese army soldiers. A climate of impunity prevails. Harassment and physical attacks on human rights defenders continue. The transitional government still does not demonstrate commitment to freedom of expression.

The UK and international partners frequently remind the Congolese authorities of the need to protect civilians from such abuses and to respect freedom of expression. The EU's work on reform of the army and its pay structure should also help increase the discipline of Congolese soldiers.

We believe the recent transfer of former militia leader Thomas Lubanga, the first indictee to be transferred to the International Criminal Court in The Hague, sends a strong signal that grave human rights abuses will not be tolerated.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many and what proportion of *(a)* staff and *(b)* new staff employed in (i) his Department and (ii) each of the agencies for which he has responsibility were registered as disabled in each of the last three years for which data is available. [61379]

Mr. Straw: The Cabinet Office collects and publishes annually statistical information on the civil service by Department. This includes data on the number of staff in departments who have declared a disability.

Declaration of a disability is voluntary.

The latest available information at April 2004 is available in the Library of the House and on the civil service website at the following addresses:

http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management/statistics/publications/xls/disability_apr04_4nov04.xls

for data relating to 1 April 2004, and

http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management/statistics/archive/index.asp

for previous reporting periods.

At April 2005, 189 (3 per cent.) Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) staff had declared a disability. The latest available figures for 2006 (as at February) are that 179 (3 per cent.) staff have declared a disability.

The number and proportion of new FCO staff who have declared a disability for the last three years is:

1 March to 28 February	*Number of staff*	*As a percentage of new staff joining that year*
2005–2006	8	2
2004–2005	7	2
2003–2004	8	3

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much his

Department spent on private schooling for the children of its staff based in the UK in each year since 1997. [60896]

Mr. Straw: Since 1997 the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has spent the following amounts on fees for private schooling in the UK for children of UK-based officers:

	£ million
1997–98	10.5
1998–99	10.5
1999–2000[1]	6.8
2000–01[1]	13
2001–02	13.8
2002–03	15.9
2003–04	17.3
2004–05	17.5

[1] These figures cover a period of moving from cash to resource based accounts and may contain discrepancies.

It is a condition of employment that members of the Diplomatic Service must be prepared to serve anywhere in the world at any time during their career, sometimes at very short notice. Those with children also have the legal obligation as parents to ensure that their children receive a full-time education from the age of 5 years. The FCO's provisions for children's education are intended to help staff meet these potentially conflicting obligations.

Children who accompany their parents on postings overseas are expected to use free state schooling if it is available locally and is of a suitable standard. But at posts where no suitable schooling is available free-of-charge locally, education fees can be refunded to enable children to receive the education they would be entitled to in the UK.

With staff moving every 12–48 months and education facilities at Posts' locations overseas varying, continuity of education can be problematic particularly during the important exam years. The FCO's provisions address this problem by enabling children to board at school in the UK while their parents remain subject to the worldwide mobility obligation.

Departmental Televisions

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many television sets are in operation in the Department *(a)* in total, *(b)* in Minister's private offices and *(c)* in each office building in the Department; and how many television licences are held by the Department. [62794]

Mr. Straw: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does not categorise expenditure down to this level of detail in its accounts. In addition, the FCO delegates budgets for such equipment to individual internal departments and does not therefore hold a centralised record of such purchases. The information requested for the whole of the Department, including our posts abroad, could therefore be provided only at disproportionate cost.

For Private Offices, a total of 15 televisions are held, including seven in my suite of offices, including those of the special advisers and security attachment. There are two in each of the other Private Offices.

The Television Licensing Agency have advised my officials that, where a Government Department uses televisions for business purposes, they are exempt from the need for a television licence. Where televisions are used for recreational purposes, they need a single licence for each site at which they are located. The FCO therefore holds two television licences, one for the site at Hanslope Park and one for the main building site in King Charles Street.

Diplomatic Posts

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs why the British embassy in Antananarivo, Madagascar was closed in August 2005; and if he will make a statement. [62360]

Ian Pearson: I refer the hon. Member to the statement given by my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary on 15 December 2004, *Official Report*, columns 137–140WS), covering the closure of several embassies and high commissions, including that of the British embassy in Madagascar.

Diplomatic Staff (Spain)

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many *(a)* diplomatic staff and *(b)* locally engaged staff are based in (i) Alicante, (ii) Barcelona, (iii) Bilbao, (iv) Ibiza, (v) Las Palmas, (vi) Malaga, (vii) Palma, (viii) Seville and (ix) Tenerife. [62641]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 30 March 2006]:* Numbers employed at posts can fluctuate. The average number of diplomatic and locally engaged staff employed by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office at each of the posts requested, in the current financial year is as follows:

Post	*UK based staff*	*Locally engaged staff*
Alicante	0	6.3
Barcelona	2	16.7
Bilbao	0	6
Ibiza	0	3.4
Las Palmas	0	7
Malaga	0	9
Palma	0	7
Seville	0	2
Tenerife	0	5

EU Constitution

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what parts of the draft EU constitution the Government support. [62742]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Government made clear their support for the draft constitutional treaty in the Inter-Governmental Conference in 2004. The Government's focus is now on delivering the policy priorities agreed at the Hampton Court summit.

Gibraltar

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress has been made in talks with Spain and Gibraltar regarding the Gibraltar constitution. [62974]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: I refer the hon. Member to my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary's statement to the House on 27 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 44–46WS. His Joint Statement with the Chief Minister and his letter to the Spanish Foreign Minister are both available in the Library of the House.

Guide to the European Union

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the total cost was of *(a)* producing and *(b)* distributing the revised Guide to the European Union. [63649]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The 2005–06 budget allocation for producing and distributing the Guide is £80,000. Final costings will be available following launch and distribution.

Hamas

Mr. Moore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions *(a)* British and *(b)* EU officials have had with representatives of Hamas since January 2006. [62219]

Mr. Straw: There have been no contacts between UK officials and Hamas since January 2006. We are not aware of any EU contacts with Hamas since January 2006.

HMS Sussex

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with *(a)* Spain and *(b)* Gibraltar concerning the treasures of HMS Sussex. [62973]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has not held any discussions with either Spain or Gibraltar about The Sussex.

Holy See

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 16 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 2462W, about the Holy See, if he will place in the Library *(a)* a copy of the internal review of the embassy in 2005 and *(b)* copies of correspondence between his Department and the Holy See about the relocation of the British embassy; and if he will make a statement. [62683]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The internal review of the embassy referred to by the hon. Member is an internal document produced to help formulate and develop policy decisions. As such, it would not be appropriate to place a copy in the Library of the House.

The correspondence requested by the hon. Member constitute a confidential exchange between two Governments. As such, it would be inappropriate to place copies in the Library of the House.

Honours

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the individuals who are not UK citizens who, since May 2005, have been awarded honours, indicating in each case the *(a)* date of announcement, *(b)* honour in question and *(c)* reason for the award. [63154]

Mr. Straw: Yes. As the information requested is lengthy, it has been placed in the Library of the House.

As honorary awards, i.e. to citizens of countries where Her Majesty the Queen is not Head of State, are not formally announced, the date of the Queen's formal approval of such awards has been given.

Iraq

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many detainees in Iraq have been *(a)* charged and *(b)* tried and convicted of offences connected to the insurgency. [61851]

Dr. Howells: This is a matter for the Iraqi judicial authorities. We are making inquiries with the Central Criminal Court of Iraq. My officials will write to the hon. Member once we have received a reply.

Isle of Man/Overseas Territories

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps the Government are taking to attract businesses to *(a)* the Isle of Man and *(b)* UK Overseas Territories. [62975]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Economic and business development in the Overseas Territories (OTs) and the Crown Dependencies, including the Isle of Man, is the responsibility of the Governments of the Territories and the Crown Dependencies. Most of the OTs and also the Crown Dependencies have agencies that are responsible for inward investment promotion.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has an Economic Adviser, based in its Overseas Territories Department and a Regional Financial Services Adviser based in the Caribbean. Both offer general economic and financial services development advice to all the OTs. The FCO also has an Overseas Territories Programme Fund. Part of this fund is used to support the economic diversification of the OTs, and in recent years has funded telecommunications liberalisation initiatives and small business development.

The Isle of Man is not part of the UK and is responsible for its own trade/export promotion.

Israel

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make representations to the Israeli authorities on behalf of Ziyad Hmeidan, being held under administrative detention. [62514]

Dr. Howells: We continue to monitor the situation with regard to all Palestinian prisoners held in administrative detention. We will continue to raise our concerns with the Israeli authorities. We have no plans to raise Ziyad Hmeidan's case with the Israeli authorities. Our ambassador in Tel Aviv last discussed the issue of Palestinian prisoners with the Israeli government on 22 March.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) currently have access to Israeli prisons and detention centres in Israel and the West Bank. The ICRC monitors conditions in Israeli prisons on a regular basis.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the election of the Kadima party to power in Israel. [63424]

Dr. Howells: As my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister said

> "I congratulate Ehud Olmert and the Kadima party on their election victory. Kadima's victory changes the shape of Israeli politics. It is an extraordinary personal achievement for Ehud Olmert. I look forward to meeting him soon to discuss his plans to take the peace process forward. I urge all parties to pursue a path of positive engagement as set out by the Quartet (EU, US, UN and Russia)".

Jericho Prison

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the Government had advance knowledge of the Israeli raid on Jericho prison following the withdrawal of the British Independent Monitors. [61000]

Dr. Howells: Israel had made clear that it would not allow the detainees involved in the assassination of the Israeli Tourism Minister, Rehevam Ze'evi, to go free. However, the Israeli authorities did not discuss the details of its operational plan with us. We also did not share the details of our withdrawal plan with the Israeli authorities. The first time the Israeli and the Palestinian authorities knew of the exact date of our withdrawal was on 14 March when we had withdrawn our monitors.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has received in relation to the termination of the UK mission at Jericho Prison. [61001]

Dr. Howells: On 14 March, my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary received representations from the Austrian Foreign Minister. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary explained that in the absence of the Palestinian Authority responding to our requests for increased security we had to withdraw our monitors to ensure their safety.

Kashmir

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the actions by Indian military personnel in Kashmir in relation to human rights of the population; and if he will make a statement. [62369]

Dr. Howells: The UK continues to be concerned by credible reports of human rights abuses in Indian-administered Kashmir, including by Indian security forces. We are aware of the incident in Handwara on 22 February 2006 in which four young Kashmiris were killed, allegedly by the Indian army. We note that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said on 25 February 2006 that he was "grieved by the incident and at the loss in innocent lives". He also said that he had "asked the army to take remedial measures so that such incidents do not recur in the future". We understand that on 1 March 2006, Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad announced a judicial probe into the killings.

The UK welcomes the continued reduction in hostility between Pakistan and India and applauds the two countries' shared commitment to the ongoing Composite Dialogue process, whose third round began on 17 January 2006. We remain in regular contact with both governments and we will continue to encourage India and Pakistan to continue to seek to resolve all of their outstanding issues, including over Kashmir. We believe that this process will advance the human rights situation in Indian-administered Kashmir.

The UK deplores the continued militant violence in Indian-administered Kashmir. There can be no justification for those who seek to influence people through intimidation and brutality and we condemn all acts of violence that bring suffering to ordinary Kashmiris. We believe firmly that violence cannot bring about a solution to the Kashmir issue and we urge the militants to remove the gun from Kashmiri politics.

Landmines (Falklands)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the terms of reference are of the joint UK-Argentinean feasibility study into the eradication of landmines in the Falklands; and what the timetable is for the study. [63252]

Dr. Howells: In line with the 2001 UK-Argentina Joint Statement, we are currently working together on the terms of reference and scope of a joint feasibility study on de-mining the Falkland Islands. Once these are agreed, there will be a tendering process to select a contractor to carry out the study, which should take place between November 2006 and March 2007.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of whether Argentina broke the Geneva convention by laying landmines in the Falklands. [63253]

Dr. Howells: Argentina did not break any of the four Geneva conventions by laying landmines in the Falkland Islands: there are no specific provisions regarding landmines in any of them.

Liberia

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps his Department has taken to assist the Government of Nigeria in apprehending Charles Taylor, former Head of State of Liberia. [62816]

Ian Pearson: We are delighted that Charles Taylor has been arrested in Nigeria and transferred to the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

The UK has been in close and regular touch with Nigeria and other international partners on the political and practical issues relating to Taylor's delivery to the court.

We are grateful for the efforts of Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf and Nigerian President Obasanjo for their efforts in this regard.

Mercosur

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has received from the Mercosur trade bloc on trade with *(a)* the EU and *(b)* the UK. [62153]

Dr. Howells: Discussions on EU-Mercosur trade in the context of the negotiations of the EU-Mercosur Regional Association Agreement, are conducted on behalf of the EU by the Commission. We have received no representations from the Mercosur group.

Mersey Police (Condoleeza Rice)

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will reimburse Mersey police for the extra costs incurred by them for policing the visit to Liverpool of the United States Secretary of State, Condoleeza Rice. [63397]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Ensuring appropriate levels of security for visiting VIP's is the responsibility of the Police Service and the Home Office takes overall responsibility for policing.

The costs of police resources fall to the Police Service concerned, in this case Merseyside police. However, there is a process through which Police Services may apply to the Home Office for a special grant to cover costs for events which are over and above routine policing.

Mujahedin-e Khalq Organisation

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment the Government have made of the military capacity of the Mujahedin-e Khalq organisation since May 2003. [62407]

Dr. Howells: The Mujahedin-e Khalq was proscribed in the UK in March 2001. The list of proscribed organisations is kept under constant review. It is established policy not to comment further on any information or intelligence we hold in relation to a specific group.

NATO Forum on Energy Security Technology

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representation his Department had at the NATO forum on energy security technology held in Prague on 22 to 24 February; and if he will place in the Library copies of all presentations made which were relevant to United Kingdom energy security. [60619]

Mr. Straw: Officials from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), Ministry of Defence and the Home Office attended this conference, which was supported by the NATO Programme for Security through Science. Government officials did not make any presentations and the presentations made at the conference were not specific to the UK.

Further information about the NATO Forum on Energy Security Technology can be found at the event's website, www.energy-security.org. FCO officials are in contact with the conference organisers to discuss possible arrangements for access to presentations made at the conference, which are password protected and only available to conference participants. My officials will write to the hon. Member when the conference organisers have been able to establish whether speakers are happy for their presentations to be shared more widely and how this can best be done.

Nigeria

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions his Department has had with counterparts in the Nigerian Government on a proposed amendment to the Constitution which will allow President Obasanjo to seek a third Presidential term; and if he will make a statement. [62824]

Ian Pearson: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary visited Nigeria from 13 to 15 February and had the opportunity to discuss a wide range of issues with senior Nigerians, including President Obasanjo. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary said publicly during his visit that Constitutional change is a matter for the Nigerians and that we will continue to support the Nigerian Government's reform programme.

Official Engagements

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list his official engagements undertaken on 21 March 2006; for which such engagements the ministerial car was used; and if he will make a statement. [61579]

Mr. Straw: Use of my official vehicles is in line with the Ministerial Code on Travel (copy in Library of the House).

For reasons of security all journeys in respect of any of my public duties (including non-ministerial ones) and almost every private journey are undertaken in official vehicles.

Palestinian Authority

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the steps being taken by the Palestinian Authority to protect foreign nationals and property in Gaza and the West Bank. [60499]

Dr. Howells: We were grateful for the steps taken by Palestinian security services to provide a safe exit for foreign nationals on 14 and 15 March. However, we are extremely concerned by the failure of the Palestinian Authority to take action against kidnappers or provide adequate protection for buildings connected with western interests in the West Bank and Gaza. It is disappointing that facilities designed to aid and support the Palestinian people, such as the library provided by the British Council, have been destroyed. We hope to re-open these facilities as soon as possible.

Peru

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the outcome of the Peruvian presidential election; and if he will make a statement. [62130]

Dr. Howells: The Peruvian Presidential election is scheduled to take place on 9 April. We are following the election campaign with close attention with a particular focus on the possible implications for our interests, including the substantial UK investments in the country. Whatever the outcome, we hope that we can continue to enjoy close and friendly relations with Peru.

Raoul Wallenberg

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will seek to obtain from the Swedish Government as much information as is in their possession about the case of Mr. Raoul Wallenberg. [63054]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Swedish Government have been very open on this matter.

In 2001, a joint Swedish-Russian working group concluded a 10-year investigation into the fate of Raoul Wallenberg. The reports from both the Swedish and Russian sides are freely available on the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs website (http://www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/3105/a/18447;jsessionid=aQgqvmN_L6g6). In this process, the Swedish Government also made public about 60,000 pages on the case of Mr. Wallenberg.

In 2003, a report into the Swedish Foreign Ministry's handling of the case was published. It is available with an English summary at http://www.regeringen.se/content/1/c4/14/55/eea4918e.pdf

In addition, the Reference Group for Support to Independent Research on Raoul Wallenberg, established by the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs in April 2002, twice a year allocates and approves funds for independent research projects on Mr. Wallenberg.

In light of the aforementioned, we have no plans to press the Swedish Government for further information on this matter.

Religious Freedom Panel

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether a meeting of the Religious Freedom Panel was held in March. [63327]

Ian Pearson: Yes. The panel met on Thursday 23 March.

Rendition

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 20 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 86W, on rendition, whether the requirement for permission is a legal requirement; and from which domestic and international law it derives. [61538]

Dr. Howells: The requirement is a legal one and is an aspect of the principle of State sovereignty over territory.

Royal Visits

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans the Queen has to visit *(a)* Commonwealth nations and *(b)* Overseas Territories. [62967]

Mr. Straw: At present, there are no immediate plans for Her Majesty the Queen to visit either Commonwealth countries or Overseas Territories, although we do of course envisage future visits. The Queen has recently returned from attending the Commonwealth Games in Australia and a State Visit to Singapore. In the previous 12 months, the Queen has visited Canada (May 2005) and Malta (November 2005).

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what visits have been made by members of the Royal Family to *(a)* Canada, *(b)* Australia, *(c)* New Zealand, *(d)* Gibraltar and *(e)* the Falkland Islands in the last five years. [63026]

Mr. Straw: Our records show the following visits by members of the Royal Family to Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Gibraltar and the Falkland Islands in the last five years.

	Her Majesty the Queen	*Country visited*	*Type of visit*
2002	22–27 February	New Zealand	Royal
2002	27 February to 2 March	Australia	Royal
2002	2–3 March	Australia	Official the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM)
2002	4–15 October	Canada	Royal
2005	17–25 May	Canada	Royal
2006	12- 6 March	Australia	Royal

	His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh	*Country visited*	*Type of visit*
2001	19–21 October	Canada	Working
2002	27 February to 2 March	Australia	Royal—with HM the Queen
2002	2–3 March	Australia	Official (CHOGM)—Royal—with HM the Queen
2002	4–15 October	Canada	Royal—with HM the Queen
2004	26–27 April	Canada	Working
2005	17–25 May	Canada	Royal—with HM the Queen
2006	12–16 March	Australia	Royal—with HM the Queen

	His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales	Country visited	Type of visit
2001	25 April to 2 May	Australia	Royal
2005	28 February to March	Australia	Royal
2005	6–10 March	New Zealand	Royal

	His Royal Highness Prince William	Country visited	Type of visit
2005	30 June to 10 July	New Zealand	Royal

	His Royal Highness Prince Harry	Country visited	Type of visit
2003	23 September to 20 December	Australia	Private

	His Royal Highness the Duke of York	Country visited	Type of visit
2001	14–17 December	Canada	Private
2002	6–17 January	Australia	Private
2002	8–11 November	Falkland Islands	Official
2003	6–13 May	Canada	Royal
2003	12–18 June	Canada	Royal
2005	23–28 September	Australia	Private
2005	28 September to 2 October	New Zealand	Regimental

	His Royal Highness the Earl of Wessex	Country visited	Type of visit
2001	2–9 August	Canada	Working
2001	30 August to 1 September	Gibraltar	Working
2002	5–8 September	Canada	Working
2002	20–24 September	Canada	Working
2002	22–29 November	Australia	Working
2003	16–25 June	Canada	Working
2004	13–22 March	New Zealand	Royal
2005	31 May to 8 June	Canada	Working
2006	10–28 March	Australia	Royal

	Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal	Country visited	Type of visit
2002	3–11 February	New Zealand	Working
2003	29 August to 2 September	Canada	Working
2003	13–30 October	Australia and New Zealand	Working
2004	4–8 June	Canada	Royal
2004	28–30 June	Gibraltar	Official

	His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent	Country visited	Type of visit
2001	4–9 April	Canada	Working
2001	19–22 October	Canada	Regimental

	His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester	Country visited	Type of visit
2004	2–17 February	New Zealand	Private

	Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Gloucester	Country visited	Type of visit
2004	23 January to 2 February	Australia	Working
2004	2–17 February	New Zealand	Private

	His Royal Highness Prince Michael of Kent	Country visited	Type of visit
2002	13–25 March	Canada	Working
2002	21–25 June	Canada	Private
2003	31 July to 6 August	Canada	Private
2004	13–18 October	Canada	Private

	Her Royal Highness Princess Michael of Kent	Country visited	Type of visit
2002	21–25 June	Canada	Private—With HRH Prince Michael of Kent
2003	31 July to 6 August	Canada	Private—With HRH Prince Michael of Kent

	Her Royal Highness the Countess of Wessex	Country visited	Type of visit
2005	31 May to 8 June	Canada	Working—With HRH the Earl of Wessex

Russia (Energy Supplies)

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the implications of Russia's development of natural gas pipelines to China. [62142]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Russia and China formally agreed to construct a spur to China from the planned East Siberia-Pacific Ocean gas pipeline during President Putin's visit to China on 21–22 March. This is consistent with Russia's desire to diversify gas exports and customers. President Putin stressed at the time of the announcement that Russia would continue to meet all its delivery requirements to European customers. More generally, the agreement reflects strengthening trade, economic and energy co-operation and bilateral links between China and Russia. Diversification of China's energy portfolio towards greater use of gas as a cleaner energy source and as a substitute for coal is good for climate change reasons.

Sierra Leone

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the security situation in Sierra Leone. [63329]

Ian Pearson: The overall security situation in Sierra Leone is generally calm, but fragile. The situation had sufficiently improved to allow the full departure of the UN peacekeeping force, the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone, at the end of 2005. There has been progress on improving the training, leadership and professionalism of the Sierra Leone Army and Police forces. A UK-led International Military Assistance and Training Team has aided much of this reform by close co-operation with the Army and will remain in Sierra Leone until at least 2010. They currently have

approximately 100 personnel in country. We have also provided support to the police in a training and reform programme, which has left them better able to deal with internal security.

Uganda

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the conclusions of the Commonwealth Observer Group report on the elections in Uganda on *(a)* the environment in which the elections were held, *(b)* whether there was a clear distinction between the ruling party and the state, *(c)* the use by the ruling party of public resources, *(d)* media coverage, *(e)* alleged harassment of the main opposition presidential candidate and *(f)* allegations of use by the ruling party of financial and material inducements. [62659]

Ian Pearson: On 15 March, the Commonwealth Observer Group issued its final report on the 2006 Presidential and Parliamentary elections. The report noted that the elections had generally been well administered and had enabled the will of the people to be expressed. However, the Group highlighted some serious irregularities, including the use of public resources, harassment and financial and material inducements, which meant that candidates were not competing on a level playing field.

We, along with other donors, raised these concerns with the Ugandan government in the run-up to the elections. In particular, we called for a clear separation of the Movement Party from the State, and for a swift and transparent trial for Dr. Kizza Besigye, the main opposition leader.

Our High Commissioner in Kampala, as chair of the local donors' group, held discussions with both the President and the main opposition party following the elections. We have called on all involved to work within the Constitution to embed pluralist democracy in Uganda.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the effect on the prospects for multi-party democracy in Uganda of the nomination of senior army officers to sit and vote in the next multi-party parliament; and if he will make a statement. [62660]

Ian Pearson: There has been no assessment made on the effects of the nomination of senior army officers in the Ugandan Parliament. The constitution is a matter for the Ugandan people. Under the constitution of the Republic of Uganda, promulgated in 1995 and amended in 2005, the Ugandan Parliament consists of 309 Members of Parliament (MPs). A number of seats are reserved for particular sectors of society; women (69), those with disabilities (five), trade and industry representatives (five), youth (five) and the armed forces (10).

An election to determine the armed forces MPs was conducted by the Ugandan Electoral Commission in mid February 2006. General Nyakairima, Chief of Defence Forces, and General Tumwine, Chairman of the General Court Martial, were among those chosen.

We welcome the return of multi-party democracy to Uganda.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the comments by Ugandan President Museveni that the UK is responsible for *(a)* the war in the north of Uganda and *(b)* the 12-hour power cuts due to load-shedding; and if he will make a statement. [62661]

Ian Pearson: During the recent election campaign, President Museveni stated that it was his opinion that the international community should share the responsibility for some of the problems currently facing Uganda. We disagree.

The long-running conflict in northern Uganda is the result of a vicious insurgency by the Lord's Resistance Army. The Government of Uganda has primary responsibility for addressing the conflict and protecting and providing for those displaced by it. We are supporting efforts to resolve the conflict and have provided over £20 million in humanitarian assistance in 2005–06.

The current extended three year period of drought in the region, coupled with reports of over-abstraction of water from Lake Victoria to generate power, have dramatically reduced the availability of power supply in Uganda leading to massive load shedding.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with President Museveni of Uganda following his election victory; and if he will make a statement. [62662]

Ian Pearson: Our High Commissioner in Kampala held discussions on 7 March with President Museveni following the election result. I also refer the hon. Member to the answers given to my hon. Friend the Member for Leicester, East (Keith Vaz) on 6 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1179W, and the hon. Member for Hammersmith and Fulham (Mr. Hands) on 13 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1911W.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Ugandan authorities following *(a)* the killing of three Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) supporters in Bulange, *(b)* the firing of tear gas at FDC supporters in Lugogo and *(c)* the driving of armoured personnel carriers through a FDC election rally in Mukono; and if he will make a statement. [62663]

Ian Pearson: The Presidential and Parliamentary elections which took place on 23 February in Uganda were generally peaceful, as noted by the Commonwealth and the European Union Observer Missions.

An individual has been arrested and is currently in detention with regard to the incident on 15 February when three opposition supporters were shot dead in the central Kampala suburb of Mengo. On 27 March, the court magistrate gave the police two weeks to complete its investigation.

Armoured vehicles and tear gas was used on several occasions to police the elections. But we have not been able to substantiate the allegations that they were used to violate human rights. We have made no representations on these specific issues, but in the run-up to the elections we made clear to the Ugandan government the importance of a peaceful and transparent electoral process.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the ability of the press to operate freely in Uganda; what assessment he has made of the position in Uganda of *(a)* BBC reporter Will Ross, *(b)* the Economist reporter Drake Blake, *(c)* the Gulu FM Radio Station and *(d)* Uganda Observer reporter Ibhrahim Nganda; and if he will make a statement. [62671]

Ian Pearson: As I outlined in my answer to the hon. Member for Cotswold (Mr. Clifton-Brown) on 13 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1911–1912W, Uganda has a relatively free press. There are 129 radio stations operating across the country, six terrestrial television stations and four principal print dailies; some of which are frequently highly critical of the government. International donors monitor media freedom closely in Uganda and raised the issue most recently in a meeting with the Information Minister on 16 January 2006. There has been no assessment made regarding the position of individual journalists in Uganda.

In late 2005, there were a number of incidents which raised concern about the Ugandan government's commitment to a free press. In part this informed the decision taken in December 2005 by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Development, to announce a reduction of £15 million in Poverty Reduction Budgetary Support to Uganda.

We support the right of all reporters to operate freely within the law. Choice FM in Gulu was closed on instructions from the Ugandan Broadcasting Council on 14 March 2006 for alleged breaches of the Electronic Media Act and for operating without a valid licence. Choice FM is contesting the allegations and an investigation is ongoing. We will keep this issue under close scrutiny and urge the Ugandan government to fully respect freedom of expression.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the climate for investment in Uganda; and if he will make a statement. [62724]

Ian Pearson: Uganda's economy has performed well in recent years, averaging approximately 6 per cent. annual growth between 1998 and 2005. By maintaining macro-economic stability and liberal economic policies Uganda has been able to attract some multinational investment and donor support. The major export crop is coffee, with some revival of tea, tobacco and cotton production. There is a modest manufacturing and tourism sector and relatively new development of horticulture. Exports continue to rise.

Ukraine

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the recent election in Ukraine; and if he will make a statement. [63317]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: In its statement of 27 March, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights' International Election Observation Mission in Kiev described Ukraine's parliamentary elections held on 26 March as free and fair. We agree with this assessment.

Coming only 15 months after Ukraine's "Orange Revolution", born itself out of a severely flawed presidential election this is a significant achievement. It represents a big step forward for democracy in Ukraine and the whole Commonwealth of Independent States region. It also marks an important stage in the evolution of Ukraine's relations with both the EU and NATO.

Ukraine's politicians are currently negotiating the formation of a coalition Government. Experience elsewhere in Europe shows that this can take some time. But whatever the complexion of the new Government, the UK stands ready to work with it in support of Ukraine's political and economic reform efforts.

UN Convention Against Torture

Mrs. Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps he is taking to encourage national governments to sign the second optional protocol to the UN convention against torture; and if he will make a statement. [62859]

Ian Pearson: The UK is a committed supporter of the optional protocol to the UN convention against torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (OPCAT). There is only one optional protocol at present. The UK ratified the OPCAT in 2003, becoming the first country in the European Union and third country in the world to do so.

In June 2004, my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary launched a worldwide lobbying campaign to encourage other countries to sign and ratify the OPCAT. We continue to lobby in support of this and, through the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's global opportunities fund, we are supporting the work of a non-governmental organisation, the Association for the Prevention of Torture, to promote ratification of the OPCAT around the world.

United States

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list his meetings with US Administration official Caleb McCarry; and what the subjects of each meeting were. [63031]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has never met Mr. McCarry. Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials, however, met Mr. McCarry in London on 7 November 2005, when he was on his way to a conference in Brussels where he met many European partners. The discussion focussed on UK/EU policy on Cuba, including ways of encouraging a process of peaceful transition to pluralist democracy in

Cuba. The difference in UK/EU and US policy was also discussed. Mr. McCarry did not meet any Ministers during his visit.

The Government continue to meet regularly with many interlocutors on Cuba, including the US. This is in line with the EU's longstanding policy of constructive engagement in pursuit of a peaceful transition to pluralist democracy.

World Cup (Complimentary Tickets)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many complimentary tickets his Department has received for games taking place at the FIFA World Cup 2006 in Germany. [63899]

Dr. Howells: FIFA has offered our ambassador in Berlin two World Cup 2006 tickets for each England game. In addition, he has been offered the opportunity to request one ticket for any other game.

World Heritage Sites

David Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs which Minister in his Department has responsibility for issues relating to World Heritage Sites. [63478]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Lead responsibility for policy on World Heritage Sites rests with my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport works closely with relevant Government Departments on all issues affecting World Heritage Sites. Within the Foreign and Commonwealth Office there is no Minister of State with specific responsibility for World Heritage Sites. However, my hon. Friend the Minister of State for the Middle East with responsibility for the UN, Kim Howells, and my noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs responsible for public diplomacy issues, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, have an interest in matters relating to World Heritage Sites.

Zimbabwe

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the removal of the BBC World Service from Zimbabwe by the Zimbabwean Government; and what representations he has made to other governments on this subject. [62613]

Ian Pearson: Representations were made to the Government of Zimbabwe in 2001, when BBC World Service reporters were first removed. Our embassy in Harare lobbied the Government of Zimbabwe in 2004, demanding the BBC's accreditation during the English cricket tour of Zimbabwe, while in parallel, my right hon. Friend the then Minister for Europe (Denis MacShane) summoned the Zimbabwean ambassador on the same issue. My hon. Friend the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Chris Mullin) also protested directly to the Zimbabwean ambassador about the pre-election crackdown on the media, including a removal of a BBC journalist, in February 2005.

Most recently on 1 February, our embassy raised our concerns about the increasing restrictions and pressure on independent and foreign journalists with the Government of Zimbabwe. We also take every opportunity to raise our concerns about the lack of press freedom and respect for human rights in Zimbabwe with African leaders.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps the UK has taken to try to ensure that the government of Zimbabwe upholds Articles 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. [62614]

Ian Pearson: This Government take every opportunity to raise its concerns about the continued abuse of fundamental human rights by the government in Zimbabwe. We are working with the EU and other international partners to build pressure on the Zimbabwean government to respect its obligations, including upholding all the Articles enshrined in the UN Declaration on Human Rights.

We have succeeded in placing Zimbabwe on the UN Security Council agenda, and the EU recently rolled over sanctions for a further year, from February 2006, in response to the continued abuse of human rights in Zimbabwe.

The Government will continue to support those in Zimbabwe working for peaceful change in the country, and for the restoration of democratic accountability, respect for human rights and the rule of law.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the South African Government on Zimbabwe; and if he will make a statement. [63892]

Ian Pearson: My noble Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, discussed Zimbabwe with a range of South African Government leaders during his visit from 2–4 March.

Many African countries share our concerns about Zimbabwe and there is growing African frustration at the lack of positive change in Zimbabwe. We and our European partners will continue to work with African leaders in addressing Zimbabwe's problems, many of which have an impact on the wider region.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Building Materials (Test Sites)

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether there are sites within the UK which are large enough to test how various building materials react when subject to *(a)* explosion and *(b)* full scale fire tests. [61800]

Yvette Cooper: There are a number of government and privately owned testing establishments in the UK that can undertake explosive blast and fire testing of building materials, components and even certain full size structures.

A considerable amount of valuable experimental work has been undertaken at these sites in the past in support of researches leading to the development of safe building structures.

Business Rates

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what primary legislation introduced since 1997 has amended rules or procedures on business rates. [62283]

Mr. Woolas: The primary legislation for business rates has been amended substantively since 1997 by the Local Government Act 2003, the Rating (Former Agricultural Premises and Rural Shops) Act 2001, the Rating (Valuation) Act 1999 and the Local Government and Rating Act 1997. Minor amendments have been made by other enactments.

Capita

Chris Grayling: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what meetings *(a)* he and *(b)* Ministers in his Department have held with directors and senior executives of (i) Capita Group plc and (ii) its subsidiaries since 1st January 2004; and whether (A) Capita Group plc and (B) its subsidiaries have provided input (1) in writing and (2) in person to policy discussions in his Department since 1 January 2004. [61086]

Mr. Woolas: The information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

James Brokenshire: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the value of contracts held by his Department with *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries was in the last three financial years. [61438]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The following table shows the value of payments made to Capita plc and its subsidiaries in the last three financial years. For completeness spend in this financial year to date has been included:

	£
2002–03	1,019,208
2003–04	545,069
2004–05	1,339,945
2005–06 to date	1,166,965
Total to date	4,071,187

James Brokenshire: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many tenders *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries have submitted to his Department in each of the last three years; and how many tenders were successful. [61439]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has awarded one contract to Capita Business Services Ltd. in 2005–06. Records are not held centrally of tenders offered and this information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

James Brokenshire: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many contracts his Department holds with *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries which still have a potential duration of five years or more. [61440]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Department does not have any contract with Capita plc of this duration.

Civil Resilience Measures

Mr. Syms: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the cost to local government of civil resilience measures; and what funding has been provided to local government for this purpose from central funds in 2005–06. [60017]

Mr. Jim Murphy: I have been asked to reply.

As a part of Spending Review 2004, Cabinet Office officials worked closely with the Local Government Association to build up a detailed assessment of the costs facing local authorities in fulfilling their civil protection duties.

As a result of Spending Review 2004 the Government more than doubled their contribution to the cost of English and Welsh local authorities' civil protection work to £40.7 million in each of the years covered by the review—2005–06, 2006–07 and 2007–08. This uplift in funding levels was welcomed by the Local Government Association.

The Government are committed to ensuring that new burdens imposed on local authorities are adequately funded. In the light of this commitment, the Government have made an additional £2,913,000 available for the period 2005–06 to 2007–08 to local authorities in recognition of new responsibilities in relation to downstream oil emergency response planning.

Council Housing

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the merits of an investment allowance as a revenue stream on which to base borrowing for council housing; and if he will introduce such an allowance to underpin the borrowing allowed under the Local Government Act 2004. [41149]

Yvette Cooper: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given on 30 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1216W.

Council Tax

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether a domestic property is revalued for council tax purposes on *(a)* the purchase of a freehold by a leaseholder, *(b)* the extension of the duration of the lease of a leasehold property, *(c)* the purchase of a

council house under the Right to Buy and *(d)* the purchase of a housing association property under the Right to Acquire. [62256]

Mr. Woolas: For the purposes of the council tax legislation, a relevant transaction means a transfer on sale of the fee simple, a grant of a lease for a term of seven years or more or a transfer on sale of such lease. The purchase of a freehold by a leaseholder, the purchase of a council house under the Right to Buy, and the purchase of a housing association property under the Right to Acquire, would all constitute a relevant transaction. The extension of the duration of the lease of a leasehold property would only constitute a relevant transaction if the extension was for seven years or more.

Where a relevant transaction has taken place, an authority may make a proposal to the listing officer for the rebanding of the property; but only if it is of the opinion that there has been a material increase in the value of a property. A material increase in relation to the value of a property means any increase which is caused (in whole or part) by any building, engineering or other operation carried out in relation to the property, whether or not constituting development for which planning permission is required.

This means that a property will be rebanded where work has taken place on the property such as to increase its value and move it into a higher band, and there has been a relevant transaction.

John Hemming: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the values were for *(a)* the assumed national Council Tax before floors and ceilings and *(b)* Council Tax at standard spending in each year since 1997–98; and for what reason these figures have increased at a rate beyond that of inflation. [63131]

Mr. Woolas: The following table gives the Council Tax for Standard Spending for the years 1997–98 to 2002–03 and the Assumed National Council Tax for the years 2003–04 to 2005–06.

Council Tax for standard spending/assumed national council tax

	£
1997–98	593.09
1998–99	634.62
1999–00	664.88
2000–01	695.54
2001–02	730.89
2002–03	769.16
2003–04	1,037.46
2004–05	1,061.46
2005–06	1,101.96

Both of these measures were simply the calculation of the assumed national council tax used within the formula grant calculations, and depended on the total of Standard Spending Assessments or Formula Spending Shares, the amount of Revenue Support Grant and the distributable amount of business rates, and the number of band-D equivalent properties in England.

The large increase between 2002–03 and 2003–04 reflects the change to the Formula Spending Share system. The totals for Formula Spending Shares were set at approximately the level of spending by authorities, and thus the assumed national council tax was reset to a level nearer to the actual national average band-D council tax.

Departmental Financial Irregularities

Anne Main: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many incidences of financial irregularities have been discovered in his Department in each year since its creation; and if he will make a statement. [54270]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Incidences of financial irregularities that have been discovered each year in the Office are as follows:

Financial year	*Number of incidents*	£ *Value*
2002–03	1	8,592
2003–04	2	8,185
2004–05	1	867,200
2005–06	0	0

These are gross figures. Actual and likely recoveries from perpetrators are excluded.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many and what proportion of *(a)* staff and *(b)* new staff employed in (i) his Department and (ii) each of the agencies for which he has responsibility were registered as disabled in each of the last three years for which data are available. [61372]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Cabinet Office collects and publishes annually statistical information on the civil service by Department. These include data on the number of staff in departments who have declared a disability. Declaration of a disability is voluntary.

The latest available information at April 2004 is available in the Library of the House and on the Civil Service website at:

http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management/statistics/publications/xls/disability_apr04_4nov04.xls for data relating to 1 April 2004, and http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management/statistics/archive/index.asp for previous reporting periods.

For new entrants to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Executive agencies, the figures for the period 1 April 2003 to 27 March 2006 are as follows[1]:

[1] New entrants who declared themselves as disabled.

	Number
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Centre)	1
Fire Service College	0
Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre	0
The Planning Inspectorate	6

Domestic Leases

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate the Government have made of the number of domestic leases extended in duration by leaseholders in each of the last five years. [62289]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not hold or collate information relating to the number of domestic leases that have been extended, and has not sought to estimate the numbers. Such transactions are recorded by the Land Registry although inquiries have established that they do not collate the information.

Energy Efficiency

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps he is taking to increase energy efficiency within his Department; and if he will make a statement. [60339]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has adopted the energy targets as set out in the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate. Our Sustainable Development Action Plan and its associated delivery plan can be viewed at http://www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1164438. We have been actively engaged with the Carbon Trust to identify both quick wins and longer term actions required to achieve the current target of a reduction of 15 per cent. usage of fuel per square metre by 2010–11.

Additionally we have completed the first phase of the programme to define the requirements for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to join the Carbon Trust's Carbon Management Programme.

Projects are underway to increase energy efficiency within our buildings. Primarily these are based upon the Carbon Trust energy audits that have been carried out in the Office's HQ buildings. Some actions are:

Revision of office light timings to reduce electricity usage;

Installation of timers on non-essential refrigeration and air handling equipment;

Optimisation of office temperatures and fresh air supply rates.

These actions are included within the certificated and independently audited ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems which the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has developed to manage our response to the "Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate".

This answer does not include the buildings occupied by Government Offices, who carry out functions on behalf of 10 Government Departments.

Environmental Information Regulations

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many requests his Department has received for information under the environmental information regulations since their introduction; and what proportion *(a)* have still to be processed, *(b)* were refused outright, *(c)* were granted in part, *(d)* were fully met as part of the original request, *(e)* were refused initially and granted in whole or in part under internal review and *(f)* have been referred to the Information Commissioner on appeal. [62291]

Jim Fitzpatrick: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given today, UIN62308.

Freedom of Information

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many requests his Department has received for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 since its introduction; and what proportion of those requests *(a)* have still to be processed, *(b)* were refused, *(c)* were partly refused, *(d)* were fully answered, *(e)* were refused initially and granted in whole or in part under internal review on appeal and *(f)* have been referred to the Information Commissioner. [62308]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The raw figures for the number of Freedom of Information requests (including requests for environmental information) received by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister—including the Government Offices for the Regions—in the first three quarters of 2005 which were granted in full, partially withheld and fully withheld are available from the Department for Constitutional Affairs' publications "Freedom of Information Act 2000—Statistics on Implementation in Central Government—Q1: January to March 2005; Q2: April to June 2005; and Q3: July to September 2005", copies of which have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses and can be viewed on the Department for Constitutional Affairs website. The information requested can be found in table 3 of the Reports.

Of the 600 "resolvable" requests received by ODPM in the first three quarters of the year, that is, requests where the information requested was held by ODPM, 31 were requests for environmental information that were answered under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. In 52 per cent. of these cases the information requested was granted in full, in 13 per cent. it was partially withheld and in 35 per cent. it was fully withheld.

In total, three requests where the information had initially been withheld or partially withheld were later granted in full, and a further 11 were granted in part, following internal review on appeal. Of the 11 that were granted in part at internal review, four were requests for environmental information that were answered under the Environmental Information Regulations. Three refusals have been referred to the Information Commissioner, of which two were requests handled under the Environmental Information Regulations.

DCA are intending to publish, and place in the libraries of both Houses, the corresponding tables for the fourth quarter of 2005 early in April 2006. In addition an Annual Report for the whole of 2005, containing additional statistics on Central Government's performance in handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act in its first year will be published later in April.

Hereditaments

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what formula is used to calculate the council tax and business rates liability for a composite hereditament. [62263]

Mr. Woolas: There is no single formula used to calculate the council tax and business rates liability for a composite hereditament. The parts of the hereditament used for domestic purposes would be placed in one of eight value bands based on their open market value on 1 April 1991. The parts of the hereditament used for non-domestic purposes would be valued to determine the rateable value. The rates liability for that part of the hereditament would be determined by applying the relevant formula to the rateable value based on the availability of any mandatory relief and then deducting any further discretionary relief.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average rateable value was per square metre in 2005 following revaluation of bulk class hereditaments in *(a)* England and *(b)* each Government Office Region. [62284]

Mr. Woolas: The ODPM produces estimates of commercial and industrial floor space and rateable values from data received from the Valuation Office Agency (VOA). The rateable values per square metre of bulk class hereditaments in England and each Government Office Region as at 1 April 2005 are given in the table.

Bulk class hereditaments comprise retail premises, offices, factories, warehouses and "other bulk premises". These types of commercial and industrial property have floor space information available from the VOA.

Rateable value per m² of bulk class hereditaments: Government Office Regions, 1 April, 2005

	£
North East	43
North West	48
Yorkshire and the Humber	45
East Midlands	45
West Midlands	48
East of England	65
London	143
South East	80
South West	55
England	66

Home Information Packs

Mr. Betts: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether it is his policy that lenders shall have full electronic access to the Home Condition Report when home information packs are introduced. [52462]

Yvette Cooper: The Government wants lenders to make use of the Home Condition Report to perform valuations. Reducing the need for separate physical inspections of homes will benefit consumers by speeding up and reducing the costs of lending. To facilitate this, we intend that lenders will have electronic access to full individual reports stored in the Home Condition Report register.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans the Government have for a regional pilot prior to the nationwide introduction of home information packs. [56187]

Yvette Cooper: The dry-run of home information packs will provide assurance to the industry that the new process will operate effectively from June 2007. The dry-run has already begun; ODPM are working with 46 organisations in England and Wales who are offering or planning to offer the packs to consumers on a voluntary basis. These organisations are feeding back their experiences on the ground to ODPM and have reported that more than 2,500 voluntary home information packs have already been commissioned by consumers.

More dry-run activities are currently being developed. There are proposals by industry organisations for activities in particular geographical areas, which will also feed into the dry-run. Over 125 organisations have expressed an interest in becoming involved in the dry-run, which will ultimately include all those who are involved in the process of delivering home information packs, such as surveyors, solicitors, estate agents, HIP providers and search companies.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the timetable is for the introduction of home information packs. [56189]

Yvette Cooper: A detailed timeline showing key events and milestones for the Home Information Pack Programme leading up to their mandatory introduction on 1 June 2007 was published on 16 March and can be seen on the ODPM's website at: www.odpm.gov.uk/homeinformationpacks

The key milestones include:

April 2006:	Launch of stakeholder publicity campaign and details of the phased "dry-run" published.
June 2006	Home Information Pack Regulations made.
June 2006	Phase one of the dry-run, focusing on ensuring that the components of the Home Information Pack can be brought together quickly and used successfully.
September 2006	First Certification Schemes approved and Home Condition Report Register and Portal contract agreed.
March 2007	Final assurance checks completed.
April 2007	Launch of main publicity campaign directed at consumers.
June 2007	Home Information Packs "Go Live" on 1 June 2007

Homebuy Schemes

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many households he expects to participate in *(a)* Social Homebuy, *(b)* Open Market Homebuy and *(c)* New Build Homebuy in each year of the proposed scheme's operations. [60127]

Yvette Cooper: The Homebuy scheme, which will commence on 1 April, will help over 100,000 households into home ownership by 2010.

As announced by right hon. Friends, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Deputy Prime Minister, on 22 March we expect to deliver 35,000 new low cost home ownership homes with increased investment of £970 million through the Housing Corporation's Affordable Housing Programme in 2006–08. These homes will be provided through our New Build and

Open Market Homebuy options. Allocations to registered social landlords who have bid to run the Social Homebuy scheme will be issued shortly.

As explained in my earlier response to the hon. Member, 6 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 917W, the final numbers to be helped through Social Homebuy will depend on take up by tenants and landlords.

Homelessness

Ms Keeble: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what research his Department has assessed since 2001 on how homelessness prevention funds have been spent. [53720]

Yvette Cooper: In addition to performance monitoring reports from local authorities submitted in relation to their homelessness grants, three studies have been particularly significant in helping to assess the impact of homelessness grants in preventing homelessness and leading to a sustained reduction in new cases of homelessness since the end of 2003.

In February 2005, the National Audit Office published a report by the Comptroller and Auditor General (HC286 Session 2004–05), "More than a roof: Progress in tackling homelessness", following an examination of the work of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Homelessness and Housing Support Directorate. The examination considered the directorate's impact in achieving the Government's targets to reduce rough sleeping and end the use of bed and breakfast hotels as long-term accommodation for families with children, and in developing new approaches to tackling homelessness. It found that the directorate's target setting, combined with directed financial support and advice, had helped to bring about significant achievements.

In December 2005 the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister published the results of a survey of local authorities about homelessness. This included information about the wide range of prevention schemes that local authorities are using currently and their plans for future prevention activities. The survey report included estimates of the impact of homelessness prevention in reducing the use of temporary accommodation by preventing crises and helping households to settle and of the efficiency savings that they plan to make. The ODPM has also commissioned Heriot-Watt University to evaluate a range of homelessness prevention initiatives in case study local authorities and to produce good practice guidance for local authorities about the effectiveness of homelessness prevention. This project has now reported and the research and guidance will be published within the next three months.

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many homeless households in *(a)* Peterborough and *(b)* Cambridgeshire were (i) living in temporary accommodation and (ii) sleeping rough in each of the past five years; and how many beds were available for homeless households in each area in each year. [54894]

Yvette Cooper: Information about the number of households in temporary accommodation arranged by Peterborough and by all local authorities in Cambridgeshire under homelessness legislation as at 31 March, and the number of persons sleeping rough in these areas, in each of the past five years is tabled as follows.

Each local authority in England has a duty to provide accommodation to households who have been accepted as homeless and are owed a main housing duty under homelessness legislation. If the authority cannot provide a settled solution straight away the household will be placed in temporary accommodation. For this reason, authorities will not have a set number of beds for homeless households.

Households in temporary accommodation[1] arranged by local authorities under homelessness legislation, and number of persons sleeping rough[2]

	Households in TA as at 31 March	*Rough sleepers*
2001		
Peterborough	129	0
All LAs in Cambridgeshire	540	16
2002		
Peterborough	[3]—	0
All LAs in Cambridgeshire	560	19
2003		
Peterborough	302	9
All LAs in Cambridgeshire	740	18
2004		
Peterborough	114	4
All LAs in Cambridgeshire	630	7
2005		
Peterborough	82	4
All LAs in Cambridgeshire	610	11

[1] Households in accommodation either pending a decision on their homelessness application or awaiting allocation of a settled home following acceptance. Excludes those households designated as "homeless at home" that have remained in their existing accommodation and have the same rights to suitable alternative housing as those in accommodation arranged by the authority.

[2] Number of persons sleeping rough, based on local authority mid-year counts or estimates.

[3] Denotes data not reported.

Note:

Temporary accommodation figures for Cambridgeshire, which include estimates for partial and non-response, have been rounded to the nearest 10.

Source:

ODPM P1E homelessness returns (quarterly) and HSSA returns (annual).

Housing

Margaret Moran: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many *(a)* households and *(b)* children in (i) the East of England and (ii) Luton are living in overcrowded accommodation. [60203]

Yvette Cooper: There are two measures of overcrowding—the statutory definition and the bedroom standard used in the survey of empty housing.

Using the bedroom standard and based on the most recent three years of 2002–03, 2003–04 and 2004–05: *(a)* the estimated number of households in the East of England who were living in overcrowded accommodation was 31,000 and *(b)* the estimated number of children who were living in overcrowded accommodation was 63,000. These figures were derived from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's "Survey of English Housing".

The only recent estimate of the number of overcrowded households in Luton is 3,000. This is from an ad hoc report based on combined data from both the "Survey of English Housing" and the Department for Work and Pension's "Family Resources Survey" for the three years 2000–01, 2001–02 and 2002–03. Reliable estimates for the number of children living in overcrowded accommodation in Luton were not determined.

Estimates based on the statutory standard are not available because the underlying data are not collected systematically. A one-off estimate was made in the autumn of 2001 that there were approximately 25,000 households across the whole of England that were in conditions of overcrowding that breached the statutory standard. This estimate was based on data from the "Survey of English Housing" for the period 1997–98 to 1999–2000 and from the 1996 "English House Condition Survey". Equivalent estimates for the East of England and for Luton are not available.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much was paid in capital grants to housing associations in each year since 2000–01. [61698]

Yvette Cooper: The table shows capital grants to housing associations via the Housing Corporation from 2000–05.

	£ million
2000–01	1,230
2001–02	1,234
2002–03	1,530
2003–04	2,060
2004–05	1,695

Source:
Housing Corporation annual accounts

The figures above represent capital grants through the Approved, Development Programme, Local Authority Social Housing Grant, Starter Home Initiative, Safer Communities Supported Housing Fund, Rough Sleepers Initiative and Thames Gateway.

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much was spent on housing benefit for tenants in *(a)* council property, *(b)* housing association and registered social landlord property and *(c)* private sector housing in (i) Tameside and (ii) Stockport in each year since 2001. [62242]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is not available broken down in the format requested. The available information for rent rebates, council tenancies, and rent allowance, all other tenancies, is in the tables.

Housing benefit expenditure in Stockport metropolitan borough council; nominal terms

£ million

	Rent Rebates	*Rent Allowance*
2000–01	15.3	20.4
2001–02	16.0	20.6
2002–03	16.4	22.0

Housing benefit expenditure in Tameside metropolitan borough council; nominal terms

£ million

	Rent Rebates	*Rent Allowance*
2000–01	2.0	42.5
2001–02	1.8	43.8
2002–03	2.1	47.9

Source:
DWP expenditure tables derived from local authority claims for housing revenue account subsidy.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much his Department paid to arm's length management organisations in each year since 2000; and how much is budgeted to be spent in *(a)* 2005–06 and *(b)* 2006–07. [61710]

Yvette Cooper: £56 million was paid to arms length management organisations (ALMOs) under the ALMO programme in 2002–03, £321 million in 2003–04 and £577 million in 2004–05. £850 million is budgeted to be spent in 2005–06 and £884 million in 2006–07.

Mr. Purchase: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much housing subsidy was *(a)* paid by his Department to each local authority and *(b)* paid to his Department by each local authority in 2004–05; and how much his Department received in right-to-buy proceeds from each local authority in that year. [48374]

Yvette Cooper *[holding answer 8 February 2006]:* I have placed the information requested at *(a)* and *(b)* in the library of the house in the form of a table showing the amount of positive and negative Housing Revenue Account Subsidy entitlement for 2004–2005, for those authorities that have submitted audited forms for that year.

The Government expects to invest a net subsidy of around 200 million in 2005–06, with similar amounts forecast for future years.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister collects data on total pooled receipts and total amounts set aside by housing authorities. These figures include the amounts arising from Right to Buy sales alongside amounts relating to other housing capital receipts, but the amounts relating to Right to Buy sales are not separately identified. The available data has been placed in the Library of the House. The aggregate national figures are set out in the following table.

	Total housing capital receipts (£ million)	Set Aside/Pooling (£ million)	Set aside/pooling as percentage of housing capital receipts	Capital investment (£ million)	Investment greater than set-aside/ pooling by (£ million)
1997–98	1,438	943	66	1,894	951
1998–99	1,630	1,085	67	2,098	1,013
1999–00	2,249	1,477	66	2,173	696
2000–01	2,441	1,626	67	2,866	1,240
2001–02	2,244	1,382	62	2,696	1,314
2002–03	3,474	1,626	47	2,943	1,317
2003–04	3,622	No data	n/a	3,964	n/a
2004–05	3,193	1,700	53	4,135	2,435
2005–06	No data	[1]840	n/a	[2]5,223	4,383
2006–07	No data	[1]801	n/a	[2]5,347	4,546
2007–08	No data	[1]753	n/a	[2]5,665	4,912

[1] Programmed expenditure
[2] Estimated pooled housing capital receipts
Note:
Pooling replaced set-aside as the mechanism to invest housing capital receipts in 2004–05

In 2004–05 the amount paid to government from all housing receipts (not just right to buy) was £1.7 billion. The amount invested in housing was £4.1 billion i.e. almost 2½ times the amount. The ratio of amount invested to set aside is expected to increase substantially in the future.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what powers councils have to impose a moratorium on specific types of new housing development if the local planning authority has met its regional building targets. [60122]

Yvette Cooper: None. Local planning authorities are required to determine all planning applications that come before them on the merits of the individual case.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the capital value of *(a)* housing association and *(b)* council housing stock in each year since 2000–01. [61700]

Yvette Cooper: The estimated capital value (Net book value) of housing association stock in each year since 2000–01 is in the following table. We do not have estimates of the current value of this stock. This does not include the value of the stock of the smallest (less than 250 units) housing associations.

	Housing association stock (Net book value) (£ billion)
2000–01	25
2001–02	27
2002–03	30
2003–04	33
2004–05	36

The estimated capital value of local authority housing stock in each year since 2000–01 is in the table below. The figures are not available for the year ending 2000. All values are at January 1999 prices.

April each year	Local authority (£ billion)
2001	109
2002	107
2003	104
2004	99
2005	94

Influenza Pandemic

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans each local authority in Hampshire has in place for action in the event of a pandemic, in relation to *(a)* their own staff, *(b)* maintaining their statutory services and *(c)* tending to the wider population; and if he will make a statement. [43872]

Mr. Jim Murphy: I have been asked to reply.

The Government does not systematically collect information on the emergency plans and business continuity arrangements maintained by individual local authorities.

Part 1 of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 establishes a statutory framework for civil protection activity at the local level. Under this legislation all principal local authorities are required to maintain emergency plans and business continuity arrangements, informed by risk assessments, to ensure that they can mobilise an effective emergency response, and are able to continue to exercise their other functions during a full range of emergencies, including health emergencies. The legislation also requires local authorities and other key partners to exercise these plans. The performance of English local authorities against the duties set out in the Act will be assessed by the Audit Commission as part of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment.

The Government have issued tailored guidance to local authorities and other local responders via the Regional Resilience Teams in the Government Offices to inform local planning for a flu pandemic.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much has been spent in respect of each stock transfer since 1997 on *(a)* set-up costs, *(b)* early redemption penalties, *(c)* debt write-off, *(d)* gap funding and *(e)* subsidy to registered social landlords, broken down by local authority. [40847]

Yvette Cooper: The following table provides figures in respect of: set up costs; the amount of local authority debt repaid by Central Government where the transfer generated a receipt insufficient to pay off the outstanding debt; and gap funding grant (this is in lieu of continued subsidy of the debt through the HRA). The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not separately log the figures in respect of early redemption penalties. Subsidy is not paid to registered social landlords as part of stock transfer.

Large scale voluntary transfers since 1997

£ million

Local authority	*Date of transfer*	*Set-up costs*	*Overhanging debt paid*	*Gap funding-spend up to 31 December 2005*
Cotswold DC	28 February 1997	2.37	—	—
South Staffs C	7 March 1997	2.06	—	—
Lichfield DC	19 March 1997	2.08	—	—
South Oxfordshire DC	7 July 1997	3.19	—	—
Eden C	22 September 1997	1.18	—	—
LB Lambeth[1] Moorlands	5 January 1998	0.40	—	—
LB Bexley	9 February 1998	2.19	—	—
LB Bexley	9 February 1998	1.81	—	—
Congleton BC	2 March 1998	2.17	—	—
Oldham BC[1] Limehurst	9 March 1998	0.257	—	—
Liverpool CC[1] Windermere	19 March 1998	0.197	—	—
LB Merton[1] Pollards Hill	23 March 1998	0.56	—	—
LB Tower Hamlets[1] Poplar I	23 March 1998	1.26	—	—
Kerrier DC	23 March 1998	1.58	—	—
LB Hackney[1] Kingsmead	30 March 1998	0.39	—	—
LB Brent[1] Fortunegate/Church End	30 March 1998	1.37	—	—
Basildon C[1] Vange	30 March 1998	0.28	—	—
West Somerset DC	30 march 1998	1.98	—	—
Stoke-on-Trent CC [1] Bentilee	31 March 1998	0.65	—	—
Tewksbury BC	27 April 1998	2.09	—	—
Rother DC	1 May 1998	1.02	—	—
LB Lambeth[1] Lansdowne Green	20 July 1998	0.25	—	—
LB Tower Hamlets[1] Poplar II	7 December 1998	1.15	—	—
Wurral[1] Leasowe	25 January 1999	0.45	—	—
Tameside[1] West Ashton	1 February 1999	0.10	—	—
West Devon BC	22 February 1999	0.4	—	—
South Somerset DC	1 March 1999	5	—	—
East Lindsey DC	1 March 1999	3.86	—	—
Liverpool CC[1] Pinehurst	5 March 1999	0.25	—	—
LB Hackney[1] Morningside	15 March 1999	0.46	—	—
LB Hammersmith & Fulham[1] Old Oak	17 March 1999	0.28	—	—
LB Hackney[1] Upper Clapton	22 March 1999	0.37	—	—
Telford and Wrekin C	25 march 1999	4.2	—	—
Worthing BC	29 March 1999	1.603	—	—
Bath & North East Somerset C	29 March 1999	2.4	—	—
Manchester CC[1] East Wythenshawe	29 March 1999	2.90	—	—
LB Greenwich[1] Charlton Triangle	29 March 1999	0.50	—	—
LB Hackney[1] Haggerston	29 March 1999	0.26	—	—
Allerdale BC[1] Salterbeck	31 March 1999	0.29	—	—
Preston BC[1] Avenham	14 June 1999	0.45	—	—
LB Lambeth[1] Central Stockwell	5 July 1999	0.94	—	—
Birmingham CC[1] Central Areas	21 June 1999	0.87	—	—
LB Islington[1] Barnsbury	26 September 1999	0.246	—	—
LB Islington[1] Ten Estates	26 September 1999	0.271	—	—
Liverpool CC[1] Speke Garston	4 October 1999	1.87	—	—
West Lindsey DC	18 October 1999	2.5	—	—
LB Lambeth[1] St Martins	25 October 1999	0.61	—	—
Boston BC	29 November 1999	1.6	—	—
Tynedale DC	20 December 1999	2.1	—	—
Newcastle under Lyme BC	31 January 2000	4.08	—	—
Restormel BC	7 February 2000	1.211	—	—
Manchester CC (Colshaw Farm)	14 February 2000	0.45	—	—
North Devon DC	21 February 2000	2.99	—	—
LB Hackney[1] Stamford Hill	6 March 2000	0.45	—	—
LB Hackney[1] Pembury Estate	6 March 2000	0.5	—	—
Burnley BC	8 March 2000	2.25	21	—
Manchester CC Sale Estate	20 March 2000	0.45	—	—
Weymouth and Portland C	20 March 2000	2.4	—	—
Huntington DC	20 March 2000	4.4	—	—
Elmbridge BC	27 March 2000	4.2	—	—
Test Valley BC	27 March 2000	5.1	—	—
Wyre Forest DC	27 March 2000	4.1	—	—

Large scale voluntary transfers since 1997

£ million

Local authority	*Date of transfer*	*Set-up costs*	*Overhanging debt paid*	*Gap funding-spend up to 31 December 2005*
Manchester CC Whitefield Estate	27 March 2000	0.5	—	—
LB Tower Hamlets[1] THCH	27 March 2000	0.54	—	—
Tameside MBC	27 March 2000	9.28	—	—
LB Richmond	17 July 2000	3	—	—
Coventry CC	22 September 2000	7.703	111.7	—
Fylde BC	2 October 2000	1.06	—	—
Chester CC	27 November 2000	2.33	—	—
Horsham DC	11 December 2000	2.4	—	—
East Northamptonshire DC	19 February 2001	0.25	—	—
Torbay BC	19 February 2001	1.992	—	—
Staffordshire Moorlands DC	23 February 2001	1.11	—	—
Calderdale MBC	6 march 2001	3.9	64.6	—
Chichester DC	13 March 2001	2.52	—	—
Mendip DC	19 March 2001	2.13	—	—
West Wiltshire DC	26 March 2001	0.95	—	—
West Oxfordshire DC	26 March 2001	2.22	—	—
East Staffordshire BC	26 March 2001	1.295	—	—
Manchester CC Handforth Estate	26 March 2001	0.36	—	—
Sunderland CC	26 March 2001	1.336	—	—
Blackburn with Darwen BC	28 March 2001	3.1	78.9	—
Shrewsbury & Atcham BC	1 October 2001	3.03	—	—
Mid-Bedfordshire DC	5 November 2001	1.5	—	—
Derbyshire Dales	4 March 2002	1.45	—	—
Chelsmford BC	11 march 2002	3.39	—	—
East Hertfordshire DC	18 March 2002	2.37	—	—
Erewash BC	25 March 2002	1.59	—	—
Reigate & Banstead BC	25 March 2002	2.36	—	—
St Edmunsbury	24 June 2002	3	—	—
Vale Royal BC	1 July 2002	1.47	—	—
St Helens MBC	1 July 2002	6.48	87.2	—
Redcar & Cleveland BC	15 July 2002	5.76	25.4	—
Knowsley MBC	15 July 2002	5.97	126.1	—
LB Waltham Forest	30 September 2002	0.52969	—	—
County of Hertfordshire C	25 November 2002	1.95	—	—
Carlisle CC	09 December 2002	8.73	18	—
Rushcliffe BC	20 January 2003	1.6		—
City of Bradford	24 February 2003	10.028	182.8	—
Amber Valley BC	24 February 2003	2.3	—	—
Crewe and Nantwich BC	10 March 2003	1.4	—	—
Walsall MBC (majority of stock)	27 March 2003	15.2	as below	—
Walsall MBC (tenant managed stock)	27 March 2003	2.6	108.7	—
Craven DC	31 March 2003	2.36	—	—
Forest of Dean DC	31 March 2003	1.7	—	—
North Hertfordshire DC	31 March 2003	2.22	—	—
Manchester CC (East Manchester)	8 September 2003	2.62	—	—
Scarborough BC	15 December 2003	1.875	—	—
Maidstone BC	2 February 2004	2.6	—	—
Cherwell	29 March 2004	2.36	—	—
Bromsgrove	29 March 2004	2.18	—	—
Hartlepool	29 March 2004	2.7	65.709	—
Liverpool (Kensington)	29 March 2004	0.36	—	—
Worcester	31 March 2004	1.83	25.23	—
South Norfolk	17 May 2004	2.5	—	—
Copeland BC	7 June 2004	1.37	15.81	—
Purbeck	28 June 2004	0.93	—	—
Manchester (Woodhouse Park)[2]	4 October 2004	—	44	—
Peterborough	4 October 2004	3.533	—	—
Forest Heath	11 October 2004	2.438	—	—
Middlesbrough	15 November 2004	9.77	138.8	—
LB Tower Hamlets Tarling East[2]	20 December 2004	—	2.51	—
Wirral	7 February 2005	5.09	111.58	—
LB Islington Grove Estate[2]	21 December 2005	—	16.20	—
Trafford	14 March 2005	5.30	30.50	—
LB Lambeth Kennington Park**	21 March 2005	—	13.53	—
LB Tower Hamlets Crossways[2]	21 March 2005	—	8.21	—
North East Lincolnshire	21 March 2005	2.90	61.37	6.18
Wakefield	21 March 2005	10.15	148.97	—
LB Tower Hamlets (Mile End East)[2]	11 April 2005	—	27.40	—

Large scale voluntary transfers since 1997

£ million

Local authority	*Date of transfer*	*Set-up costs*	*Overhanging debt paid*	*Gap funding-spend up to 31 December 2005*
Manchester CC (Haughton Green)	18 April 2005	0.50	19.27	—
LB Tower Hamlets (Leopold and Burdett West)[2]	1 August 2005	—	12.21	0.538
LB Tower Hamlets (Sheltered)[2]	14 November 2005	—	6.85	0.073
Islington (Ringcross)[2]	28 November 2005	—	5.11	—
Preston CC[2]	28 November 2005	—	65.63	0.500
Halton	5 December 2005	3.62	40.54	—
Tower Hamlets (Island Homes)[2]	5 December 2005	—	36.20	—
	—	299.430	1720.040	7.291

[1] Relates to set up costs paid as part of the Estates Renewal Challenge Fund (ERCF) programme
[2] Local authority has not requested set up costs

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much was raised by right-to-buy sales in each local authority in each year since 1997; how much was retained by each local authority in each year; how much was *(a)* transferred from local authority control for other purposes and *(b)* not permitted to be used for housing purposes by the local authority; and what percentage the amount transferred from local authority control and not permitted to be used for housing purposes represents as a percentage of the amount from right to buy sales put into housing revenue accounts in each case in each year. [56380]

Yvette Cooper *[holding answer 7 March 2006]:* I have placed in the Library of the House the available information on right to buy sales in each local authority in each year since 1997 and the available information on the total housing capital receipts for each local authority and the amount each authority has been required either to set aside for debt repayment or to pay to the Secretary of State under the pooling arrangements.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has no information on what uses each local authority makes of the proportion of the housing capital receipt they are entitled to retain. Local authorities may use the retained proportion of the capital receipt for any capital purpose they see fit.

The total national position is summarised in the following table. In 2004–05 the amount paid to Government from all housing receipts (not just right to buy) was £1.7 billion. The amount invested in housing was £4.1 billion. The ratio of amount invested to amount set aside is expected to increase substantially in the future.

	Total housing capital receipts (£m)	*Set Aside/Pooling (£m)*	*Set aside/pooling as percentage of housing capital receipts*	*Capital investment (£m)*	*Investment greater than set-aside/pooling by (£m)*
1997–98	1,438	943	66	1,894	951
1998–99	1,630	1,085	67	2,098	1,013
1999–2000	2,249	1,477	66	2,173	696
2000–01	2,441	1,626	67	2,866	1,240
2001–02	2,244	1,382	62	2,696	1,314
2002–03	3,474	1,626	47	2,943	1,317
2003–04	3,622	No data	n/a	3,964	n/a
2004–05	3,193	1,700	53	4,135	2,435
2005–06	No data	[1]840	n/a	[2]5,223	4,383
2006–07	No data	[1]801	n/a	[2]5,347	4,546
2007–08	No data	[1]753	n/a	[2]5,665	4,912

Note:
Pooling replaced set-aside as the mechanism to invest housing capital receipts in 2004–2005.
[1] Estimated pooled housing capital receipts.
[2] Programmed expenditure.

Local Government (Pensions)

Mr. Weir: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether he has discussed with the Scottish Executive changes to the local government pension scheme. [61318]

Mr. Woolas: I discussed the local government pension scheme with Tom McCabe, Minister for Finance and Public Service Reform at the Scottish Executive, on 7 March 2006.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the Local Government Pension Scheme will participate in the Pension Protection Fund. [62280]

Mr. Woolas: The pension benefits paid under the terms of the Local Government Pension Scheme are guaranteed by statute. As a public service pension scheme, therefore, there is no reason why it needs to participate in the Pension Protection Fund.

Local Government Expenditure

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proportion of local government revenue expenditure was financed through parking charges and fees in each year since 1997–98; and what the estimated figure is for 2006–07. [60196]

Mr. Woolas: Revenue expenditure is financed by grants, council tax and changes in reserves. Income from services, including parking, do not finance revenue expenditure, but are netted off from service expenditure when determining revenue expenditure. It is therefore not possible to calculate a proportion of revenue expenditure financed by parking charges and fees.

Local Government Restructuring

Mrs. Lait: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the meetings that the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State with responsibility for local government has had with local authority *(a)* officials and *(b)* representatives concerning local government restructuring in the last 12 months. [52884]

Jim Fitzpatrick: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 2 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 941–42W to the hon. Member for Meriden (Mrs. Spelman) by my hon. Friend the Member for Oldham, East and Saddleworth (Mr. Woolas).

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the Government's plans for local government restructuring involve potential changes to the boundaries of existing unitary authorities. [62309]

Mr. Woolas: We have launched a public debate about the governance arrangements for local areas and are interested to hear all views on the merits of change and how it might be made. We intend to finalise our position around the middle of the year at about the same time as the publication of the proposed White Paper.

London Governance

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the Answer to the hon. Member for Meriden of 24 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 2238W, on London governance, when he expects to publish the outcome of his consultation; and whether he plans to do so before the London local elections. [62207]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Government aims to publish a final package of additional powers for the Mayor of London and London Assembly later in the spring. We do not intend to publish the final package before the local elections on 4 May.

Mines Rescue Service

David Taylor: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what representations he has received on the *(a)* past, *(b)* present and *(c)* future utilisation of the specialist skills of the Mines Rescue Service by fire and rescue services; and if he will make a statement. [60262]

Jim Fitzpatrick *[holding answer 21 March 2006]:* The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has not received any representations on the utilisation of the Mines Rescue Service, though technical and operational advice has been sought from Her Majesty's Fire Service Inspectorate in relation to particular specialist incidents. Over the years Fire and Rescue Services in whose areas the Mines Rescue Service is located have maintained close links with it, particularly where there are working mines.

I have undertaken, in response to a question from my hon. Friend the Member for Rhondda (Chris Bryant), 8 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 809, to consider how the specialist skills of the Mines Rescue Service may be used in future major incidents.

A close relationship has been forged with the Mines Rescue Service through ODPM's New Dimension Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) project over the last few years. This relationship was effectively demonstrated through the response to the Glasgow factory collapse in May 2004, whereby USAR and Mines Rescue Service teams worked closely together. I would anticipate that there will be future involvement between the USAR project and the Mines Rescue Service to address operational and other issues.

Neighbourhood/Community Warden Schemes

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what central direct funding his Department has provided to each local authority *(a)* neighbourhood and *(b)* community warden scheme since 1997. [62290]

Mr. Woolas: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister made available £84 million to directly fund three rounds of warden schemes across England since 2000. Tables showing the funding to each local authority have been made available in the Library of the House.

Parish Precepts

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average parish precept in England was in each year since 1997–98; and what the estimated figure is for 2006–07. [62307]

Mr. Woolas: For earlier years, I refer the hon. Member to the answer that I gave to the Member for Kettering on 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1733W.

The total amount precepted by parish and town councils for 2006–07 is £282 million. This is shown in Table 3 of the statistical release on the "Levels of Council Tax Set by Local Authorities in England 2006–07", which is available at: http://www.local.odpm.gov.uk/finance/ctax/ctax067.pdf

Pathfinder Schemes

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the *(a)* targets and *(b)* performance indicators that the Government have set for each of the pathfinder schemes; and what the latest performance is against each. [56185]

Yvette Cooper: Data is not yet available for the outcome up to March 2006. Some pathfinders have adjusted the balance of their progress in response to consultation or changing market circumstances. In some areas development has been put back in order to incorporate longer consultations.

The following table shows the key performance indicators that are contained in each pathfinder's funding agreement for the period between implementation of the agreement at 31 March 2006 and the performance against them up to September 2005, the latest information available.

Pathfinder	Refurbishments: Planned output by March 2006	Refurbishments: Completed to September 2006	Demolitions: Planned output by March 2006	Demolitions: Completed to September 2005	New Builds: Planned output by March 2006	New Builds: Completed to September 2005	Acquisitions: Planned output by March 2006	Acquisitions: Completed to September 2006
Birmingham Sandwell	1,524	128	553	154	154	47	812	648
East Lancashire	1,195	1,021	790	495	131	0	846	647
Hull and East Riding	0	0	0	0	44	0	233	115
Manchester	12,745	7,814	1,640	915	965	0	0	729
Salford	13,425		1735		1,015			
Merseyside	325	4357	2,734	161	1,642	6	2,787	1058
Newcastle Gateshead	1,505	507	1,856	673	95	10	349	314
North Staffordshire	320	452	89	277	0	6	0	251
Oldham Rochdale	367	367	295	128	0	0	442	311
South Yorkshire	2,073	1,009	1,618	1,402	112	0	0	1110

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what legally binding *(a)* requirements, *(b)* contracts and *(c)* targets the Government have agreed with the pathfinder schemes. [56186]

Yvette Cooper: The pathfinders have funding agreements with the Government up to 31 March 2006. These agreements include expected levels of key outputs on the number of homes affected, but can also cover land and covered property in the areas.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 17 October 2005, *Official Report*, columns 814–15W, to the hon. Member for Meriden (Mrs. Spelman) on pathfinder areas, if he will estimate *(a)* the number of demolitions funded by Housing Market Renewal Grant in each pathfinder area in (i) 2005–06 and (ii) 2006–07 and *(b)* the total payments to the housing market renewal pathfinders, including housing market renewal funding, for 2005–06. [56053]

Yvette Cooper: The following table provides information on the number of demolitions, refurbishments and new builds funded by the Housing Market Renewal Fund (HMRF) in 2005–06 as at 30 September 2005 (the latest information available) and the amount of grant payments to housing market renewal pathfinders in respect of expenditure between April 2005 and January 2006. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister have not yet concluded funding agreements for 2006–07 so estimates of outputs are not yet available.

	Funded by housing market renewal grant up to 30 September 2005			
Pathfinder	*Refurbishments*	*Demolitions*	*New builds*	*Grant payments to housing market renewal pathfinders in respect of expenditure in 2005–06 (£ million)*
Birmingham Sandwell	118	83	0	18.024
East Lancashire	347	98	0	34.916
Hull and East Riding	0	0	0	3.894
Manchester Salford	3,510	238	0	39.949
Merseyside	1,911	39	0	46.143
Newcastle Gateshead	18	264	1	24.288
North Staffordshire	311	43	0	14.723
Oldham Rochdale	958	50	0	24.985
South Yorkshire	249	305	0	26.168

Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proportion of members of the Principal Civil Service pension scheme in his Department joined the scheme before the age of *(a)* 20, *(b)* 25, *(c)* 30, *(d)* 35, *(e)* 40, *(f)* 45 and *(g)* over 45 years old. [62009]

Jim Fitzpatrick: As at 24 March 2006 there were 3123 active members of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and related agencies. The ages at which they joined the scheme are shown in the following table.

Age	*Number*
(a) before 20	500
(b) 20 and before 25	921
(c) 25 and before 30	520
(d) 30 and before 35	286
(e) 35 and before 40	302
(f) 40 and before 45	232
(g) 45 and after	362

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the current employer contribution rates to the Principal Civil Service pension scheme are; what assumed rate of return underlies those contribution rates; and what the contribution rate would be if the assumed rate of return was in line with current redemption yield on index-linked gilts. [62010]

Jim Fitzpatrick: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Secretary for the Cabinet Office (Jim Murphy), on 29 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1030–31W.

Prudential Borrowing Rules

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to change the prudential borrowing rules to allow arm's length management organisations to borrow for housing purposes. [61667]

Yvette Cooper: We have no plans to change the prudential borrowing rules to allow arms length management organisations to borrow for housing purposes

Regional Government

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total central government grant to English regional chambers will be for 2006–07. [62262]

Yvette Cooper: A total of £18,835,000 will be allocated to the eight regional assemblies and their umbrella body the English Regions Network.

Additional funding will be made available to cover costs associated with the transfer to the regional assemblies of the responsibilities, previously held by the Regional Housing Boards.

Right to Acquire

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many units of social housing have been purchased under the Right to Acquire in England in each year of its operation. [62315]

Yvette Cooper: The total number of housing association homes purchased under the Right to Acquire in England in each year of its operation are tabled as follows.

Right to Acquire sales year to 31 March

Sales year to 31 March	*Number*
2001	26
2002	151
2003	228
2004	389
2005	505

Note:
The figures are derived from the Housing Corporation's Regulatory and Statistical Return (RSR).
Source:
RSR Section K Part 1 Q4 (2005), Section K Part 2 Q6 (2004), Section K Part 2 Q6 (2003), Section K Part 2 Q6 (2002), Section C Part 1 Q4 (2001)

Stamp Duty

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate his Department has made of the average stamp duty paid by first-time buyers. [51107]

Yvette Cooper: There is no complete house price data available that identifies first-time buyers. Estimates from the Regulated Mortgage Survey, show that almost half the first-time buyers paid no stamp duty as the value of their property was below the stamp duty threshold. This estimate does not allow for buyers in Enterprise Areas where the threshold is higher. Averaging the stamp duty paid across all first time buyers who are not sitting tenants and who bought with a mortgage produces a figure of £1,500 for quarter 3 2005. In the Budget the Chancellor raised the threshold to £125,000.

Superannuation Liability

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what total amount of employers' normal contributions accruing superannuation liability charge has been accounted for by his Department in each of the last five years for which data is available. [61369]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) was created following the Machinery of Government changes on 29 May 2002. The amount of employers' accruing superannuation liability charges in respect of the principal civil service pension scheme for ODPM, including the Government Offices and the Department's Executive agencies, are as follows:

	£
2002–03	20,024,437
2003–04	23,969,512
2004–05	25,337,297

WORK AND PENSIONS

Administration Costs

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions which functions of his core Department are carried out in *(a)* England and *(b)* London; and what administrative costs were associated with these functions for each area in the last year. [39816]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration budgets regime overseen by Treasury does not monitor country or regional administration costs separately.

The Departmental Report (CMD 6539) contains information on the Corporate and Shared Services function in 2004–05. The most recent Public Expenditure Outturn White Paper (CMD 6639) contains the provisional 2004–05 departmental administration costs outturn.

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what functions in his Department are carried out in Scotland; and what the administrative costs of these functions were in the last year for which figures are available. [40010]

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions which functions of his core Department are carried out in *(a)* Northern Ireland and *(b)* Wales; and what administrative costs were associated with these functions for each area in the last year. [39942]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration budgets regime overseen by the Treasury relates to Whitehall Departments only. How running costs are controlled in the devolved Administrations is a matter for them. Treasury do not monitor administration costs by country separately.

The most recent Public Expenditure Outturn White Paper (CMD 6639) contains the provisional 2004–05 departmental administration costs outturn and the Departmental Report (CMD 6539) contains information on the Corporate and Shared Services function in 2004–05.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the administrative costs were of each non-departmental public body for which he has responsibility in the last year for which figures are available; what the total of such costs was in that year; and whether the costs are regarded for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable. [40063]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration budgets regime overseen by Treasury does not include non-departmental public bodies. The only exception to this for the Department for Work and Pensions is the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). The administrative costs for HSE in 2004–05 were £192.412 million net of income. These costs were identifiable.

The most recent Public Expenditure Outturn White Paper (CMD 6639) contains the provisional 2004–05 departmental administration costs outturn.

Benefits

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the total processing time for each of his Department's administered benefits in *(a)* 2002, *(b)* 2003, *(c)* 2004, *(d)* 2005 and *(e)* the latest year for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [35691]

Mrs. McGuire: In response to the question, processing targets and actual achievements against those targets for the Department of Work and Pensions administered benefits are listed in the following tables for Pension Service, Jobcentre Plus and Disability and Carers Service.

Pension Service

From 2005–06 performance data includes non-complex claims processed at the National Pension Centre alongside the claims processed at ordinary pension centres.

	2002–03	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06*[1]
Retirement Pension/State Pension[2] Clearance—Target 95 per cent. in 60 days (non-complex claims). A separate target for complex claims is relevant only from 2004–05 (Percentage)	94.7	[3]94.13	[4]95.06	[4]97.13
State Pension Clearance (complex claims[5]). Target 91 per cent. in 85 days. A separate target for complex claims is relevant only from 2004–05 (Percentage)	–	–	87.95	90.95
MIG Clearance—Target 10 days. Due to implementation of Pension Credit end of year figures only relevant to 2002–03 (Days)	12.1	–	—	—
Pension Credit Clearance—Target 10 Days. Implemented mid year in 2003–04 (Days)	–	12.31	10.3	8.63

[1] Year to date figure at December 2005.
[2] Retirement pension became state pension in 2003–04.
[3] Does not include National Pension Centre figures.
[4] Includes National Pension Centre figures.
[5] Complex claims are claims to state pension from customers who have been widowed or divorced and the spouse's national insurance contributions are taken into consideration.

Jobcentre Plus

The following tables contain annual actual average clearance (AACT) times for the three benefits administered by Jobcentre Plus going back to 2002.

Actual average clearance times

	19 day planning assumption	*12 day planning assumption*	
	Incapacity benefit	*Income support*	*Jobseeker's allowance*[1]
2002	16.5	10.2	10.2
2003	16.0	10.3	10.8
2004	17.0	10.9	12.0
2005	15.4	10.9	13.7

[1] The JSA figures are April to March with the exception of 2005 which are December YTD.

Disability and Carers Service

The table shows targets and actual achievement.

	Target 2002–03	*2002–03*	*Target 2003–04*	*2003–04*	*Target 2004–05*	*2004–05*	*Target 2005–06*	*YTD December 2005* *2005–06*
	Average actual clearance time	*Average actual clearance time*	*Average actual clearance time*	*Average actual clearance time*	*Average actual clearance time*	*Average actual clearance time*	*Average actual clearance time*	*Average actual clearance time*
Disability Living Allowance								
New Claims (NR)	43.0	42.0	42.0	39.7	39	36.2	39.0	34.5
New Claims (SR)	8.0	7.0	8.0	6.1	8	5.7	8.0	5.6
Renewals	32.0	28.6	32.0	28.2	32	28.2	32.0	30.7
Reconsiderations	39.0	34.3	39.0	31.8	39	29.2	35.0	28.3
Supersessions	49.0	44.9	48.0	41.5	48	40.0	48.0	41.7
Appeals	40.0	32.1	40.0	30.0	40	30.5	37.0	30.6
Attendance Allowance								
New Claims (NR)	27.0	24.2	26.0	20.8	24	18.2	22.0	17.9
New Claims (SR)	8.0	5.6	8.0	4.9	8	4.5	8.0	4.5
Renewals	23.0	18.5	23.0	15.5	23	15.0	23.0	15.1

	Target 2002–03	2002–03	Target 2003–04	2003–04	Target 2004–05	2004–05	Target 2005–06	YTD December 2005 2005–06
	Average actual clearance time	Average actual clearance time	Average actual clearance time	Average actual clearance time	Average actual clearance time	Average actual clearance time	Average actual clearance time	Average actual clearance time
Reconsiderations	38.0	32.5	38.0	28.8	38	25.3	35.0	23.1
Supersessions	38.0	34.7	37.0	27.9	37	24.8	37.0	25.0
Appeals	40.0	31.5	40.0	27.4	40	25.8	35.0	24.2
Carers Allowance								
Claims	32.0	20.7	30.0	15.0	24	16.4	22.0	13.4
Appeals	40.0	30.2	38.0	26.2	38	28.8	35.0	29.2

Notes:
1. The figures are April to March with the exception of 2005 which is YTD December 2005.
2. The special rules cover people who suffer from a progressive disease that is so severe that they are not expected to live longer than six months.
3. Up to 2001–02 targets were performance indicators.
4. From 2002–03 the target changed to the AACT (actual average clearance time) format.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his answer of 6 February 2006, *Official Report*, columns 860–61W, to the hon. Member for Daventry, on benefits payments provision, how much his Department spent on the end-to-end delivery of the new debt management IT system introduced in August 2005. [52537]

Mr. Plaskitt: The costs of the introduction of the new Debt Manager system stand at £22,207 million as at 31 January 2006. This cost includes all supplier costs, the costs of Project staff and Debt Management costs relating exclusively to the implementation of the new system.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many households containing children living in relative poverty received no council tax benefit in the latest year for which information is available; and if he will make a statement. [59341]

Margaret Hodge: The estimated number of households, with children, that received no council tax benefit, and whose household income was less than 60 per cent. of contemporary median—a measure of "relative" low income—is in the following table:

Number of households containing children in Great Britain, 2004–05

	Households, with children, not in receipt of council tax benefit and in relative low income	All relative low income households with children	All households with children
Before Housing Costs	600,000	1,200,000	7,000,000
After Housing Costs	800,000	1,700,000	7,000,000

Notes:
1. Figures rounded to the nearest 100 thousand.
2. Incomes below 60 per cent. of contemporary median is a measure of 'relative' low income.
3. Estimates of income, and whether households were not in receipt of council tax benefit, relate to the household's status at the time they were interviewed for the FRS. The income measure used is weekly net (disposable) equivalised household income (that is to say income that is adjusted to reflect the composition of the household). The median relates to the middle-ranked individual.
4. The estimates are based on sample survey counts, which have been adjusted for non-response and a number of other variables. Estimates are subject to both sampling error, and to the remaining variability in non-response which is not corrected by the adjustment method.

Source:
Households Below Average Income series (HBAI), derived from the Family Resources Survey (FRS). The HBAI series provides information on net disposable income. Figures are for 2004–05, the latest period for which data is available.

People fail to take up their benefit rights, including council tax benefit, for a number of reasons. For example, the increasing number of home owners compared to tenants has had an impact on the number of people claiming council tax benefit. This is because home owners are likely to have less contact with the benefit system while tenants normally make a claim to council tax benefit at the same time as they make their claim for housing benefit.

However, we are working hard to increase the take up of council tax benefit by making receipt of a council tax benefit as automatic as possible for everyone eligible. Departmental policy officials, working together with representatives from local authorities, Jobcentre Plus, The Pension Service and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs aim to develop recommendations shortly.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much was spent on housing benefit for tenants in *(a)* council property, *(b)* housing association property and *(c)* the private sector in the last year for which figures are available. [61561]

Mr. Plaskitt: Spending on housing benefit for all three tenant groups in 2004–05 is in the table.

Spending on housing benefit by tenant groups

	Estimated expenditure in 2004–05 (£ million)
Local Authority Tenants	5,208
Registered Social Landlord Tenants	4,586
Private Rented Sector Tenants	3,365

Notes:
1. The figures presented are in £ million and reflect nominal costs for the whole of Great Britain.

2. They are total amounts paid to beneficiaries, irrespective of the source of funding, and include benefit spending reimbursed by DWP, spending on rent rebates financed within local authorities' housing revenue accounts, and benefit spending financed from local authorities' general funds.
3. They reflect the latest benefit-by-benefit estimate of out-turn, and not the amounts voted by Parliament.
4. This information is taken from the latest published housing benefit forecasts, available at http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd4/Table8.xls

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much in housing benefit was paid to tenants of *(a)* housing associations and *(b)* arms' length management organisations in each year since 1997; and what estimate he has made of the effect on costs in each year of tenants transferring from council management to registered social landlords as part of large scale voluntary transfers. [61666]

Mr. Plaskitt: The amount of housing benefit paid to registered social landlord tenants each year since 1997 is in the table.

Information is not available on the housing benefit paid to tenants of arms length management organisations.

For information about the effect on costs in each year of tenants transferring from council management to registered social landlords as part of large scale voluntary transfers, I refer the hon. Member to the written answer I gave on 1 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 591W.

Housing benefit paid to registered social landlord tenants

	£million
1997–98	2,208
1998–99	2,425
1999–2000	2,697
2000–01	3,019
2001–02	3,407
2002–03	4,155
2003–04	4,246
2004–05	4,586

Notes:
1. The figures presented reflect nominal costs for the whole of Great Britain.
2. They are total amounts paid to beneficiaries, irrespective of the source of funding, and include benefit spending reimbursed by DWP, spending on rent rebates financed within local authorities' housing revenue accounts, and benefit spending financed from local authorities' general funds.
3. They reflect the latest benefit-by-benefit estimate of out-turn, and not the amounts voted by Parliament.
4. Figures for 1999–2000 onwards are on a resource accounting and budgeting basis. There may be differences between figures quoted in these tables and those quoted in Department for Work and Pensions accounts.
5. Some figures for past years may have changed since previous publications owing to the incorporation of more up-to-date information. Also please note that from April 2003 responsibility for child benefit, guardians allowance and child's special allowance has been transferred to Inland Revenue.
6. Figures exclude asylum seekers from April 1999, since when the National Asylum Support Service has reimbursed DWP for benefits paid to asylum seekers.
7. This information is taken from the latest published housing benefit forecasts, available at http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd4/Table8.xls

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much was spent on housing benefit for tenants in *(a)* council property, *(b)* housing association property, *(c)* registered social landlord property and *(d)* private sector housing in Coventry in each of the last three years. [62685]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is not available broken down in the format requested. The latest available information for rent rebates, council tenancies, and rent allowance, all other tenancies, is in the tables.

Housing benefit expenditure in Coventry city council: nominal terms

£ million

	Rent Rebates	Rent Allowance
2000–01	15.0	43.6
2001–02	0.1	60.5
2002–03	0.1	68.1

Note:
Coventry city council undertook a large-scale voluntary transfer of housing stock to the Whitefriars Housing Group on 23 September 2000.

Source:
DWP expenditure tables derived from local authority claims for housing revenue account subsidy.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the requisite National Vocational Qualification level is for Jobcentre Plus advisers working with clients in receipt of incapacity benefits; whether the minimum qualification level must be in a relevant subject; and whether qualification requirements will be reviewed as part of the welfare reforms proposed in the paper A New Deal for Welfare: Empowering People to Work. [59799]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions has asked me to reply to your question asking what is the requisite National Vocational Qualification level for Jobcentre Plus advisers working with clients in receipt of incapacity benefits, whether the minimum qualification level must be in a relevant subject and whether qualification requirements will be reviewed as part of the welfare reforms proposed in the paper A new deal for welfare: Empowering people to work. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Jobcentre Plus expects all Advisers to commit themselves to achieving an Advice & Guidance National Vocational Qualification.

During 2004/05 Jobcentre Plus invested in 1,654 full National Vocational Qualifications of which 868 were Advice & Guidance Level 3 or 4 for Advisers. When deciding which National Vocational Qualifications to support, courses which benefit those Advisers who deal with Incapacity Benefit claimants are our top priority.

The accreditation strategy across DWP is currently being reviewed to ensure that it supports the requirements of the welfare reform agenda.

I hope this is helpful.

Bereavement Allowance

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many men received bereavement allowance in the last period for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement; [62355]

(2) how many *(a)* widows and *(b)* widowers are receiving bereavement allowance; and if he will make a statement. [62364]

Mr. Plaskitt: As at August 2005, there were 17,400 men and 37,400 women in receipt of bereavement allowance in Great Britain.

Capita

James Brokenshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many contracts his Department holds with *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries which still have a potential duration of five years or more. [61476]

Mrs. McGuire *[holding answer 29 March 2006]:* The Department has only one contract with Capita, with a potential duration of five years or more, let through an open competition following an advert in the *Official Journal* of the European Union. A Records Storage contract was awarded in 2004 and runs from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2011 with option to extend for up to a further three years.

Child Poverty

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his latest estimate is of the proportion of children living in households below 60 per cent. of median income in each year since 1976–77 *(a)* before and *(b)* after housing costs; and if he will make a statement. [44735]

Margaret Hodge: Specific information regarding low income for Great Britain is available in "Households Below Average Income (HBAI) 1994/95–2004/05", available in the Library. The threshold of below 60 per cent. .contemporary median income is the most commonly used in reporting trends in low income.

There is no fully consistent time series using a single data source since 1979. The latest time series on a consistent basis is only available from 1994–95, which is sourced from the Family Resources Survey and covers Great Britain. Previous HBAI results were sourced from the Family Expenditure Survey (FES), which employed a slightly different definition of income and related to the United Kingdom. FES estimates are also presented for GB, for consistency with the FRS.

The following table gives the proportions of children living in households with less than 60 per cent. of relative median household income for years that estimates are available from 1979. Information before 1979 is not available from official sources.

Income below 60 per cent. of contemporary median income

	Before housing costs	*After housing costs*
1979[1]	12	14
1981[1]	18	20
1987[1]	21	25
1988–89[1]	23	26
1990–91[1]	26	31
1991–92[1]	27	32
1992–93[1]	27	33
1993–95[1]	25	32
1979[2]	12	14
1981[2]	17	19
1987[2]	21	25
1988–89[2]	23	26
1990–91[2]	25	30
1991–92[2]	26	31
1992–93[2]	26	32
1993–95[2]	25	32
1994–95[3]	23	31
1995–96[3]	22	31
1996–97[3]	25	33
1997–98[3]	25	32
1998–99[3]	24	33
1999–2000[3]	23	32
2000–01[3]	21	30
2001–02[3]	21	30
2002–03[3]	21	28
2003–04[3]	21	28
2004–05[3]	19	27

Notes:

1. Table shows numbers in millions.
2. The reference period for FRS figures is single financial years.
3. FES figures are single calendar years from 1979–87, two combined calendar years from 1988–89 to1992–93 and two financial years combined for 1993–95.

Sources:

[1] Family Expenditure Survey (UK).
[2] Family Expenditure Survey (GB).
[3] Family Resources Survey (GB).

Further information showing the proportion and number of individuals living in low income households, including annual levels, can be found in the publication "Households Below Average Income 1994/95—2004/05". This also reports statistics between 1979 and 1995–96, using the data source and income definitions previously employed for the 'Households Below Average Income' series.

Child Support

Jessica Morden: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the *(a)* maximum, *(b)* minimum and *(c)* average length of time taken by the child support commissioners was to reach a decision on appeals placed by claimants relating to non-resident, non paying parents in the latest period for which figures are available. [61788]

Ms Harman: I have been asked to reply.

The Commissioners' Office decides appeals on a point of law from Appeal Service tribunals in social security, tax credit, housing benefit and council tax benefit cases as well as child support cases. It reports on the disposal times for its work taken as a whole, and does not separate performance statistics by individual benefit type. Performance data are generated via a database system that holds statistics on the overall work of the tribunal, and the format of this data cannot be manipulated to provide performance figures for child support cases only.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what his latest estimate is of the average time it takes the Child Support Agency to bring cases from first application to assessment; [30039]

(2) how many and what proportion of eligible parents received their first payment from the Child Support Agency within the time limit of six weeks during the last calendar year, broken down by month. [30041]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive. He will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty:

In reply to your Parliamentary Questions about enforcement activity in the Child Support Agency, the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what his latest estimate is of the average time it takes the Child Support Agency to bring cases from first application to assessment.

You also asked how many and what proportion of eligible parents received their first payment from the Child Support Agency within the time limit of six weeks during the last calendar year broken down by month.

As at the end of December, of those cases that progressed to calculation since the introduction of the new scheme, the average time from first contact to calculation was 177 days (25 weeks). Of such cases, 24 per cent. received a calculation in less that 6 weeks; 49 per cent. between 6 weeks and 6 months; 16 per cent. between 6 months and a year; and 11 per cent. took more than a year.

It should be noted, however, that the Agency does not regard an application as being cleared once a calculation alone has been carried out, but once collection arrangements have been agreed with the non resident. Additionally, since not all Child Support Agency applications result in a calculation, an application is also defined as cleared if the case is closed, the parent with care is identified as claiming Good Cause or is subject to a Reduced Benefit Decision, or the application is identified as being a change of circumstances on an existing case as opposed to a new application.

As of the end of December 2005, for all cases cleared since the introduction of the new scheme, the mean average time taken to process a new-scheme application from the date of first contact to clearance, as defined above, was 193 days (28 weeks). Of those cases cleared, 25 per cent. did so in less that 6 weeks; 42 per cent. between 6 weeks and 6 months; 18 per cent. between 6 months and a year; and 16 per cent. took more than a year. However, it should be noted that these figures exclude 104,000 applications that came through the Jobcentre Plus interface and have been cleared, but for which management information does not enable the age at clearance to be determined.

The Agency does not have a time limit for the time taken for a parent with care to receive their first payment.

Information regarding the number and percentage of cases receiving a first payment within six weeks or longer is attached.

Once a case has received a calculation, a method of collection must be agreed with the non-resident parent and set up by the Agency which, in the cases of a Direct Debit or a Standing Order, may take a few weeks. The day on which payment is due from the non-resident parent is then specified by the Agency having taken in to account the date of any other income payable to the non-resident parent, which may result in a delay of up to 4 weeks to make payment to the Agency. The Agency then has 10 days to process the payment from the non-resident parent and make payment to the parent with care.

Delays may occur if a non resident parent does not comply. For an employed non-resident parent the Agency can then impose a Deductions from Earnings Order (DEO). Where this occurs, the Agency must contact and liaise with the employer to set up the DEO, wait for the subsequent payment from the employer, which in itself can take over 20 days, before money is available to be paid to the parent with care.

The elapsed times between a payment request by the Agency and actual payment by the non resident parent mean that, even when the Agency becomes more efficient at processing applications to the point of calculation, and if the non resident parent accepted financial responsibility for their children without the need for enforcement action, it is unlikely that it would be physically possible for many parents with care to receive maintenance payments within 6 weeks of their first contact with the Agency.

I hope you find this helpful.

Cases where payment has been made from the Agency to the parent with care by time elapsed since first contact with the CSA

Number

	Cases receiving payment in			
Date of intake	*Less than six weeks*	*Six weeks or longer*	*Cases where payment not yet received*	*Total*
2004				
January	[1]	6,000	1,500	8,000
February	[1]	5,500	1,500	7,500
March	[1]	7,000	2,000	9,000
April	[1]	5,500	1,500	7,000
May	[1]	6,000	1,500	7,500
June	[1]	6,000	1,500	7,500
July	[1]	5,500	1,500	7,000
August	[1]	5,500	1,500	7,000
September	[1]	5,500	1,500	7,000
October	[1]	5,500	1,500	7,000
November	[1]	5,000	1,500	6,500
December	[1]	4,000	1,000	5,000

Cases where payment has been made from the Agency to the parent with care by time elapsed since first contact with the CSA

Percentage

	Cases receiving payment in			
Date of intake	*Less than six weeks*	*Six weeks or longer*	*Cases where payment not yet received*	*Total*
2004				
January	2	76	21	8,000
February	3	76	21	7,500
March	2	77	21	9,000
April	2	78	20	7,000
May	2	79	19	7,500
June	2	79	19	7,500
July	2	79	19	7,000
August	2	78	19	7,000
September	3	77	20	7,000
October	3	77	19	7,000
November	3	75	22	6,500
December	2	77	21	5,000

[1] Less than 250.

Note:

Numbers are rounded to the nearest 500, and percentages to the nearest whole per cent. As such, components may not sum to totals.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 23 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 53W, on the Child Support Agency, what the *(a)* shortest and *(b)* longest period was between the Child Support Agency notifying the Jobcentre Plus to deduct the five pound flat rate in maintenance from a non-resident

parent's benefit and the maintenance deduction being made in the latest period for which figures are available. [56881]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is the matter for the Chief Executive. He will write to my right hon. Friend with the information requested.

Letter from Hilary Reynolds:

In reply to your Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive is currently unavailable as he is communicating the Operational Improvement Plan to all Agency staff. I am responding on his behalf.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 23rd February 2006 Official Report column 53W on the Child Support Agency what the *(a)* shortest and *(b)* longest period was between the Child Support Agency notifying the Jobcentre Plus to deduct the five pound flat rate in maintenance from a non-resident parent's benefit and the maintenance deduction being made in the latest period for which figures are available.

I assume that you intended to refer to the answer of 27th February 2006 Official Report column 238W, since this relates to the same subject as your current question.

As I noted in my previous letter, information regarding the time taken between the Agency notifying Jobcentre Plus to set up a deduction from a non-resident parent's benefit and the maintenance deduction being made is not available.

However, it is possible to provide indicative information using the difference between the date on which Jobcentre Plus notified the Agency that a collection schedule had been set up, and the date on which maintenance was received by the Agency. Due to limitations with currently available data, this indicative information can only be provided where:

Payment had both been received from Jobcentre Plus and made to the parent with care.

The case's original collection schedule was a deduction from benefit and was still in place at the time of first payment, i.e. excluding cases where there was a subsequent change of circumstance.

Data in this area is extremely complex, and the analysis required to answer this question revealed anomalies in the base data that was used to provide my previous answer. In my previous letter, I stated that the average time between Jobcentre Plus notifying the Agency that a collection schedule had been set up and payment being received by the Agency was around 28 days. That figure should actually be 25 days.

In December 2005, scheme to date, for all new-scheme cases:

The shortest period of time between Jobcentre Plus notifying the Agency that a collection schedule had been set up and payment being received by the Agency was 0 days—that is, the payment was received on the same day.

The longest period of time was 692 days. But note that only 60 cases, out of 34,000 considered, took longer than 350 days to complete this process and in 75% of cases payment was received by the Agency in 29 days or less of Jobcentre Plus notifying the Agency that a collection schedule had been set up.

I hope you find this useful, and I apologise for the error in the previous response.

Customer Management System

Mr. Anthony Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what financial penalties have been imposed on *(a)* Electronic Data Systems, *(b)* the contractor and *(c)* the provider, in relation to the Customer Management System. [46827]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to my hon. Friend.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions has asked me to reply to your question concerning the financial penalties that have been imposed on *(a)* Electronic Data Systems, *(b)* the contractor and *(c)* the provider, in relation to the Customer Management System (CMS). This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Rather than "financial penalties", our contracts for the delivery of our IT services provide for payments to suppliers to be reduced or withheld in event that agreed performance standards are not met.

The development of the CMS application was contracted on a fixed price basis, with payments conditional on our acceptance criteria being met by the agreed dates. In the case of CMS application delivery payments were withheld to IBM until the relevant criteria were met.

Once the system is in use by our staff we monitor its performance to ensure it meets their needs in processing departmental business. For CMS, there are two key performance standards, Service Availability and Response Times. Service Availability measures when the CMS service is available for staff to use. Response Times measure the processing speed of the system in supporting staff in carrying out their duties. If the system fails to meet the required standards a deduction is made from the suppliers invoice reflective of the scale of the performance failure according to the terms of the contract.

I can confirm that we have applied deductions during the operation of the service by EDS.

Debt Management

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much his Department has spent on debt management *(a)* consultants and *(b)* staff training in each quarter since Q2 2001. [52496]

Mr. Plaskitt: The financial records for debt management as a separate entity were not available prior to the financial year commencing April 2002.

The following table provides details of the costs of consultants working for debt management, and identifiable costs of training debt management staff.

£ million

Period	*Consultants*	*Staff training*
2002		
April—June	1.714	0.341
July—September	0.145	0.363
October—December	1.193	0.574
2003		
January—March	0.933	0.521
April—June	0.494	0.360
July—September	0.006	0.637
October—December	0.881	0.432
2004		
January—March	0.482	0.796
April—June	1.785	0.463
July—September	1.216	0.455
October—December	0.608	0.491
2005		
January—March	3.058	0.704
April—June	1.254	0.138
July—September	0.427	0.372

£ million

Period	Consultants	Staff training
October—December	1.024	0.445
2006		
January—March	n/a	n/a

n/a = not available.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many individual debt cases have been opened in each quarter since Q2 2001; and how many of these cases were followed up with written correspondence. [52499]

Mr. Plaskitt: The volume of debt cases opened in each quarter are shown in the attached table.

Separate figures are not kept of the volume of letters issued. In the vast majority of recoverable overpayments the customer or their representative would have received at least one item of written correspondence. In the cases where the overpayment is classified as non-recoverable, correspondence would only be issued where it is considered they should have realised they were being overpaid.

	Volume of new recovery overpayments in quarter	Volume of new non-recovery overpayments in quarter	Total volume of new debt
2001–02			
Qtr 1	136,968	7,535	144,503
Qtr 2	140,630	7,094	147,724
Qtr 3	133,038	7,117	140,155
Qtr 4	158,095	6,837	164,932
Total	568,731	28,583	597,314
2002–03			
Qtr 1	131,374	5,637	137,011
Qtr 2	125,221	3,920	129,141
Qtr 3	120,330	3,705	124,035
Qtr 4	133,427	4,312	137,739
Total	510,352	17,574	527,924
2003–04			
Qtr 1	88,709	2,968	91,677
Qtr 2	97,658	3,251	100,909
Qtr 3	88,747	2,692	91,439
Qtr 4	111,594	2,834	114,428
Total	386,708	11,745	398,453
2004–05			
Qtr 1	88,244	2,062	90,306
Qtr 2	94,061	2,651	96,712
Qtr 3	98,586	1,814	100,400
Qtr 4	126,271	1,844	128,115
Total	407,162	8,371	415,533
2005–06			
Qtr 1	129,234	1,413	130,647
Qtr 2	67,258	4,016	71,274
Qtr 3	122,426	3,651	126,077
Qtr 4	—	—	—
Total	318,918	9,080	327,998

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much his Department spent on bottled water in 2004–05. [40321]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Department held contracts, across all the government office regions, with two suppliers in 2004–05 for the provision of bottled water, water cooler hire, cups and also covers delivery charges. Expenditure for the period was £435,000 and relates to these contracts only. We are unable to separate the costs for each individual element within the contracts without incurring disproportionate costs.

It is very likely that the Department would have also provided bottled water at certain meetings as part of a refreshment order, however, we are not able to separate the cost for these from the overall refreshment costs.

Departmental Finance

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many cases of financial irregularities have been recorded in his Department in each of the last five financial years; and if he will make a statement. [57547]

Mr. Plaskitt: Information is not available in the format requested.

For such information as is available, in respect of the estimated cost of internal and contractor fraud to the Department, I refer the hon. Member to the written answer I gave the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws) on 6 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 870W.

The Department has a robust approach to the detection, prevention and deterrence of internal and contractor fraud. This approach is consistent with Treasury guidance.

The Department has a fraud response plan and an anti-fraud policy in place. Investigations into suspected internal or contractor-related frauds are conducted by a professional and dedicated team.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his Department's target is for paying invoices to contractors; and what percentage of bills were paid on time in the last period for which figures are available. [60581]

Margaret Hodge: All admin payments are made within the terms of the contract, or within 30 days of receipt of the goods/services or receipt of an invoice whichever is the later. The Departments target for paying invoices to contractors is 96.5 per cent. The percentage of bills, which were paid on time in the last period, period 10 of the current financial year for which figures are available, is 96.9 per cent.

Departmental Publications

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the instructional leaflets his Department and the agencies for which he has responsibility produced in the period from January to December 2005. [51981]

Mrs. McGuire: A list of the Department's leaflets that were current on the 16 February 2006 has been placed in the Library. Information on the instructional leaflets issued during the period January to December 2005 is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Staff

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people were employed by the *(a)* Rent Service, *(b)* Health and Safety Executive, *(c)* Department for Work and Pensions, *(d)* Child Support Agency, *(e)* JobcentrePlus and *(f)* Pension Service in each region in each of the last 12 months for which information is available; and how many and what percentage of posts were vacant in each month. [51167]

Mrs. McGuire: The figures requested are published in Civil Service Statistics. Table A of this publication covers staff numbers (on a full time equivalent and headcount basis) for each organisation as at 1 April 2004. The more recent data does not include a breakdown of DWP staff numbers by agency.

Information on The Health and Safety Executive, part of the Department since June 2002, is available in the same publication.

Civil Service statistics are available in the Library and at the following address on the Cabinet Office Statistics website: http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management/statistics/index.asp

Information on the number of vacant posts is not collected.

Household Income

Greg Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what methodology was used to produce the charts of income distribution for the total population published in each edition of Households Below Average Income; and whether corresponding figures and charts are available for particular sectors of the population. [60607]

Margaret Hodge: The latest Department for Work and Pensions' statistical publication Households Below Average Income (HBAI), published on 9 March 2006 provides charts showing the number of individuals living in Great Britain by ten pound equivalised income bands. "Figure 2.1 (BHC)" shows income measured before housing costs were deducted from household income, and "Figure 2.1 (AHC)" shows income after housing costs were deducted from income.

The McClements equivalence scale was used to adjust for household income and household size and composition. Details of this and other factors included in the HBAI methodology can be found in Chapter 1 and Appendix 2 of the latest edition of HBAI, copies of which are available in the Library.

Corresponding charts for children, working-age adults with and without children, and pensioners, are in Chapters 4, 5, and 6 respectively.

Job Search Appointments

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what arrangements are in place in jobcentres for dealing with clients arriving late for Job Search appointments; [54246]

(2) what the average waiting time is between a request for a Job Search appointment and the actual appointment in each Jobcentre Plus contract centre area. [54247]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions has asked me to reply to your questions asking what arrangements are in place in jobcentres for dealing with clients arriving late for Job Search appointments and what the average waiting time is between a request for a Job Search appointment in each Jobcentre Plus contact centre area. This is something that falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

People claiming working age benefits are usually required to attend regular appointments to discuss opportunities for work and to see what help Jobcentre Plus can provide. Those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance are normally required to attend fortnightly job search reviews and more in-depth appointments with a personal adviser at key stages of their claim if they are unable to find work quickly. Customers who attend on the correct day, but who are late, are told about the need to attend future appointments on time and that failure to do so might affect entitlement to benefit. Those who subsequently fail to attend on time or fail to attend any appointment on the correct date are required to show good cause; otherwise their benefit may be sanctioned.

Alongside these regular and scheduled appointments, people may ask, at any time, for an appointment to see an adviser at their local Jobcentre. Wherever possible, we aim to see people immediately, but a forward appointment may be made. If someone attends late, we will still try to accommodate them, but where this is not possible another appointment will be made. There are no benefit implications for people arriving late for an appointment that has been arranged at their request and we do not monitor actual average waiting times for these types of appointments.

Jobcentre Plus sets out in its Customers' Charter the standards of service we aim to meet. It is our stated intention to see people quickly and on time when they have an appointment. We are introducing revised service standards from 3 April 2006 and these are set out in "Our Service Standards" leaflet. A copy of the Customers' Charter and "Our Service Standards" can be found in the Library.

I hope this is helpful.

Jobcentre Plus

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on planned Jobcentre Plus closures; and what *(a)* financial and *(b)* headcount implications are expected from each closure. [51978]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question asking if he will make a statement on planned Jobcentre Plus closures and what *(a)* financial and *(b)* headcount implications are expected from each closure. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Following the creation of Jobcentre Plus in 2002 a detailed service delivery planning exercise was carried out in each District, in consultation with local stakeholders, to identify the sites from which new processes and services would be best delivered. Jobcentre Plus inherited a network of around 1,500 offices from

the former Employment Service and Benefits Agency, many of which were unsuitable due to the fabric of the building, or location or both. I have placed in the Library a list of the remaining sites to be closed as part of the Jobcentre Plus rollout. (Annex A).

As a result of our decision in September 2004 to centralise the processing of benefits, 35 sites were identified for closure and I have placed in the Library a list of those 35 sites. (Annex B).

We continuously evaluate our services and the network from which they are delivered. If it becomes clear that some of our offices are less cost efficient and that services can be more effectively delivered from an alternative location we will reconfigure our network. Reducing expenditure on our office network is part of our wider strategy for focusing resources more effectively on frontline advisory services to help our customers move into work. All closure proposals are agreed by the Minister of State and I have placed a list of those sites for closure as a result of the Jobcentre Plus implementation programme in the Library. (Annex C)

Details of the annual running cost savings for each of the site closures are shown in each of the three lists placed in the Library. The planned closures will lead to a saving of £73.9 million for each year of the contract we have with Land Securities Trillium for management of the Departmental estate. The cost of delivering these savings is £38.9 million. This sum includes one off costs, which will be incurred between now and 2008, associated with decommissioning the offices, making any alterations back to the original condition where it is a condition of the lease and contractual fees payable to Land Securities Trillium under our contract with them.

Closing Jobcentre Plus offices does not of itself produce headcount reductions. When planning the shape of the office network staff implications are considered fully, and it is our policy to make every effort to redeploy staff locally where possible.

Overpayments

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much his Department has accrued in unrecovered overpayments in each quarter since Q2 2001; and what is the total level of accrued overpayments. [52501]

Mr. Plaskitt: The details requested are in the following table.

£ million

	Total value of new debt
2001–02	
Quarter 1	81.2
Quarter 2	87.7
Quarter 3	78.0
Quarter 4	91.5
Total new debt in year	338.4
Total cumulative debt stock at 31 March 2002	1,240.3
2002–03	
Quarter 1	75.6
Quarter 2	76.1
Quarter 3	75.2
Quarter 4	85.3
Total new debt in year	312.2
Total cumulative debt stock at 31 March 2003	1,144.7
2003–04	
Quarter 1	65.1
Quarter 2	68.9
Quarter 3	68.0
Quarter 4	83.2
Total new debt in year	285.2
Total cumulative debt stock at 31 March 2004	1,156.5
2004–05	
Quarter 1	65.1
Quarter 2	74.4
Quarter 3	80.9
Quarter 4	91.5
Total new debt in year	311.9
Total cumulative debt stock at 31 March 2005	1,229.8
2005–06	
Quarter 1	88.5
Quarter 2	53.9
Quarter 3	83.5
Quarter 4	—
Total new debt in year	225.9
Total cumulative debt stock at 31 December 2005	1,354.0

Parliamentary Questions

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he will reply to *(a)* Questions 38885, 38991 and 38992 on the Child Support Agency and the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service tabled on 19 December 2005, *(b)* Question 41897 on the numbers of people employed at the Child Support Agency, Jobcentre Plus and other agencies tabled on 10 January 2006 and *(c)* Question 44602 on Child Support Agency assessments tabled on 17 January 2006. [48906]

Mr. Plaskitt: Replies have been given to the hon. Member for all the questions as follows:

(a) 38885, 38991 and 38992 on 1 February, *Official Report*, column 594W;

(b) 41897 on 16 February, *Official Report*, column 2434W;

(c) 44602 on 30 January, *Official Report*, column 275W.

Pathways to Work

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of Pathways to Work participants have received the return to work credit since inception. [59796]

Margaret Hodge: 18 per cent. of those who started on the choices programme providing support to incapacity benefit claimants have received return to work credit (RTWC) since the inception of the Pathways to Work Pilots. 8 per cent. of those who undertook a mandatory work focused interview have received a return to work credit.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of Pathways to Work recipients who received the return to work credit have received it for *(a)* up to three months, *(b)* three to six months, *(c)* six to nine months, *(d)* nine to 12 months and *(e)* the full 12 months. [59797]

Margaret Hodge: The information requested is in the table.

Duration of return to work credit award

	Percentage
Up to 3 months	12
3 to 6 months	49
6 to 9 months	3
9 to 12 months	4
Full 12 months	32

Note:
Data are to October 2005.
Source:
Pathways to Work Evaluation Database.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of new claimants of incapacity benefit in Pathways to Work pilot areas were returning claimants who had previously found employment through Pathways to Work in the most recent period for which figures are available. [59851]

Margaret Hodge: The most recent period for which figures are available is October 2005. In that month, five per cent. of people who contacted Jobcentre Plus to make a claim for incapacity benefit in Pathways to Work pilot areas were returning claimants who had previously found employment through Pathways to Work.

Note :

The statistics quoted in this response are taken from the Pathways to Work Evaluation Database.

Mrs. Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in receipt of incapacity benefit in the Bridgend area were supported to return to work as a result of the Pathways to Work pilot in that area. [60046]

Margaret Hodge: In the Bridgend area; 3,450 people in receipt of incapacity benefits; including 870 volunteers, have gained a job as a result of taking part in the Pathways to Work pilot in that area.

The success of Pathways to Work has demonstrated that, with the right help and support, many people on incapacity benefits can move back into work reinforcing our view that labelling people as incapable of work is normally entirely inappropriate.

Pension Fund Trustees

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what powers *(a)* the pensions regulator and *(b)* other authorities have to disqualify or penalise pension fund trustees; and in what circumstances. [61770]

Mr. Timms: The pensions regulator is the statutory body set up to regulate occupational pension schemes. It inherited a range of powers from the Occupational Pensions Regulatory Authority (OPRA) and has additional powers to enable it to deal with trustees of occupational pension schemes who are dishonest, unscrupulous or incompetent.

The powers available to the pensions regulator include issuing prohibition orders to prevent a person from acting as a trustee if the regulator considers that the person is not a "fit and proper" person to act in this capacity. The regulator is required to keep a register of all people who are prohibited from acting as a trustee.

Section 29(1) of the Pensions Act 1995 provides the grounds for a person being disqualified from being a trustee of any trust scheme. These include conviction of any offence involving dishonesty or deception.

The regulator can also issue suspension orders so that a trustee can be suspended where consideration is being given to proceedings against that trustee.

Section 10 of the Pensions Act 1995 enables the regulator to impose a fine on a person where it is satisfied that by reason of any act or omission a civil penalty is appropriate.

Pension Protection Fund

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the impact of small county court judgments on the Pension Protection Fund risk-based levy faced by pension providers. [62415]

Mr. Timms: In setting the risk-based levy for eligible pension schemes for 2006–07, the PPF used Dun and Bradstreet ratings which include county court judgements (CCJs) as one factor in assessing the risk of a business. As companies with CCJ's are more likely to become insolvent, then it is deemed fair that this should be reflected in the levy. Companies had until the 31 March 2006 to provide evidence that any recorded CCJs have been paid. The total pension protection levy which the PPF plans to raise in 2006–07 is £575 million across the pension schemes eligible for the PPF.

Pensions Day

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many participants had completed the National Pensions Day debate survey on his Department's website up to and including 18 March. [61413]

Mr. Timms: The number of National Pensions Debate surveys completed on-line on www.dwp.gov.uk/debate up to and including 18 March 2006 was 4,313.

As of 27 March 2006, the total number of surveys returned has increased to 5,496.

The results from the National Pensions Debate will be used to help inform the Government's White Paper due this spring.

Personal Capacity Assessment

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will establish an executive panel to review the personal capacity assessment; and if he will make a statement. [59798]

Margaret Hodge: In our Welfare Reform Green Paper, "A new deal for welfare: Empowering people to work", we set out our proposals to reform the current personal capability assessment. The current assessment focuses solely on a person's incapacity and what they

cannot do. We intend to transform the assessment so that it also looks at a person's capabilities and the help and support they need to make full use of them.

The current assessment was set up over 12 years ago. Since then there have been many changes to working patterns, illnesses and the types of medical treatment available and we want to ensure that the revised assessment process is fully equipped to deal with today's society and the challenges it faces.

We are currently in the process of setting up a consultative group to advise us on our proposals to reform the personal capability assessment. This group will be made up of representatives from disability stakeholder and lobby groups, covering the full range of illnesses and disabilities.

Meanwhile, as part of our work to ensure that the personal capability assessment reflects today's needs, we are also planning to review both the physical and mental health components of the assessment. We are setting up two working groups of relevant medical experts to carry out these reviews. The first meeting of the Mental Health Medical Working Group is planned to take place shortly, while the composition of the Physical Health Medical Working Group is still being determined. We are also establishing a specific Mental Health Consultative Group, as we recognise the unique problems that those with mental health conditions face. This group, made up of people with real experience of working with those with these conditions, will work alongside the Medical Working Group and ensure that the customer is at the heart of the review.

Both working groups are due to report their findings to Ministers later in the year.

Post Office Accounts

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his oral answer of 13 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1139, if he will list the 25 accounts from which those in receipt of pensions or benefits can access their cash at post offices. [59766]

Mr. Plaskitt: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for North Shropshire (Mr. Paterson) on 14 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 1955W.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what representations he has received on his decision to discontinue the Post Office card account. [59007]

Mr. Plaskitt: I and my ministerial colleagues have received a number of letters on the future of the Post Office card account. We have also answered questions in the House and responded to points raised during debates. We have already set out our policy on the Post Office card account at some length, including in the reply to the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws) on 31 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 443–44W.

Tin-Lead Alloy

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many organ pipe makers have reported suffering illness as a result of working with tin-lead alloy in each of the last 10 years; and what research has been conducted on the health and safety effects of using tin-lead alloy in pipe organs. [60988]

Mrs. McGuire: HSE currently receives statutory medical information about people working with lead, under the Control of Lead at Work Regulations (CLAW). The purpose of these Regulations is to remove workers from exposure to lead, before any toxic effects can occur. Up until 2001, no more than 10 cases of lead poisoning were reported to HSE each year under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations.

The nature of these two different information sources means that it is not possible to break this down into specific occupational groupings—and organ pipe makers, in particular.

HSE's guidance advises that soldering and handling of clean solid metallic lead e.g. pipes, are not liable to result in significant exposure to lead. Therefore, HSE has not commissioned any research into the health and safety effects of using tin-lead alloy in pipe organs.

Tribunals System

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the success rate was of appeals taken before tribunals for each benefit in the last year for which figures are available. [59052]

Mrs. McGuire: This is a matter for Christina Townsend, Chief Executive of the Appeal Service, she will reply to my hon. Friend.

Letter from Christina Townsend:

The Secretary of State has asked me to respond to your question regarding what the success rate was of appeals before tribunals for each benefit in the last year for which statistics are available.

The information you ask for is contained in the table attached.

I hope this reply is helpful.

Appeals cleared at hearing by benefit and outcome

Benefit	*Cleared at hearing*	*Cleared in favour*	*Percentage cleared in favour*
Not known	435	110	26
Pension Credits	980	310	32
Working Tax Credit	550	30	6
Child Tax Credit	435	90	20
Child Support Reforms	1,195	445	37
Widows Benefit	345	55	16
Social Fund—Maternity Payments	515	55	10
Social Fund—Funeral Payments	1,755	305	17
Severe Disablement Allowance	170	80	47
Retirement Pension	1,055	85	8
Jobseekers Allowance	6,190	1,845	30
Invalid Care Allowance/Carers Allowance	965	150	16
Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit	9,480	3,710	39
Income Support	9,495	3,135	33
All Personal Capability Assessment (not Incapacity Benefit)	760	295	38
Incapacity Benefit (not Personal Capability Assessment)	4,565	1,730	38
Incapacity Benefit (Personal Capability Assessment)	44,185	21,235	48
Housing / Council Tax Benefit	2,815	885	31
Housing Benefit	2,975	900	30
Disability Living Allowance	71,370	35,905	50
Council Tax Benefit	835	205	24
Compensation Recovery Unit	905	630	70

Appeals cleared at hearing by benefit and outcome

Benefit	*Cleared at hearing*	*Cleared in favour*	*Percentage cleared in favour*
Child Support Departures Referral	95	65	69
Child Support Departures Appeal	500	225	45
Child Support Assessments	1,255	605	48
Child Benefit/One Parent Benefit	710	80	11
Attendance Allowance	5,665	2,310	41
Other	425	130	30
Total	170,640	75,595	44

Notes:
1. Data are taken from the Management Information System (MIS) computer system.
2. Figures have rounded to the nearest 5.
3. Figures are for the calendar year (January to December) for 2005.
4. All figures are subject to change as more up to date data become available.
5. Figures for the latest months will rise significantly as information feeds through to the Appeals Service.
6. "Other" refers to types of appeals which have low numbers, they have been summed to preserve the anonymity of the appellant.

Source:
DWP, Information Directorate

Uncollected Debt

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much uncollected debt was referred out to private partners under the enforcement initiative during each quarter since the second quarter 2004. [52538]

Mr. Plaskitt: The following table shows the total debt referred to the private sector partners. This includes benefit debt and Social Fund Loans. Some of the debt will have been referred back to the department, for example when the debtor has returned to benefit.

	£ million
2004–05	
Quarter 1	78
Quarter 2	38.4
Quarter 3	22.9
Quarter 4	33.4
2005–06	
Quarter 1	15.9
Quarter 2	0
Quarter 3 (to 31 January 2006)	3.5

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Additional Learning Support (West Midlands)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much her Department has spent on additional learning support in *(a)* Coventry, South and *(b)* the west midlands region. [61756]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 29 September 2005]:* The Coventry Excellence Cluster, which began in September 2001, has received a total of £7,708,174. For this financial year (2005–06) it has received £3,561,213. About half of this sum was allocated to fund Learning Mentors and Learning Support Units to tackle barriers to learning and provide extra support to pupils with learning difficulties. The Excellence Cluster initially covered seven schools in the Coventry, South constituency, but from September 2006, all secondary schools in Coventry, South have benefited from Excellence in Cities (EiC) funding.

Other local authorities in the west midlands region have also benefited from EiC funding. Birmingham, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall, Wolverhampton and Stoke-on-Trent, have participated in the full EiC programme and others have received targeted EiC funding. As a result, authorities in the west midlands collectively received £159,131,969 over the lifetime of the EiC programme.

Adult Education

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assistance her Department is providing to adults in Hartlepool to improve and increase their level of skills. [60008]

Phil Hope: This is a matter for the Learning and Skills Council. Mark Haysom, the council's chief executive, has written to my hon. Friend with this information and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

The Government's Skills Strategy, outlined in the two White Papers, "21st Century Skills: Realising Our Potential" (July 2003) and "Skills: Getting on in business, getting on at work" (March 2005), sets out our plans for ensuring that individuals have the skills needed to be both employable and personally fulfilled. Everyone studying literacy and numeracy skills or a first full level 2 qualification, and all those on jobseeker's allowance or income related benefits and their dependents will continue to receive free tuition in further education. All have access to in-depth advice about their careers and training through the Learndirect one-stop telephone and on-line advice service.

The Government's PSA target on adult attainment challenges us to reduce by at least 40 per cent. the number of adults in the work force who lack NVQ Level 2 (equivalent to five A-C GCSEs) by 2010. Previous progress has been good; the proportion of adults in the work place qualified to Level 2 and above rose from 65 per cent. in 1997 to 72 per cent. in 2004.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 5 April 2006:

I write in response to your recent Parliamentary Question regarding Skills for adults.

LSC funding of £3m. Per annum is contracted to Hartlepool training providers to address skills for adults. This covers programmes in the two Further Education providers, Apprenticeships for 19–25 year old learners, Adult and Community Learning services contracted through the Local Authority and NVQ Level 2 and Skills for Life programmes for employers funded through Train to Gain pilots. In the three years since March 2003, more than 23,000 individuals have enrolled on courses. Available programmes cover the range from community based foundation programmes, through full and part NVQ level 2 and 3 courses, to Foundation Degrees run in partnership by the local Further Education College and Teesside University. There is a strong focus on Skills for Life programmes. Vocational areas include construction and engineering, health and care, and business administration.

Further Education

More than £9m (£9,049,596) has been spent between 03/04 and 05/06 on adult learning through providers based principally in Hartlepool. This has been for 21,044 learners, enrolled on 29,244 courses. The percentage of enrolments within this group that are

Skills for Life has risen from 11.5% to 15% over the years. Those within the National Qualification Framework (i.e. those resulting in a recognised qualification) have risen from 35% to 61% of the total enrolments by adult learners. The percentage of qualifications in Level 1 has fallen from 45% to 29%, with a rise in Level 2 from 15% to 22% and Level 3 from 13% to 23%. The sector benefiting the most from policy changes in provision has been the Health, Public Services and Care sector, with a cumulative total share of 36% of the enrolments between 03/04 and 05/06.

Success Rates for the year 04/05 are not yet final, but the overall Success Rates in Further Education for providers based principally in Hartlepool rose by 13% between 02/03 and 03/04, from 66% to 79%. This is well above the national average of 70% for the adult group.

Work-Based Learning

The number of adults from Hartlepool in learning in Work Based Learning has varied between 216 and 253 over the past three years (for all LSC-funded provision), the greater number participating in Apprenticeships. The overall success rates for Hartlepool residents in Work Based Learning have risen from 47.4% to 55.8% in 03/04 and 04/05 respectively, as compared to the national averages of 46.0% and 53.0%.

Skills for Life

From 2000/01 to 2004/5, the cumulative total number of adult learners achieving at least one Skills for Life qualification is 1,888, with 1,099 (58.2%) counting towards the Public Service Agreement target. This is the aggregate of 4,138 opportunities taken up, 3,579 courses completed, and 2,888 achieved. 2,623 taken up, 2,082 completed and 1,420 achieved counted towards the Public Service Agreement target. These figures are best estimates based on providers located in Hartlepool.

Adult and Community Learning

The number of learners accessing Adult and Community Learning in the one Hartlepool-based provider has reduced by almost 20%, from 1,148 to 936 in 03/04 and 04/05 respectively. This is in line with a national reduction in Adult and Community Learning learner numbers of 23.7% from 03/04 to 04/05. The cash allocation however has increased by over 20%, from £553,175 to £671,543.

The reduction in volumes of learners is because short course options have been cut (e.g. one day courses) in favour of longer/accredited courses. However, not included in the figure above are 282 short courses delivered to first time adult learners Hartlepool and 140 courses through Neighbourhood learning in deprived communities.

Hartlepool accounts for approximately 14% of the adult population of Tees Valley. The service attracts 16% of the Further Education budget contracted to Local authorities in the Tees Valley and 15% of the Adult and Community Learning budget.

Employer Training Pilot (now Train to Gain)

444 Hartlepool learners have participated in phase 3 of the employer training pilot. 426 started A-level 2 qualification of which 343 completed (80%). 18 participated in skills for life programmes, of which 14 achieved (78%).

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the level of Government funding for adult education for people on *(a)* benefits and *(b)* low incomes was in Shrewsbury in (i) 2001 and (ii) 2005. [50090]

Phil Hope: The Department allocates funds for post-16 education and training to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) working through 47 local offices. The LSC was established in 2001 bringing planning and funding of post-16 education under one body within a framework set by Government. Budgets are not allocated specifically for people on benefits or those on low incomes, although there are a number of arrangements in place to help ensure these learners can access education and training such as learner support funds, fee remission and free provision for Skills for Life.

The total overall spend on all adult programmes for 2001–02 was reported in the LSC's Annual Report and Accounts as £2,236 million. The funding allocated for the LSC's major education and training programmes only for adults for 2005–06 is £2,851 million. The Department does not hold figures for adult education at a local level. I am therefore copying this letter to Mark Haysom, the council's chief executive so that he can respond in more detail to your request. A copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 5 April 2006:

I write in response to your recent Parliamentary Questions regarding funding for adult education for people on benefits and low incomes in Shrewsbury and funding to allow the Skills for Life section of Shrewsbury Sixth Form College to remain open.

Shropshire LSC funding for adult education is through Adult and Community Learning (ACL) which is delivered by Shropshire County Council, the ACL funding is for Shropshire as a whole and therefore this makes it difficult to show exactly what has been earmarked for Shrewsbury, the following is a rough guide to allocations.

	2001–2 SCC LSC revenue allocation for County £365,879		*2005–6 SCC LSC revenue allocation for County £467,858 (excluding family learning funds of £150,172)*
Shrewsbury -Gateway Centre and provision	£163,000	Shrewsbury—Gateway Centre and provision	£285,180
Shrewsbury schools ACL	£24,550	Shrewsbury schools: New ACL centres at Grange and Sundorne schools	£38,000 (includes some extended schools funds)

Skills for Life provision is a high priority. The LSC has clearly stated in its annual statement of priorities that "Adults without basic skills are entitled to free learning". As a result of this commitment, LSC resources both nationally, regionally and locally are increasingly focused on securing this priority activity.

The funds committed to Skills for Life in Shropshire has increased from £1,960,235 in 04/05 to £3,510,250 in 05/06. In addition to this core activity, Shropshire learners have benefited from a further £94,000 of investment in Skills for Life activity through the Employer Training Pilot and £641,412 funded through European Social Funds activity in 05/06.

Shropshire LSC 2004 target for skills for life achievements (6177) was exceeded by 8% with a total achievement of 6,692. A further 2,252 achievements will be required in 2006/2007 to deliver Shropshire's contribution to the national 2007 target.

Shrewsbury Sixth Form College delivered Skills for Life activity to a funding value of £87,362 in 04/05 and was allocated a further £65,000 for Skills for Life provision in 05/06.

In the funding and planning dialogue for 06/07 the college was initially offered an indicative allocation for adult programme delivery of £132,639 (including Skills for Life) but the college itself requested the opportunity to review this provision due to its desire to focus development on its key mission: "As a high quality post 16 establishment, Shrewsbury Sixth Form College is dedicated to meeting the needs of all its learners in a supportive and challenging environment. It specialises in the provision/teaching of advanced level courses for 16–19 full time students".

The college has seen significant growth in its delivery of 16–18 learning with an additional 82 learners from 04/05 to 05/06, with a planned cohort of 1318 for 06/07 and it has an outstanding record of delivery at level 3. Through the recognition of its mission, core specialisation, forward thinking and innovative co-location discussions with Shrewsbury College of Arts and Technology, the sixth form college senior managers identified that Skills for Life provision may be more efficiently and effectively placed for delivery with other local providers.

Consequently, the value of funding allocation that had been earmarked for Skills for Life provision for adults in 06/07 at the college £95,928 has by mutual agreement been transferred across to Shrewsbury College of Art and Technology, thereby ensuring that the provision of Skills for Life learning remains local and available to the people of Shrewsbury.

In summary, the Secretary of State, through the LSC is continuing to fund Skills for Life provision for learners in Shrewsbury, through the college of arts and technology rather then through the sixth form college. Both colleges are fully committed to maintaining accessible and high quality Skills for Life provision. This transfer of provision, agreed by all parties, supports the LSC's targets of providing high quality learning opportunities to make England better skilled and more competitive.

I trust the information provided answers your questions, if I can be of further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me.

A-levels

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the funding required to include optional harder questions in A-level testing. [62977]

Jacqui Smith: The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) is funding the modelling and trialling of options for introducing greater stretch and challenge into A-level. Trialling will begin in September 2006. The funding required to deliver revised A-level examinations will be considered as part of the evaluation of the trials. In reforming A-levels from six assessment units to four we will reduce the number of A-level exams. This reduction should lead to lower exam fees for schools and colleges.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps the Government are taking to improve A-level results of inner-city students. [62984]

Jacqui Smith: Reforms to qualifications are aimed at benefiting all students who take them. The reforms we made to A-level as part of the Curriculum 2000 reforms helped to improve results for all A-level students. The further improvements planned for A-level as part of our 14–19 reforms will benefit all those embarking on A-level programmes, including those in inner city areas.

Aimhigher is a national programme that operates more intensively in disadvantaged areas. It aims to raise aspiration and attainment levels among young people from backgrounds currently under-represented in higher education. Evaluation indicates that it is having a positive effect on aspirations and attainment among target beneficiaries.

Brentford and Isleworth (Examination Grades)

Ann Keen: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the number of pupils reaching grades C and above in mathematics and English in the constituency of Brentford and Isleworth in each year since 2001. [62122]

Jacqui Smith: The figures requested are shown in the following table.

Number and percentage of 15-year-olds[1] achieving A to C grades in GCSE English[2] and mathematics[3] in Brentford and Isleworth constituency, maintained schools only*

	Number of 15-year-old pupils[1]	*Number achieving A*-C in English[2] and mathematics[3] GCSE*	*Percentage achieving A*-C in English[2] and mathematics[3] GCSE*
2004/05	1,828	958	52.4
2003/04	1,823	901	49.4
2002/03	1,795	837	46.6
2001/02	1,784	839	47.0
2000/01	1,788	781	43.7

[1] Age at the start of the academic year (i.e. 31 August).
[2] English includes English and English language.
[3] Mathematics includes mathematics, additional mathematics and statistics.

As far as the national picture is concerned, the proportion of 15-year-olds achieving A*-C grades in English and mathematics GCSE has improved by 3.6 percentage points, from 41.9 per cent. in 2001 to 45.5 per cent. in 2005.

Capita

James Brokenshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the value of contracts held by her Department with *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries was in the last three financial years. [61487]

Bill Rammell *[holding answer 29 March 2006]*: A complete answer to this question could only be supplied at disproportionate cost as the department does not maintain a central record of all contracts.

I can tell you, however, from the records that the Department does hold on Capita and its subsidiaries the following information on contracts:

Current contracts with Capita

Teachers' Pensions Administration from 2003 to 2010 value estimated £60.5 million Connexions Card from 2002 to 2008 value estimated £108.8 million National Strategies 2005 to 2010 value estimated £180 million Criminal Records Bureau Checking Service 2006 to 2008 value estimated £2 million

Expired contracts with Capita in the last three financial years

London Challenge 2004 to 2005 approximate value £95,000.

James Brokenshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many tenders *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries have submitted to her Department in each of the last three years; and how many tenders were successful. [61488]

Bill Rammell *[holding answer 29 March 2006]:* This information could be supplied only at disproportionate cost.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much business her Department has placed with *(a)* Capita Group plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries in each of the last five years; what the total value is of outstanding contracts placed with Capita Group plc and its subsidiaries by her Department; for which current tenders issued by her Department (i) Capita Group plc and (ii) its subsidiaries have been invited to bid; and whether (A) Capita Group plc and (B) its subsidiaries have seconded staff (1) temporarily and (2) on a longer-term basis to (X) her Department and (Y) its agencies. [61081]

Bill Rammell: Information on how much business the Department has placed with Capita Group and its subsidiaries in each of the last five years could be supplied only at disproportionate cost. Comprehensive information on what the total value is of outstanding contracts placed with Capita Group and its subsidiaries could be supplied only at disproportionate cost as the Department does not maintain a central record of all contracts. I can tell the hon. Member, however, from the records that the Department holds on Capita and its subsidiaries the following information on outstanding or current contracts:

Current contracts with Capita

Teachers' Pensions Administration value estimated £60.5 million.

Connexions Card value estimated £108.8 million.

National Strategies value estimated £180 million.

Criminal Records Bureau Checking Service value estimated £2 million.

The total estimated value of the current contracts with Capita for which we hold records is £351.3 million.

Information on which current tenders issued by her Department, Capita Group and its subsidiaries have been invited to bid could be provided only at disproportionate costs.

There are no employees of Capita Group or its subsidiaries seconded to the Department.

Capital City Academy

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what measures the Capital City Academy in Brent is taking to raise its standards; and if she will make a statement. [62926]

Jacqui Smith: The Ofsted report of March 2006, rated the Academy's overall effectiveness as satisfactory, with many strengths and also showing a significant improvement since it opened in 2003. The Department will continue to work closely with the Academy to support it in raising standards by building on the strategies already in place to provide the best possible education for its students.

The Academy's predecessor school, Willesden High, had been in special measures for four and a half years before its closure.

Cared-for Children

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills under what circumstances *(a)* a local authority, *(b)* an agency acting on its behalf and *(c)* another statutory organisation can be involved in the placement of a child with family members or friends without the child becoming a looked after child. [60747]

Maria Eagle: The Children Act 1989 makes clear that a child may become looked after by a local authority when:

A care order is made because the child is at risk of significant harm or is beyond parental control.

The child is accommodated after an agreement has been made with the child's parents.

The child is accommodated because no person has parental responsibility for him.

Parents may make private arrangements for their child to be cared for by another adult, without the child becoming looked after, in the meaning of the terms of the Children Act 1989. Such placements may be facilitated by the local authority, the police or another organisation where appropriate. For example, a local authority might organise and support a family group conference at which it is decided that a child should live with another member of the family or the police might transport children to a relative at the request of a parent, after the parent has been imprisoned or incapacitated. In some circumstances, the local authority may assist family and friends carers with seeking a residence order, where its assessment causes it to form the view that such a step is in the best interests of the child.

Carers of children, who are not looked after, are not required to be in contact with their local authority, unless they fall within the definition of private foster carers. Where they are private foster carers, they are required to notify the relevant local authority. It has a range of duties designed to check the suitability of the carer and protect the welfare of the child.

Child Abuse

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 13 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1860W, on child abuse, who was commissioned by the Department to report on the scale of alleged child abuse related to witchcraft practices. [61636]

Maria Eagle *[holding answer 30 March 2006]:* Eleanor Stobart was commissioned by my Department to carry out the study to scope the problem of child abuse in England linked to belief in "possession" or "witchcraft", or in other ways related to particular spiritual or religious belief, and to consider the circumstances leading to such abuse and the common features between cases.

Child Protection

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what measures she is taking to

ensure that full screening takes place in relation to child protection issues in the provision of *(a)* child care in all settings from birth to entry to school and *(b)* youth services. [43767]

Ruth Kelly *[holding answer 19 January 2006]:* It is already a requirement that childcare for under 8s must register with Ofsted in order to operate. Regulations under the Children Act 1989 require Ofsted to undertake a range of checks, including enhanced CRB disclosures to ensure that nursery and playgroup providers are suitable to care for children. Such checks mean that Ofsted have robust systems in place for preventing unsuitable people from working with young children. We are reviewing the scope of regulations to ensure that there are no further safeguards we need to put in place.

Arrangements in place to safeguard young people in receipt of youth services delivered by local authorities are covered by "The Protection of Children Act (PoCA) 1999."

These arrangements include checking the names of prospective employees against the PoCA list through the Criminal Records Bureau, and against List 99. As a result of inclusion on the PoCA list an individual will be disqualified from working with children for the purposes of Section 35 of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000. We are currently reviewing arrangements to ensure that any risk to young people is managed effectively.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what child protection procedures are in place to ensure that staff working in *(a)* further education colleges and *(b)* early years settings do not pose a risk to children; and if she will make a statement. [46961]

Ruth Kelly: This Government's ambition is to make safeguarding children everyone's business. We want our children to be safe in all settings—and that requires everyone to play their part—in Government, as parents, citizens, in the police, local authorities, health bodies, voluntary and private sector organisations.

My statements of 19 January and 1 March, and my report of 19 January, published alongside the statement covered this wider safeguarding agenda, as well as focusing on specific settings where appropriate. List 99 currently covers positions working with children in schools, FE institutions and LEA education services. In addition, the PoCA list is held by my Department pursuant to the Protection of Children Act 1999; this legislation places a statutory duty on child care organisations, employing people in child care or "regulated positions" (as defined in section 36 of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000), to refer the names of individuals who fulfil criteria making them unsuitable to work with children. The Act also permits other organisations, such as voluntary organisations, sports clubs and scout associations to refer those working in child care positions who meet the criteria for possible inclusion in the PoCA list. A person whose name is included in the PoCA list will be barred from working in a regulated position, for example, a position whose normal duties include work in an educational institution or a position whose normal duties include work on day care premises. Indeed, under the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000, it is a criminal offence for such people to seek or obtain work in a regulated position, just as it is a criminal offence for employers to knowingly offer work in a regulated position or fail to remove such a person from employment in a regulated position.

The Department's guidance note "Child Protection: Preventing Unsuitable People from Working with Children and Young Persons in the Education Service" issued in June 2005 provides current advice for employers in the education service on preventing unsuitable people from working with children and young persons.

In addition, mandatory CRB checks will be implemented for schools through amendment regulations to be made under sections 35 and 36 of the Education Act 2002 (and section 72 of the School Standards and Framework Act (SSFA) 1998)—this will effect amendments to the current School Staffing (England) Regulations 2003. Changes announced by the Secretary of State (on 1 March 2006) will mean that existing arrangements become compulsory for schools through the proposed amendments, which will make an "on appointment" CRB check compulsory for all new appointments to the schools workforce. We are looking to apply similar mandatory checks for teachers, tutors and trainers working in FE institutions.

Providers of childcare for under-8s must be registered by Ofsted in order to operate, and the registration process includes an enhanced disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau to ensure that those providing and managing the service are suitable to work with children. Ofsted also checks those living in the households of registered childminders and, on inspection, checks to ensure that employers have in place vetting procedures to ensure that their staff are suitable to look after children.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether a Criminal Record Bureau check was requested on William Gibson by *(a)* Dorset county council and *(b)* the head teacher or other authorised staff at (i) Porchester school in Bournemouth and (ii) Hebburn comprehensive school. [47282]

Ruth Kelly: My Department does not hold this information.

We have made it clear in successive guidance that CRB checks are strongly recommended as part of the appointment process on anybody who will be working in a school, further education institution or LEA education service.

"Safeguarding Children in Education" (September 2004) emphasises the wider responsibilities on employers including adopting recruitment practices which involve scrutinising applicants, verifying any qualifications, obtaining references, checking previous job history as well as a check of List 99 and CRB check where appropriate.

Existing arrangements will become compulsory for schools through regulations to be made under sections 35 and 36 of the Education Act 2002 (and section 72 of the School Standards and Framework Act (SSFA) 1998)—these will amend the current School Staffing

(England) Regulations 2003 and will make a CRB check compulsory prior to, or as soon as practicable after, all new appointments to the schools workforce, where the individual concerned has not worked in a school or institution within the further education sector for at least three months prior to this appointment.

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research she has carried out to establish how many individuals whose names appear on the sex offenders register have been employed in the provision of child care in any regulated pre-school setting in the last four years. [48904]

Ruth Kelly: Any individual who appears on List 99 or the POCA List (other than provisionally) on the grounds of unsuitability to work with children is barred from working in a "regulated position" within the meaning of section 36 of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 which includes, for example, a position whose normal duties include work on day care premises or a position whose normal duties include caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge of children.

Employment decisions are a matter for individual employers and that involves making thorough checks on any individual whose work will bring them in to contact with children. Providers of child care for under-eights must be registered by Ofsted in order to operate, and the registration process includes an enhanced disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau to ensure that those providing and managing the service are suitable to work with children.

I have not commissioned research to establish how many individuals whose names appear on the sex offenders register have been employed in the provision of child care in any regulated pre-school setting in the last four years.

Children Missing Education

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what guidance is issued to social workers regarding children they identify as missing education. [61626]

Maria Eagle: In July 2004 the Department of Education and Skills issued good practice guidance for local authorities to use to help them identify children missing education: "Identifying and maintaining contact with children missing, or at risk of going missing, from education". The local authority teams responsible for identifying children missing education are expected to work with their colleagues in children's social care services, and other local partners, to ensure that practitioners notify them of any children they identify as missing education.

Additionally, we are currently revising the guidance for agencies on safeguarding children: "Working together to safeguard children: a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children". The revised guidance will make it clear that social care workers and other practitioners working with children should inform their nominated local authority contact on children missing education if they know or suspect that a child is not receiving education. It also signposts the good practice guidance on children missing education, as an aid for local agencies and professionals, including social workers.

Civil Service

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether her Department is on target to meet the 2004 spending review target to reduce the number of its civil service posts to 1,960 by 2007–08. [60623]

Maria Eagle: The Department is committed to achieving a total of 1,460 staff reductions by end March 2008 in response to the 2004 spending review; in addition the Office for Standards in Education has a target to reduce by 500 staff by the same date.

(a) The Department is on target to achieve these reductions. It set an interim target to reduce by 850 posts against the October 2003 baseline by end March 2006. At 1 March 2006 the reductions totalled 883 posts.

(b) The Office for Standards in Education has already met its target of 500 reductions. Its full time equivalent staffing total as at 31 December 2005 was 2,280 against a baseline of 2,814, a reduction of 534 posts.

Correspondence

Mr. Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when she will reply to the letter of 14 February 2006 from the hon. Member for Walsall, North concerning a constituent. [60760]

Maria Eagle *[holding answer 23 March 2006]:* I responded to my hon. Friend's letter on 20 March.

Criminal Record Bureau

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when she will issue guidance on the portability of Criminal Record Bureau checks. [60779]

Ruth Kelly: Policy on the portability of Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks is primarily a matter for the CRB itself. My Department will, however, be consulting later this year on revised guidance to schools and local authorities on vetting and recruitment, and portability of CRB checks will be a relevant issue.

Cyber-bullying

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps the Government are taking to combat cyber-bullying among school children. [62980]

Jacqui Smith: The Government have made clear that all forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying, are unacceptable and must be punished.

The Department's anti bullying pack for schools "Don't Suffer in Silence", gives advice on approaches to combating all forms of bullying, including online and bullying by text message. We are currently reviewing this guidance to see if it needs strengthening and to ensure that schools have the most up-to-date information available.

Degree Courses

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* male and *(b)* female students are studying the thirty most popular degree courses. [59823]

Bill Rammell: The latest available figures are given in the following table:

UK and overseas degree students at English HE institutions, students studying the 30 most popular subjects by gender

	Female	Male	Total
Business studies	27,331	30,741	58,073
Computer science	7,223	35,888	43,111
Psychology	34,144	8,377	42,521
Design studies	25,500	16,028	41,527
English studies	25,798	8,686	34,484
Combined subjects	20,370	13,691	34,062
Nursing	29,821	3,135	32,956
Law by topic	18,573	11,594	30,167
History by period	12,044	12,647	24,690
Management studies	11,508	12,316	23,824
Economics	6,960	14,070	21,030
Information systems	5,552	15,340	20,892
Sociology	14,537	5,263	19,799
Media studies	10,268	8,276	18,544
Training teachers	15,730	2,742	18,472
Social work	14,570	2,767	17,337
Others in subjects allied to medicine	13,266	4,023	17,289
Sports science	6,600	10,686	17,286
Mathematics	6,382	10,463	16,845
Accounting	7,411	9,292	16,703
Electronic & electrical engineering	1,845	14,574	16,419
Law by area	10,023	6,312	16,335
Politics	6,954	9,340	16,294
Clinical medicine	9,051	6,473	15,525
Biology	8,954	5,567	14,521
Drama	9,632	3,626	13,257
Academic studies in education	10,809	1,515	12,325
Music	5,377	6,694	12,070
Fine art	8,121	3,926	12,047
Mechanical engineering	870	10,630	11,500

Degree Places

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many degree places were unfilled in 2005; and how many became vacant but remained unfilled following drop outs. [59815]

Bill Rammell: The information requested is not held centrally. The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) does set targets for student places for individual institutions, however, these are set for the whole institution across all years of study including post-graduate places not just for new entrants. Information is not collected centrally on how many places remain unfilled after students drop-out. However, the completion rate within UK Higher Education Institutions is currently 85 per cent. which is a higher rate than most other countries and shows an decrease in the number of drop-outs since 1997.

Departmental Finance

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what her Department's target is for paying invoices to contractors; and what percentage of bills were paid on time in the last period for which figures are available. [60574]

Bill Rammell: Provided that the goods or services have been satisfactorily supplied as ordered and invoices are undisputed the Department for Education and Skills target for paying invoices to contractors is within 30 days of receipt, unless other terms have been greed. In the financial year 2004–05 96 per cent. of all invoices (and claims) were paid within the 30 days or the agreed terms.

Drop-out Rates (Universities)

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps the Government are taking to decrease drop-out rates in universities. [62989]

Bill Rammell: The position has improved steadily since 1997. The latest available figures published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) are shown in the following table:

Percentage of UK domiciled full-time first degree students expected neither to obtain an award nor transfer—higher education institutions in the UK

Students starting courses in:	Non-completion rate (percentage)
1996/97	16.0
1997/98	15.9
1998/99	15.8
1999/2000	15.9
2000/01	15.0
2001/02	14.1
2002/03	14.4

Source:
"Performance Indicators in Higher Education", published by HESA. For 2002/03, the projected outcomes summarise the pattern of movements of students at institutions between 2002/03 and 2003/04 and give the outcomes that would have been expected from starters in 2002/03 if progression patterns were to remain unchanged over the next few years. The HESA data show the proportion of entrants who are projected to: obtain a qualification (either a first degree or another undergraduate award); transfer to another HEI; neither obtain a qualification nor transfer (ie fail to complete the course).

Figures published in 2005 by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) showed that in 2003 the UK had one of the lowest higher education non-completion rates among OECD countries.

This progress has been possible for a number of reasons. Since 2000, we have been putting funding into universities, via the Widening Participation Allocation managed by the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE), to help universities cover the additional costs of recruiting and retaining non-traditional students. In 2006–07, a total of £344 million will be allocated to institutions to support their Widening Participation activity, which includes increased funding of £236.6 million to improve student retention. This funding will be used for a variety of activities including: supporting the transition of students into HE, study skills and learner support and activities to enhance the quality of teaching and learning, all of which help to maximise their chance of success.

We have made major investments in teaching and learning overall. These include the establishment of 74 Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning spread across universities and colleges to establish and spread best practice on learning and teaching. In addition, we are continuing to invest in the Teaching Quality Enhancement Fund, through which HEFCE will allocate £158.5 million over the next three years to promote continuous improvement in leaning and teaching, including a priority focus on supporting the success and progression for students with diverse needs.

Through the Teaching Quality Information site established by HEFCE, applicants are now able to access a wide range of information about the quality of teaching including the views of students—at subject and institutional level, informing their choice of institution and course.

Our improved student finance package from 2006/07, including income assessed maintenance grants of up to £2,700, together with generous bursaries which HE institutions are offering will also assist retention.

Underpinning all of this, we are continuing to invest in research and evaluation to ensure that we understand how best to improve student retention. For example, via HEFCE, we have provided £2 million to fund an ESRC programme, within their Teaching and Learning Research Programme, which includes projects which will examine the student experience and the factors that influence their success.

Education Maintenance Allowance

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils in the East Riding of Yorkshire receive the education maintenance allowance; and if she will make a statement. [57222]

Maria Eagle: This is a matter for the Learning and Skills Council, who operate education maintenance allowances for the DFES and hold the information about take-up of the scheme. Mark Haysom, the Council's chief executive, has written to the hon. Member with the information requested and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom dated 15 March 2006:

I am writing in response to your parliamentary question regarding Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA).

By the end of January 2006, 2,457 young people in the East Riding local education authority area had received one or more EMA payments in the academic year 2005–06.

I hope this information is helpful and addresses your question.

Education (Wirral, West)

Stephen Hesford: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people in Wirral, West *(a)* gained at least two A-levels and *(b)* went on to higher education in each of the last three years. [62352]

Jacqui Smith: The following tables show the requested information.

(a) 16–18 year A-level candidates at schools in Wirral West constituency who achieved 2 or more A-level passes 2002/03 to 2004/05

Academic year	*Number*
2002/03	537
2003/04	552
2004/05	589

Source:
School and College Achievement and Attainment Tables data

(b) 18-year-old entrants from Wirral West constituency to HE courses at UK HE institutions, 2002/03 to 2004/05

Academic year	*Entrants*
2002/03	300
2003/04	385
2004/05	345

Note:
The answers to *(a)* and *(b)* do not have the same coverage and should not be compared. The A-level candidates in Wirral, West are those that are at school or college there, the HE entrants are those whose home address is in Wirral, West.
Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) student record. Figures are on a HESA standard registration population and are rounded to the nearest 5. Entrants are those domiciled in Wirral, West constituency, rather than those who attended school or college there.

Education Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) if she will make a statement on the operation of section 159 of the Education Act 2002; [58706]

(2) on how many occasions the Chief Inspector has been requested to exercise his powers under section 159(2) of the Education Act 2002 in each year since its enactment; what the outcome was of each such inspection; and if she will make a statement. [58709]

Jacqui Smith: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply given on 27 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 525W.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many proprietors have been prosecuted for operating unregistered schools *(a)* under the Education Act 2002 and *(b)* prior to the implementation of the Education Act 2002 between (i) 1997 and 2002 and (ii) 1991 and 1996; and what the outcome was of each prosecution for cases which have been completed; [58707]

(2) whether her Department has been prevented by the regulatory framework from pursuing a prosecution under section 159 of the Education Act 2002 after deciding to do so; and if she will make a statement. [58708]

Jacqui Smith: No proprietors have been prosecuted for operating unregistered schools either since, or prior to, the implementation of the Education Act 2002. The current regulatory framework has not prevented my Department from prosecuting any case under section 159 of the Education Act 2002.

Education Funding

Patrick Hall: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the annual average per capita expenditure was in *(a)* state schools for all (i) five to

19-year-olds, (ii) five to 11-year-olds, (iii) 11 to 16-year-olds and (iv) 16 to 19-year-olds and *(b)* state grammar schools for all (A) 11 to 16-year-olds and (B) 16 to 19-year-olds in England in the last year for which figures are available. [62956]

Jacqui Smith: The requested information is not collected by the Department in the way that it has been asked for. Expenditure in local authority maintained schools cannot be attributed to a particular age group and instead is split by phase of education. The available information for school based expenditure per pupil by local authority maintained schools in England during 2004–05 is contained in the following table:

	£ per pupil
Primary school based expenditure per pupil	2,910
Secondary school based expenditure per pupil[1]	3,800
Local authority maintained grammar school based expenditure per pupil	3,630
Total school based expenditure per pupil (includes maintained primary, secondary and special schools)	3,440
Total school based expenditure per pupil (includes maintained nursery, primary, secondary and special schools)	3,450

[1] Includes all local authority maintained grammar schools.

Notes:

1. School based expenditure includes only expenditure incurred directly by local authority maintained schools. This includes the pay of teachers and school-based support staff, school premises costs, books and equipment, and certain other supplies and services, less any capital items funded from recurrent spending and income from sales, fees and charges and rents and rates. This excludes the central cost of support services such as home to school transport, local authority administration and the financing of capital expenditure. The pupil data are drawn from the DfES Annual Schools Census adjusted to be on a financial year basis.
2. Includes all local authority maintained schools with delegated budgets.
3. 2004–05 data are provisional and are subject to change by the local authority.
4. Figures are as reported by local authorities at 29 March 2006 in cash terms and rounded to the nearest £10.
5. Financial data are drawn from local authorities' 2004–05 section 52 outturn statements submitted to the DfES. Pupil data are drawn from the DfES Annual Schools Census adjusted to be on a financial year basis. Local authority maintained grammar schools in England are drawn from Edubase (the Department's database of educational establishments) and matched across to the financial data reported on section 52 outturn.
6. There are 164 grammar schools. The unit cost for grammar schools was compiled by obtaining a list of schools from EduBase and matching the financial data for the 164 schools from s52 outturn table B, and replicating the Department's LA unit cost calculation for these schools.

Educational Attainment

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to her answer of 7 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1426W, on educational attainment, what proportion of *(a)* children in receipt of free school meals, *(b)* pupils with special educational needs and *(c)* all children aged 15 years at the end of the 2004–05 academic year achieved (i) five or more A* to C grades at GCSE and equivalent including mathematics and English and (ii) no A* to C grades at GCSE and equivalent, broken down by (A) community schools, (B) foundation schools, (C) voluntary aided schools, (D) voluntary controlled schools, (E) academies, (F) city technology colleges and (G) special schools excluding grammar schools. [60723]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested can be found in the following table.

GCSE and equivalent results of 15-year-old pupils[1] in maintained schools (excluding selective schools)

	Number of pupils	*Percentage achieving:* 5+ A*-C inc. English and mathematics	*No A*-C passes*
Pupils receiving free school meals			
Academy	796	10.3	42.7
Community	55,166	16.8	43.7
Voluntary aided	10,037	23.7	35.5
Voluntary controlled	1,450	16.3	45.9
Foundation	8,272	20.4	39.9
City technology college	326	58.3	6.4
Special[2]	3,485	0.0	95.0
Total[3]	79,532	17.4	44.4
Pupils with special educational needs[4]			
Academy	685	4.4	59.3
Community	63,207	6.7	61.1
Voluntary aided	10,898	10.4	51.8
Voluntary controlled	2,582	8.9	60.0
Foundation	12,458	9.0	55.1
City technology college	298	36.2	11.4
Special[2]	9,435	0.1	93.9
Total[3]	99,563	6.9	62.2
All pupils			
Academy	2,099	15.5	36.2
Community	365,966	38.0	24.9
Voluntary aided	78,672	49.1	16.7
Voluntary controlled	18,285	47.3	19.6
Foundation	85,281	44.2	19.5
City technology college	2,488	65.9	3.6
Special[2]	9,578	0.1	93.8
Total[3]	562,369	40.2	23.9

[1] Age at the start of the academic year.
[2] Including community and foundation special schools.
[3] Containing pupils who were not included in the Pupil Level Annual School Census (as in national figures).
[4] Including statemented and non-statemented SEN pupils.

Education-Business Partnerships

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what action her Department is taking to ensure *(a)* the continued operation of and *(b)* continuing public funding for Education-Business Partnerships. [62727]

Jacqui Smith: The nature of EBPs varies widely and they are largely independent bodies. We do not fund the EBPs nationally, however, through the LSC, we annually provide £25 million to support the local delivery of school business links activity.

Examination Papers

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research she has evaluated comparing past examination papers with recent examples. [59504]

Jacqui Smith: The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) has statutory responsibility for maintaining examination standards over time. QCA has a rolling programme of standards reviews, which began in 1997. The programme was organised to run in five-year cycles. The first cycle of reviews investigated standards in a subject in four sample years over a 20 year

period. Subsequent reviews investigate standards since the date of the previous review of a subject. They therefore normally cover the past five years. The reports are available on the QCA website.

Expulsions

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many expulsions there have been from secondary schools in *(a)* Romford, *(b)* Havering and *(c)* Greater London in each of the last 10 years. [62978]

Jacqui Smith: Data on permanent exclusions are available from 1995/96 onwards. The available information is given in the following table.

Maintained secondary schools: number and percentage of permanent exclusions 1995/96 to 2003/04

	Permanent exclusions from secondary schools					
	Romford parliamentary constituency		*Havering local authority*		*London*	
	Number	*Percentage*[1]	*Number*	*Percentage*[1]	*Number*	*Percentage*[1]
1995/96	19	0.47	69	0.47	1,894	0.51
1996/97	18	0.45	50	0.34	1,814	0.48
1997/98	19	0.49	66	0.45	1,665	0.44
1998/99	16	0.43	39	0.26	1,471	0.38
1999/2000	11	0.29	33	0.21	1,066	0.27
2000/01[2]	13	0.32	30	0.19	1,197	0.29
2001/02[2]	12	0.30	42	0.26	1,196	0.29
2002/03[2]	12	0.29	32	0.20	1,255	0.30
2003/04[2]	18	0.44	35	0.21	1,343	0.32

[1] The number of exclusions expressed as a percentage of the total number of pupils on the school roll in January of the same school year. Excludes dually registered pupils.

[2] There are known quality issues with exclusions data for these years. Figures shown here for Romford parliamentary constituency are as reported by schools but are unconfirmed and should be used with caution. Figures for Havering local authority and London have been checked back with authorities.

Source:
Annual Schools Census

Federation Schools

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what additional funding is available for schools entering into full federation with another school. [62925]

Jacqui Smith: There is no specific central Government funding for schools entering into a hard governance federation. However, schools now receive increasing sums of direct funding and they may well choose to use some of that funding to support a partnership or federation as a strategy for school improvement. In addition, local authorities also have the opportunity to channel funding to schools where it is felt that a federation structure would contribute toward school improvement.

Free School Meals

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the end of year financial position was in 2004–05 of each of the 100 *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools with the (i) highest and (ii) lowest percentage of children on free school meals. [61129]

Jacqui Smith: I have placed in the Library tables showing the requested financial data for 2004–05.

Happy Slapping

John Penrose: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans she has to issue guidelines to tackle the practice known as happy slapping. [61022]

Jacqui Smith: The Government have made clear that all forms of bullying are unacceptable and must be punished. This includes the practice known as "happy slapping" where acts of bullying are recorded and transmitted, using mobile phones. Although there is no evidence to suggest that this is a widespread problem in schools, any incidents need to be dealt with firmly and appropriately.

Misuse of mobile phones was one of the specific issues considered by the Practitioners' Group on School Behaviour and Discipline, in its report "Learning Behaviour" published last October. The report points to the fact that, while mobile phones are now a part of daily life, schools need a clear policy on their possession and use on school site. In the current Education and Inspections Bill we are re-enacting and strengthening the duty on schools to establish a behaviour policy, and we will be producing guidance on that duty which will specifically address the issue of mobile phone misuse. Bullying by mobile phones and the seriousness with which this should be treated is also referred to in our anti-bullying guidance pack for schools "Don't Suffer in Silence", which is currently being updated. The wider problem of "happy slapping" and how to tackle it will also be covered within the soon to be launched Violence Reduction in Schools Programme (VIRIS) guidance. In addition, the remit of the Anti-Bullying Alliance under the funding provided by the Department includes investigating this issue as part of its work on developing innovative solutions to bullying.

Higher Education

Ed Balls: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people in *(a)* Wakefield District and *(b)* Normanton constituency went on to higher education in (i) 2004 and (ii) 2005; and what proportion of these attended universities in West Yorkshire. [62246]

Bill Rammell: The latest information for the two most recent years is given in the table.

Comparable figures for 2005/06 will be available in January 2007.

Students from Normanton and Wakefield Constituencies Entering Undergraduate Courses[1] by Institution of Study

	2003/04				2004/05			
	Normanton		Wakefield		Normanton		Wakefield	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Total entrants[2]	780	100	1,015	100	840	100	980	100
of which, those studying at:								
Bradford University	10	1	25	2	25	3	25	2
Huddersfield University	195	25	280	28	190	23	295	30
Leeds University	85	11	110	11	85	10	65	7
Leeds Metropolitan University	155	20	155	15	145	17	155	16
Other HE institutions	335	43	445	44	395	47	445	45

[1] Entrants to full and part-time undergraduate courses.
[2] Entrants to all higher education institutions in the UK.
Note:
Figures have been rounded to the nearest 5, so components may not sum to totals.
Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

Ed Balls: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research she has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated into the effects of involving parents in post-16 career and education decisions. [62248]

Bill Rammell: Research commissioned by the Department demonstrates the important role of parents in young people's decision making: Payne's review of the literature ("Choice At The End Of Compulsory Schooling: A Research Review, DfES Research Report 414") concluded that young people see "parents as probably the most important source of advice and help when decisions about post-16 routes have to be taken". Recent qualitative research for the Department ("How Do Young People Make Decisions at Ages 14 and 16"—forthcoming May 2006) also shows that "the parental role was identified by both young people and teachers as being particularly influential in the decision-making processes at ages 14 and 16".

However the Department has not commissioned any research/evaluation looking specifically at the benefits of involving parents/carers in post-16 career and education decisions, or indeed how good parents are at providing advice. Such an issue would be difficult to research or evaluate, since it would be difficult to isolate the role of parents from other influencers (for example friends, teachers, careers advisers or labour market conditions), particularly in terms of hard outcomes.

Increased Flexibility Programme

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on funding for the transport element of the Increased Flexibility Programme. [63053]

Jacqui Smith: Funding for the Increased Flexibility for 14–16 Year Olds programme is decided locally between partnerships. It is expected that some of the funds covers the transport element.

Learning and Skills Council

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the impact of a reduction in further education provisions for work-related causes as a result of changing the Department of Work and Pensions' priorities on Learning and Skills Council provision. [50035]

Bill Rammell: We are still in the process of agreeing the detail of the transfer with the Department for Work and Pensions and the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The underpinning rationale in making this change is to get better value for money in the commissioning and delivery of publicly funded basic skills and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) training and to target these resources more closely to meet the specific needs of people seeking employment or looking to progress their learning once they have found a job. It is too soon to assess what the impact of this change might be on the level of provision with different providers but Mark Haysom, the LSC's chief executive will write to you once such an assessment has been made.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 23 March 2006:

I write in response to your recent Parliamentary question regarding the transfer of basic skills.

At the time of writing the transfer has not yet been confirmed so we are unable to provide a full assessment of what the level of provision will be with different providers. Discussions are still taking place between DfES and DWP to agree the level of funding that will transfer.

In the meantime the LSC has undertaken some analysis to ascertain the degree to which providers are shared between both organisations. This is based on data provided to the LSC in August 2005 and shows that approximately 63% of JCP providers who hold a contract to provide JCP basic skills and ESOL programmes also have LSC contracts. There are regional variations. In the South West for example 73% of JCP providers also have a contract with the LSC.

There will be no overall negative financial impact upon further education provision as a consequence of the transfer of funding responsibility from the DWP to the LSC. The LSC will ensure that the full resource transferring to the LSC from DfES/DWP is utilised to procure Skills for Life provision.

Indeed, once fully embedded into the LSC's planning cycle, it is envisaged that existing LSC providers will be able to realise administrative savings because they will only need to talk to the LSC about planning and performance.

I am happy to provide further specific analysis if you wish once the detail of transfer has been agreed.

Lip Reading

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what funding has been provided for the establishment of lip reading classes to assist those with hearing difficulties in North Yorkshire in each of the last three years; [58712]

(2) what funding has been provided for the establishment of lip reading classes in England in each of the last three years. [58713]

Bill Rammell: In 2004/05 the LSC funded 641,000 learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities at a cost of around £1.5 billion. Continuing investment in this provision remains a priority, which was confirmed in our 2006/07 Grant Letter to the LSC and the LSC has in turn made clear in their strategic planning guidance the priority it attaches to this provision.

Funding is not allocated for specific courses. Colleges as independent bodies decide their provision within plans agreed with the LSC. Information about lip-reading courses is only available for further education colleges and providers from the Individualised Learner Record (ILR). The most recent academic year for which this data are available is 2004/05. From these data we know that the funding associated with lip-reading courses was £110,779 in 2002/03, £175,803 in 2003/04 and £140,190 in 2004/05. The Department does not hold local funding figures for lip-reading classes. I am therefore copying this reply to Mark Haysom, the council's Chief Executive, so that he can respond in more detail to your request. A copy of his reply will be placed in the Library

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 5 April 2006:

I write in response to your recent parliamentary question regarding funding associated with lip reading courses.

In his response the Minister provided national figures for the funding associated with lip reading courses over the last three years. Information on local funding figures for North Yorkshire indicates that the only college in North Yorkshire where there has been funding associated with lip-reading courses is Leeds Metropolitan University with funding of £3,386 in 2003/04. Other colleges in the area offer British Sign Language and Signed Communication Skills.

The LSC has made clear in its planning guidance to providers the priority it places on funding for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities. In addition to provision specifically for these learners the guidance also states that programmes for those that work with this group are a priority and gives sign language, lip-reading and Braille courses as examples. However, colleges as independent bodies make their own decisions on the provision they offer, taking into account LSC priorities, with the LSC agreeing the overall plan.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will include lip-reading courses in the list of courses for which full fee remission can be claimed by education providers. [62945]

Phil Hope: Continuing investment in provision for deaf and hard of hearing learners and more generally for all learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities remains a priority. In 2004–05 the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) supported more than 641,000 learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities at a cost of nearly £1.5 billion. In our 2006–07 grant letter to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) we confirmed that this provision continues to be a priority and the LSC has in turn made clear in their strategic planning guidance the priority it attaches to this provision.

Full fee remission continues to be available to learners, and their dependants, receiving a means tested benefit, pensioners receiving the Pension (Guarantee) Credit; and unemployed people on Jobseekers Allowance.

For adult learners facing barriers to learning, learner support funds (LSF) provide additional financial support to people undertaking learning. Providers set their own criteria for allocating these funds to learners taking into account local needs and based on guidance from the LSC. The LSC guidance makes clear that learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities must be given priority to these funds, especially where they are at risk of not taking up or continuing in further education.

Where learners are not receiving a means tested benefit the provider may waive fees at their discretion and may make use of LSF in order to provide support. While the majority of those undertaking lip-reading courses do have a hearing impairment around 25 per cent. do not, and are therefore undertaking the course for a variety of other reasons. In 2004–05 less than 20 per cent. of learners undertaking lip-reading courses paid fees with the rest qualifying for full fee remission either as a result of being on means tested benefits or due to the discretion of the provider. We are continuing to monitor this position with the LSC to ensure that the provisions we have in place to support these learners are sufficient.

Mini-motorcycles

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) whether she plans to introduce an information campaign for schools on safety measures for drivers of mini-motorcycles; [62428]

(2) if she will provide for initiatives in schools to educate children and young people about the risks of driving mini-motorcycles. [63163]

Jacqui Smith: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has no plans for an information campaign or other initiatives with a focus on safety issues relating to mini-motorcycles.

Safety is included in the non-statutory framework for personal, social and health education (PSHE) at key stages 1 and 2, and at key stage 3 pupils should be taught "to recognise and manage risk and make safer choices about healthy lifestyles, different environments and travel".

DfES has also made available Safety Education guidance to schools which outlines the opportunities to develop pupils' knowledge and skills about safety education, including road safety.

Modern Apprenticeships

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people *(a)* entered,

(b) completed and *(c)* were participating in modern apprenticeships in each quarter in the past three years, broken down by level. [62729]

Jacqui Smith: Figures relating to new starts on apprenticeship courses and numbers participating quarterly are published biannually, and most recently in the Statistical First Release (SFR): Further Education. Work-based Learning for Young People and Adult and Community Learning—Learner Numbers in England on 1 October 2005

The following table is based on table 6 in the SFR and shows numbers starting both advanced apprenticeships (equivalent to NVQ level 3) and apprenticeships (equivalent to NVQ level 2) in thousands:

	Quarter ending	*Advanced apprenticeship*	*Apprenticeship*
2003/04	October 2003	26.0	54.4
	January 2004	11.1	26.6
	April 2004	10:1	27.8
	July 2004	9.7	27.9
	Total	57.0	136.6
2004/05	October 2004	24.6	56.9
	January 2005	10.0	25.6
	April 2005	8.4	21.4
	July 2005	10.9	30.6
	Total	53.9	134.5
2005/06	October 2005	22.2	51.0

The following table is based on table 5 from the SFR and shows the average number of people participating on advanced apprenticeships and apprenticeships in thousands:

	Quarter ending	*Advanced apprenticeship*	*Apprenticeship*
2003/04	October 2003	109.5	146.5
	January 2004	106.7	146.2
	April 2004	103.1	144.1
	July 2004	100.3	144.4
	Year average	104.8	143.1
2004/05	October 2004	105.5	160.0
	January 2005	104.0	158.5
	April 2005	100.3	152.1
	July 2005	99.1	153.2
	Year average	101.8	154.0
2005/06	October 2005	103.5	164.1

Figures for those completing apprenticeships are published in terms of success rates for the cohort of people leaving apprenticeship courses, for whatever reason, in that year (as such figures do not include those who remain on their course from one year to the next). Figures are published annually, most recently in the SFR: Further Education and Work Based Learning for Young People—Learner Outcomes in England: 2003/04

However, more timely information, including provisional success rate estimates for 2004/05, have been published less formally on the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) website: Partners—WBL Success Rates. The following table brings together figures from the LSC web-site for 2002/03, 2003/04 and 2004/05:

Percentage

			Advanced apprenticeship	*Apprenticeship*	*All apprenticeship*
2004/05	Framework	x	38	40	40
	NVQ Only	y	14	11	12
	Framework or NVQ	x + y	52	51	51
	Total leavers		50,200	119,200	169,400
2003/04	Framework	x	32	30	31
	NVQ only	y	14	12	13
	Framework or NVQ	x + y	46	43	44
	Total leavers		51,400	106,800	158,200
2002/03	Framework	x	32	24	27
	NVQ only	y	11	13	13
	Framework or NVQ	x + y	44	37	39
	Total leavers		60,600	104,900	165,600

Figures for 2004/05 will be updated in the following SFR to be published on 11 April 2006: Further Education and Work Based Learning for Young People—Learner Outcomes in England: 2004/05

Nursery Education

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* private, *(b)* voluntary and *(c)* independent providers of nursery education have been removed by Ofsted from its approved directory of providers in each year for which figures are available. [60891]

Beverley Hughes *[holding answer 23 March 2006]:* This information is not collected centrally. Local authorities are responsible for maintaining a local directory of providers eligible to deliver the free early education entitlement in their area. It is for local authorities to determine whether a provider of free early education should be removed from the directory. This may be as a result of an unsatisfactory Ofsted report or because of failure to meet agreed local conditions.

NVQ (Level 2)

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what progress the Government

have made in increasing the number of people holding NVQ Level 2 qualifications since the publication of the Welfare to Workforce Development paper in February 2004. [62481]

Phil Hope: The Labour Force Survey (LFS) shows that the number of people of working age[1] in England who hold an NVQ Level 2 or equivalent qualification or higher has increased by 677,000 between winter 2003 and autumn 2005.

[1] People of working age are defined as men aged 16–64 and women aged 16–59.

Parliamentary Contacts

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent discussions have taken place between Ministers and *(a)* the Learning and Skills Council, *(b)* the Sector Skills Development Agency, *(c)* Investors in People and *(d)* the Learning and Skills Development Agency on improving contacts with parliamentarians. [62726]

Bill Rammell: All four of these organisations undertake activities to ensure that they are effectively engaged with Parliament and parliamentarians. Ministers maintain regular contact with all of these bodies on a wide range of issues, and will, where necessary, have discussions on how they can improve their contact with parliamentarians.

For example, the Learning and Skills Council's (LSC) Chief Executive, Mark Haysom, has sought meetings with every English MP to discuss the LSC's work in transforming further education and its work in schools and colleges in Members' constituencies. Local LSCs are encouraged to have an open dialogue with constituency MPs of all parties in order swiftly to answer any concerns or issues that may arise. As part of its restructuring the LSC will ensure, as one of its key priorities, that local and regional staff further develop their relationships with stakeholders, including with MPs.

Both the LSC and the Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA) are engaged in a number of All-Party Groups and Associate Parliamentary Groups, ensuring that MPs of all parties have the opportunity to question them and raise issues of concern. Representatives from both organisations also appeared before the Education and Skills Select Committee during their inquiry into Further Education in January.

The annual report and accounts for all four organisations are also placed in the Libraries of the House each year.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many questions to her Department which have not yet been answered have been unanswered for over two weeks. [59825]

Bill Rammell: Since May 2005 the Department have received 4,805 written parliamentary questions. There are 72 parliamentary questions awaiting reply which have been unanswered for over two weeks.

Pathfinder Schools

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many schools are in a Pathfinder programme, broken down by local authority. [50254]

Jacqui Smith: The Department engages with specific schools on a number of projects and programmes; sometimes to pilot how we deliver new proposals. Some of our larger programmes are trialled as "Pathfinders" before being rolled out nationally to ensure the most effective approach is adopted.

Some Pathfinders, such as 14 to 19 Pathfinders and Enterprise Pathfinders, have now concluded their Pathfinder phase. The following Pathfinder programmes are currently operational. Other targeted programmes, for which we use different terminology, are not included here.

Building Schools for the Future Pathfinders

We began working with the four BSF Pathfinder projects (Greenwich, Lewisham and Southwark was a joint project) in March 2003. Since then three further "waves' have been announced, including projects in an additional 33 local authorities.

In addition 13 local authorities have been allocated capital funding from 2006–07 for a BSF one-school pathfinder project. The LAs involved in the first tranche of these projects are: Bexley, Barnet, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Kingston-upon-Thames, Leicestershire, North Yorkshire, Richmond-upon-Thames, Torbay, Warrington, and Wiltshire. The Department also intends piloting projects by parent promoter groups to establish a new school, in support of the choice, diversity and access agenda. We expect the first of these to be in Barnet.

Numbers of schools in currently in BSF Pathfinders are as follows:

Local Authority	*Number of Schools*
Bradford	3
Bristol	4
Greenwich	5
Lewisham	3
Sheffield[1]	6
Southwark[2]	2

[1] Originally seven schools but one subsequently dropped out when it was identified to become an Academy

[2] Originally four schools, but two subsequently dropped out when they were identified to become Academies

Behaviour and attendance pathfinder partnerships

We set out an expectation that all secondary schools be working in partnership groups to improve outcomes in behaviour and persistent truancy by September 2007. From January 2006, 278 secondary schools will be working together in 37 "pathfinder" partnerships, across 19 local authorities.

Names of "pathfinder" partnership within each LA area are as follows

Local Authority	*Pathfinder name*	*Number of secondary schools*
Coventry	Coventry	19
Derbyshire	Peak	11
	Bamber	7
Devon	Chances	6
Dorset	Chesil	4
Durham	Durham	36
Leeds	Five groups (no names)	39
Lewisham	Hillsyde	3
	Crossways	4
Lincolnshire	four groups (no names)	8
Norfolk	five partnerships (no names)	16
North Lines	North Lincs	14
North Tyneside	North Tyneside	11
North Yorks	three Eastern area partnerships (no names)	13
Sunderland	Sunderland	18
Nottinghamshire	Mansfield	7
Staffordshire	Tamworth	5
West Sussex	Area Improvement Partnership "A"	10
Windsor and Maidenhead	Maidenhead	5
Wolverhampton	Wolverhampton	18
Worcestershire	Four partnerships (no names)	24

Trust school pathfinder programme

We are engaged in discussions with a range of schools and partners as part of the process of setting up trust pathfinders. We do not currently have a definitive list of these pathfinders. This information will become available as each project is confirmed.

Personalised Learning

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the planned basis is for the distribution of existing and additional funding announced in the Budget for personalised learning in 2006–07; whether local education authorities will decide their own local allocation scheme to schools; and whether local education authorities will be allowed to levy *(a)* brokerage payments and *(b)* service level agreement deductions from the funding they will receive. [63074]

Jacqui Smith: Funding for personalised learning will be allocated through the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), the Standards Fund and School Standards Grant (SSG).

The Government announced in November 2005 new funding for personalised learning allocated as follows:

Dedicated schools grant

£ million

	Primary schools	*Key Stage 3*
2006–07	100	120
2007–08	230	335

This funding has been allocated to local authorities on the following basis:

15 per cent. according to projected pupil numbers;

35 per cent. according to projected pupil numbers, weighted by the number of children in families in receipt of income support;

50 per cent. according to projected pupils, weighted for the proportion of pupils not achieving level 2 at KS2 (for the primary funding) or level 4 at KS3 (for the Key Stage 3 funding) in English and Maths.

The Area Cost Adjustment (ACA), as announced in the Local Government Settlement on 5 December 2006, has been applied to all three distribution factors. Local authorities can decide how to allocate this funding to schools, in consultation with their Schools Forum. The Government expects the distribution across schools in the authority to be based on an assessment of relative need to:

support intervention and catch-up provision for children who have fallen behind in English and maths;

support the education of gifted and talented learners; and

help learners from deprived backgrounds to access after school and year-round activities.

Standards fund

£ million

	Primary schools	*Secondary schools*
2006–07	30	30
2007–08	30	30

This funding has been allocated to local authorities based on the number of schools in each local authority that have a high number of pupils behind age related expectations in English or maths. Local authorities must allocate this funding to schools facing the greatest challenges, based on an assessment of need by the National Strategy manager in each local authority.

Further additional funding for personalised learning of £220 million in 2006–07, rising to £365 million in 2007–08, was announced in the Budget Statement on 22 March 2006. This funding will be paid to schools as an addition to their Schools Standards Grant. The funding will be allocated to schools on a per pupil basis weighted for deprivation, as measured by Free School Meal take up, and low prior attainment. The exact distribution formula will be determined in consultation with school and local government representatives.

All of the additional funding must be fully allocated to schools on the conditions set out above. Local authorities cannot retain any of the funding or make deductions to the amounts allocated to schools.

Phonics

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what support she *(a)* is giving and *(b)* plans to give to local education authorities to develop phonics in primary schools. [62839]

Jacqui Smith: The Primary National Strategy (PNS) directly supports all Local Authorities (LAs) on developing effective teaching of literacy in primary schools, including phonics. This consists of regular guidance and training for key staff by PNS Regional Advisers; funding support and training for a consultant field force that works directly with schools; and provision of materials and funding to support training in schools. The PNS has produced dedicated phonics teaching materials to support teaching: "Progression in Phonics" (1999) and "Playing with Sounds" (2004).

The implementation of the recommendations from Jim Rose's review of the teaching of early reading forms part of the renewal of the PNS Framework for teaching literacy and associated materials, and the development of the new Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). A formal consultation on the draft Literacy Framework is being launched after Easter; the final version will be available to schools in September, along with the revised Numeracy Framework. The PNS is now working with LAs to plan the implementation of this work in schools in the autumn, including establishing concentrated training programmes for school staff.

The relevant parts of the new EYFS will be fully aligned with the new Framework, and the rollout in 2008 will include further training for both maintained and non-maintained early years settings. Both the Framework and the EYFS will further strengthen work on speaking and listening skills, already reflected for instance within the Foundation Stage curriculum, as Jim Rose has highlighted these skills as a very important precursor to phonic work.

Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of members of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme in her Department joined the scheme before the age of *(a)* 20, *(b)* 25, *(c)* 30, *(d)* 35, *(e)* 40, *(f)* 45 and *(g)* over 45-years-old. [62011]

Maria Eagle: As at 31 March 2006 there were 3,901 active members of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme in the Department. The ages at which they joined the scheme are shown in the table.

Age	*Number*
(a) Before 20	442
(b) 20 and before 25	919
(c) 25 and before 30	729
(d) 30 and before 35	564
(e) 35 and before 40	497
(f) 40 and before 45	345
(g) 45 and after	405

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the current employer contribution rates to the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme are; what assumed rate of return underlies those contribution rates; and what the contribution rate would be if the assumed rate of return was in line with current redemption yield on index-linked gilts. [62012]

Maria Eagle: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given by my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary, Cabinet Office on 29 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1030–31W.

Remedial Education

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on the role of her Department in providing remedial educational training for recruits to *(a)* the civil service and *(b)* other public sector roles, with particular reference to (i) basic literacy and (ii) simple arithmetic. [59827]

Maria Eagle: The Department provides advice and guidance to any member of its own staff who wants to enhance their literacy and numeracy skills, and can arrange for screening and diagnostic assessment

The Department does not provide remedial educational training for recruits to either the civil service or other public bodies, although we do encourage other Departments and indeed all employers to address Skills for Life needs in their staff, where they occur.

Skills for Life is the Government's national strategy for improving adult literacy, numeracy and language skills It caters for the literacy, language (English for Speakers of Other Languages—ESOL) and numeracy needs of all post-16 learners, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities, from pre-entry level up to and including level 2.

Safeguarding Children

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to her oral statement of 19 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 966–70, on safeguarding children, how many of her Department's staff are involved in the safeguarding vetting process; how many have received training, support and advice on child protection issues; and what the timetable is for training the remainder of staff. [45188]

Ruth Kelly: It is not possible to give precise numbers of the Department's staff working on the safeguarding vetting process. This is important work which requires the involvement of individuals from several different Divisions in the Department.

We are currently reviewing the training needs of all those involved with vetting activity and the scope for operational improvements in the light of recent events, and in the context of the statement made to the House on 19 January 2006 *Official Report*, columns 966–70. We will seek Sir Roger Singleton's expert input on these issues, and we expect operational changes and further training to be implemented over the next few months.

School Discipline

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many recorded incidents of antisocial behaviour in secondary schools there have been in *(a)* Romford, *(b)* Havering and *(c)* Greater London in each of the last 10 years. [62976]

Jacqui Smith: The requested information is not collected centrally.

The nearest available data relate to the number of exclusions by the reason for exclusion. Information given in the table relates to 2003/04 academic year—the first year for which "reason for exclusion" was collected.

Information on exclusions during the 2004/05 academic year will be available in June 2006.

Maintained secondary schools[1]
Number and percentage of permanent and fixed period exclusions by reason of exclusion, 2003/04

	Number of permanent exclusions[2,3]	*Percentage of all permanent exclusions*[4]	*Number of fixed period exclusions*	*Percentage of all fixed period exclusions*[5]
Romford parliamentary constituency				
Physical assault against a pupil	[6]—	[6]—	69	13
Physical assault against an adult	[6]—	[6]—	11	2
Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against a pupil	[6]—	[6]—	16	3
Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against an adult	3	17	76	14
Bullying	0	0	25	5
Racist abuse	0	0	16	3
Sexual misconduct	0	0	[6]—	[6]—
Drug and alcohol related	[6]—	[6]—	6	1
Damage	0	0	19	4
Theft	0	0	12	2
Persistent disruptive behaviour	5	28	69	13
Other	4	22	208	39
Total	18	100	528	100
Havering local authority				
Physical assault against a pupil	3	9	269	18
Physical assault against an adult	[6]—	[6]—	20	1
Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against a pupil	[6]—	[6]—	33	2
Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against an adult	5	14	222	15
Bullying	0	0	42	3
Racist abuse	0	0	32	2
Sexual misconduct	0	0	5	0
Drug and alcohol related	[6]—	[6]—	31	2
Damage	[6]—	[6]—	46	3
Theft	0	0	36	2
Persistent disruptive behaviour	9	26	142	10
Other	10	29	599	41
Total	35	100	1,477	100
London				
Physical assault against a pupil	269	20	7,319	23
Physical assault against an adult	127	9	1,113	4
Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against a pupil	109	8	1,483	5
Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against an adult	132	10	5,754	18
Bullying	34	3	630	2
Racist abuse	[6]—	[6]—	254	1
Sexual misconduct	16	1	363	1
Drug and alcohol related	86	6	1,004	3
Damage	49	4	1,098	4
Theft	54	4	1,051	3
Persistent disruptive behaviour	301	22	6,256	20
Other	163	12	4,930	16
Total	1,343	100	31,256	100

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] There are known quality issues with exclusions data for these years. Figures shown here for Romford parliamentary constituency are as reported by schools but are unconfirmed and should be used with caution. Figures for Havering local authority and London have been checked back with authorities.
[3] The distribution of exclusions by reason has been derived from the Termly Exclusions Survey and applied to the number of permanent exclusions as confirmed by local authorities as part of the Annual Schools Census data checking exercise.
[4] The number of permanent exclusions by reason expressed as a percentage of the total number of permanent exclusions.
[5] The number of permanent exclusions by reason expressed as a percentage of the total number of permanent exclusions.
[6] 1 or 2 exclusions, or a rate based on 1 or 2 exclusions.

School Food

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what definition of confectionery will be applied to the School Food Trust guidelines on the sale of such products from vending machines and tuck shops in secondary schools. [60784]

Jacqui Smith: Officials are still collecting stakeholder views on the School Food Trust's advice to Government on nutritional standards for food served at times of the day other than lunch. Views have been sought from representatives of the food industry, education and health sectors. Forthcoming decisions on a definition of confectionery for the purposes of school food standards will be taken in light of these stakeholder views.

Shrewsbury Sixth Form College

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will provide funding to allow the Skills for Life section of Shrewsbury Sixth Form College to remain open beyond the 2005–06 academic year. [59864]

Phil Hope: This is a matter for the Learning and Skills Council who are responsible for the planning and funding of Skills for Life learning via the 47 local Learning and Skills Council offices. Mark Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive, has written to the hon. Member with the information requested and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 5 April 2006:

I write in response to your recent Parliamentary Questions regarding funding for adult education for people on benefits and low incomes in Shrewsbury and funding to allow the Skills for Life section of Shrewsbury Sixth Form College to remain open.

Shropshire LSC funding for adult education is through Adult and Community Learning (ACL) which is delivered by Shropshire County Council, the ACL funding is for Shropshire as a whole and therefore this makes it difficult to show exactly what has been earmarked for Shrewsbury, the following is a rough guide to allocations.

2001/02 SCC LSC revenue allocation for county £365,879		*2005/06 SCC LSC revenue allocation for county £467,858 (excluding family learning funds of £150,172)*	
Shrewsbury—Gateway Centre and provision	£163,000	Shrewsbury—Gateway Centre and provision	£285,180
Shrewsbury schools ACL	£24,550	Shrewsbury schools: New ACL centres at Grange and Sundorne schools	£38,000 (includes some extended schools funds)

Skills for Life provision is a high priority. The LSC has clearly stated in its annual statement of priorities that "Adults without basic skills are entitled to free learning". As a result of this commitment, LSC resources both nationally, regionally and locally are increasingly focused on securing this priority activity.

The funds committed to Skills for Life in Shropshire has increased from £1,960,235 in 2004/05 to £3,510,250 in 2005/06. In addition to this core activity, Shropshire learners have benefited from a further £94,000 of investment in Skills for Life activity through the Employer Training Pilot and £641,412 funded through European Social Funds activity in 2005/06.

Shropshire LSC 2004 target for skills for life achievements (6,177) was exceeded by 8 per cent. with a total achievement of 6,692. A further 2,252 achievements will be required in 2006/07 to deliver Shropshire's contribution to the national 2007 target.

Shrewsbury Sixth Form College delivered Skills for Life activity to a funding value of £87,362 in 2004/05 and was allocated a further £65,000 for Skills for Life provision in 2005/06.

In the funding and planning dialogue for 2006/07 the college was initially offered an indicative allocation for adult programme delivery of £132,639 (including Skills for Life) but the college itself requested the opportunity to review this provision due to its desire to focus development on its key mission: "As a high quality post 16 establishment, Shrewsbury Sixth Form College is dedicated to meeting the needs of all its learners in a supportive and challenging environment. It specialises in the provision/teaching of advanced level courses for 16–19 full time students".

The college has seen significant growth in its delivery of 16–18 learning with an additional 82 learners from 2004/05 to 2005/06, with a planned cohort of 1318 for 2006/07 and it has an outstanding record of delivery at level 3. Through the recognition of its mission, core specialisation, forward thinking and innovative co-location discussions with Shrewsbury College of Arts and Technology, the sixth form college senior managers identified that Skills for Life provision may be more efficiently and effectively placed for delivery with other local providers.

Consequently, the value of funding allocation that had been earmarked for Skills for Life provision for adults in 2006/07 at the college £95,928 has by mutual agreement been transferred across to Shrewsbury College of Art and Technology, thereby ensuring that the provision of Skills for Life learning remains local and available to the people of Shrewsbury.

In summary, the Secretary of State, through the LSC is continuing to fund Skills for Life provision for learners in Shrewsbury, through the college of arts and technology rather then through the sixth form college. Both colleges are fully committed to maintaining accessible and high quality Skills for Life provision. This transfer of provision, agreed by all parties, supports the LSC's targets of providing high quality learning opportunities to make England better skilled and more competitive.

I trust the information provided answers your questions, if I can be of further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sixth-form Schools

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much her Department has allocated to raising the number of A-level students in small sixth-form schools in the last three years. [62970]

Jacqui Smith: The Department has allocated a total of £4.8 billion via the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) for school sixth forms in the last three years. £1.5 billion in 2003–04, £1.6 billion in 2004–05 and £1.7 billion in 2005–06. But information is not held centrally about allocations to sixth forms of different sizes. We have also introduced educational maintenance allowances (EMA) to boost participation across all post 16 routes. The EMA budget is £432 million in 2005–06, £566 million in 2006–07 and £597 million in 2007–08.

In December 2005 the Department and the LSC launched a dedicated 16–19 capital fund aimed at increasing choice and diversity in 16–19 provision, including in school sixth forms. The 16–19 capital fund includes £120 million in 2006–07 and £180 million in 2007–08.

Skills Training

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people aged *(a)* 30 to 39 years, *(b)* 40 to 49 years and *(c)* 50 years and over received skills training in (i) Lancashire and (ii) West Lancashire constituency in each year since 1997. [58486]

Phil Hope: This is a matter for the Learning and Skills Council. Mark Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive, has written to my hon. Friend with this information and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

The Governments Skills Strategy, outlined in the two White Papers, "21st Century Skills: Realising Our Potential" (July 2003) and "Skills: Getting on in Business, Getting on at Work" (March 2005), sets out our plans for ensuring that individuals have the skills

needed to be both employable and personally fulfilled. The Government remain committed to ensuring that training serves the needs of the whole community, regardless of age or background. Everyone studying literacy and numeracy skills or a first full level 2 qualification, and all those on jobseeker's allowance or income related benefits and their dependents will continue to receive free tuition in further education. As well as this, the main vehicle we are creating for supporting training in the workplace, Train to Gain, will cater to the needs of a diverse range of employees, including older people.

The Government's PSA target on adult attainment challenges us to reduce by at least 40 per cent. the number of adults in the workforce who lack NVQ Level 2 (equivalent to 5 A-C GCSEs) by 2010. Previous progress has been good: the proportion of adults in the workplace qualified to Level 2 and above rose from 65 per cent. in 1997 to 72 per cent. in 2004.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 5 April 2006:

I write in response to your recent Parliamentary Question regarding skills training.

Skills training is at the heart of the LSC's priorities and has featured significantly in both the first national Skills Strategy published in July 2003 and the more recent White Paper published in March 2005.

On the specific question of how many people have been trained in Lancashire and your West Lancashire constituency please find the details in the table attached.

You will note that the information only covers the years from 2001 when the LSC was first established. We do not hold any data prior to then.

If you require any further detail regarding Lancashire please do not hesitate to contact Steve Palmer, Executive Director, at our Lancashire office who I know would be delighted to meet with you and share current and future plans that impact on skills training.

Adult Learners in Further Education by Notional Level of Study

	Skelmersdale College					*LSC Lancashire*			
Age/Notional Level	*2004/05*	*2003/04*	*2002/03*	*2001/02*	*2000/01*	*2004/05*	*2003/04*	*2002/03*	*2001/02*
30 to 39									
Level 1 and entry	916	1,190	1,264	975	799	8,817	10,034	10,377	8,666
Level 2	515	559	504	887	785	8,477	8,064	8,174	10,402
Level 3	233	343	308	393	443	4,461	4,477	4,688	5,615
Level 4, 5 or higher	53	25	63	12	10	711	726	668	570
Other	473	400	173	71	338	2,502	2,472	2,741	3,694
Sub total	2,190	2,517	2,312	2,338	2,375	24,968	25,773	26,648	28,947
40 to 49									
Level 1 and entry	1,084	1,159	1,260	861	756	7,999	9,052	8,841	7,215
Level 2	477	514	472	799	633	6,941	6,363	6,242	8,206
Level 3	220	286	194	249	299	3,483	3,299	3,366	3,883
Level 4, 5 or higher	34	19	42	18	8	615	515	459	460
Other	397	336	144	52	267	2,276	2,184	2,208	2,723
Sub total	2,212	2,314	2,112	1,979	1,963	21,314	21,413	21,116	22,487
50 to 59									
Level 1 and entry	743	873	1,106	759	684	5,474	6,776	6,928	5,532
Level 2	329	350	359	526	429	3,983	3,806	3,822	5,362
Level 3	87	114	104	135	136	1,525	1,562	1,713	1,975
Level 4, 5 or higher	20	2	23	4	3	268	216	164	149
Other	223	251	93	49	224	1,463	1,522	1,526	1,905
Sub total	1,402	1,590	1,685	1,473	1,476	12,713	13,882	14,153	14,923
Total	5,804	6,421	6,109	5,790	5,814	58,995	61,068	61,917	66,357

Skills Training (MOD Personnel)

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on the role of her Department in providing skills training to Ministry of Defence personnel. [59828]

Maria Eagle: The Department does not provide any skills training for personnel in the Ministry of Defence.

Social Exclusion

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funding streams her Department plans to finance in 2006–07 to tackle social exclusion. [56083]

Maria Eagle: Social exclusion is a multi-faceted problem, but tackling it is well embedded in the Department for Education and Skills policies. Through our "Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners" (July 2004), we are committed to giving children and families the best possible start in life, reducing the numbers of young people who leave school with low qualifications and poor literacy and numeracy skills and providing opportunities through widening participation for the numbers of young adults with low and poor skills.

DfES policies place particular emphasis on child poverty and investing in high quality early years services because we know that this improves outcomes for children and that those benefits are greatest for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. Many Sure Start programmes, for example, are targeted on the most disadvantaged areas or groups, or targeted in their initial stages on the most disadvantaged communities, as are our new Children's Centres, which will be rolled out nationally by 2010. The General Sure Start Grant (GSSG) to local authorities funds Sure Start Children's Centres; inclusion, work force development and child

care affordability and sustainability initiatives; and supports LAs in gearing up to meet the new duties in the Childcare Bill currently before Parliament. The GSSG will total around £1.5 billion in 2006–07.

Well-organised, safe and stimulating activities before and after school and other extended services also make a real difference to children's chances at school. We have committed additional funding to support the development of extended services in schools by making approximately £160 million of funding available to local authorities since 2003 and we will be making a further £680 million available from 2006–08. Deprivation levels will be a factor in distributing funding.

The 14–19 White Paper set out our priorities for those aged 14 to 19, including new opportunities for young people to enjoy new styles of learning, in different settings and with more opportunities for practical and applied learning. Those at most risk of dropping out will get extra support. We are extending financial support such as Education Maintenance Allowance and a number of learner support funds will be available for those who need it. It also sets out our plans for ensuring that all young people develop functional skills (English, Maths and ICT) as these skills will enable individuals to operate confidently, effectively and independently in life and at work.

The Government has earmarked just over £1.3 billion funding over the 2006–08 period for schools to support personalised learning during and beyond the school day, which will support access to extended services, especially for children from disadvantaged areas. This includes funding routed through the "Dedicated Schools Grant", and the additional "School Standards Grant" money for personalised learning announced by the Chancellor in the Budget last week.

Social Segregation Report

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the Answer of 13 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1880W, on the social segregation report, when she expects research work on social segregation in schools from the Centre of Economics of Education to be completed. [59870]

Jacqui Smith: This research work is due to be published on the Centre for the Economics of Education website http://cee.lse.ac.uk/ on Thursday 30 March.

Special Educational Needs

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of children in England with a special educational need have been given more than one fixed-term exclusion from school in a year. [58943]

Maria Eagle: The requested information is given in the following table.

Maintained primary, secondary and special schools[1, 2]: Number of pupils by special educational needs (SEN) and fixed period exclusions 2003/04, England

	Pupils with statements of SEN	*Pupils with SEN without statements*	*Pupils with no SEN*	*Total*
Number of pupils	227,250	1,167,740	6,211,060	7,606,040
Number of pupils with one or more fixed period exclusions	18,290	69,090	114,400	201,780
Of which:				
Number of pupils with more than one fixed period exclusions	8,950	30,170	32,260	71,380
Percentage of pupils with more than one fixed period exclusions[3]	3.94	2.58	0.52	0.94

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed
[2] Excludes non-maintained special schools.
[3] Number of pupils with more than one fixed period exclusion by stage of SEN expressed as a percentage of the total number of pupils by same stage of SEN.
Notes:
Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10. There may be discrepancies between the sum of constituent items and totals as shown.
Source:
Termly Exclusions Survey

Special Guardianship Orders

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many special guardianship orders have been made since 30 December 2005, broken down by region. [60750]

Ms Harman: I have been asked to reply.

The number of Special Guardianship Orders made in the county courts (including the high court) up to the end of February 2006 is 25. They are broken down by region as follows:

Region	*Number*
Eastern	2
London	10
Merseyside	1
North East	1
North West	3
South East	3
South West	3
Wales	1
West Midlands	1

Statistical information on the same for Family Proceedings Courts is not recorded.

Student Loans

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the impact of interest payable on unpaid student loans on the ability of graduates to repay loans. [62314]

Bill Rammell: Interest is only charged on student loans in line with inflation, which means no borrower pays back more in real terms than the value of the loan they took out. Borrowers repay loans at a fixed percentage of salary once their earnings reach the repayment threshold so fluctuations in the interest rate do not affect the monthly repayment amount.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many graduates have still to start to repay student loans *(a)* in total and *(b)* in (i) England, (ii) Scotland, (iii) Wales and (iv) Northern Ireland. [57450]

Bill Rammell: This table shows student loan borrowers with mortgage-style loans who have not made any repayments up to 31 December 2005 and have passed their Statutory Repayment Due Date (SRDD). Borrowers are not required to repay before they reach the SRDD, which is the April after they graduate or otherwise leave their course. Mortgage-style borrowers who have passed their SRDD are able to apply for deferment of repayments if their income is below 85 per cent. of national average earnings, i.e. less than £24,137 per annum from 1 September 2005.

Country of domicile	*Mortgage-style borrowers passed SRDD who had not made any repayments, position at 31 December 2005*
England	120,000
Wales	8,000
Scotland	24,000
Northern Ireland	7,000
UK total	159,000

Source:
Student Loans Company

The following table shows student loan borrowers with income-contingent loans who have not made any repayments before 31 March 2004, and had passed their SRDD by that date. At that time income-contingent borrowers who had passed the SRDD only made repayments when they were earning over £10,000. Since April 2005 this threshold has been increased to £15,000.

Country of domicile	*Income-contingent borrowers passed SRDD who had not made any repayments, position at 31 March 2004*
England	332,000
Wales	22,000
Scotland	62,000
Northern Ireland	16,000
UK total	432,000

Source:
Student Loans Company

Complete information for more recent dates are not yet available due to the system of collection via the tax system and subsequent reporting to the Student Loans Company.

Superannuation Liability

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what total amount of employers' normal contributions accruing superannuation liability charge has been accounted for by her Department in each of the last five years for which data are available. [61370]

Maria Eagle: The amount of employers' accruing superannuation liability charges in respect of members of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme in the last five years is:

	£000
2004–05[1]	17,529,105
2003–04[1]	17,455,539
2002–03[1]	14,991,954
2001–02	12,793,713
2000–01	12,284,901

[1] From 1 October 2002 new entrants have been able to opt for a partnership pension partnership account, a stakeholder arrangement with an employer contribution. Employers' contributions to partnership pension accounts are not included in the figures in the table.

Tourette's Syndrome

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps her Department is taking to ensure that education professionals are trained to work with students with Tourette's syndrome. [58363]

Maria Eagle: We have a number of training programmes in place which aim to provide educational professionals with the necessary skills to enable them to make suitable provision for children with special educational needs (SEN), including those with Tourette's syndrome.

In order to be awarded Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), all trainee teachers must demonstrate that they understand their responsibilities under the statutory Special Educational Needs Code of Practice. They must show that they know how to seek advice from specialists, such as the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), if they are concerned about children's development or behaviour or about less common types of SEN, such as Tourette's Syndrome. They must also be able to differentiate their teaching to meet the needs of individual pupils including those with SEN.

All schools receive a School Development Grant which they are able to use to support improvement in any aspect of teaching and learning including training. Local authorities may retain a proportion of this grant to provide specific training and development programmes for staff in teaching children with SEN.

The Department has introduced the National Programme for Specialist Leaders in Behaviour and Attendance (NPSL-BA) which is giving teaching and non-teaching staff the status and qualification to lead colleagues in developing programmes for managing behaviour positively. The programme was piloted in 2004/05 and in now being extended nationally.

Truancy

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the truancy levels were in

schools in *(a)* Lancaster and Wyre constituency, *(b)* Lancashire and *(c)* England in each year since 1997. [61326]

Jacqui Smith: The Department does not hold data on the levels of truancy. However, the figures for the percentage of half days missed due to unauthorised absence (of which truancy forms a part) in maintained mainstream schools can be found in the table.

	Lancaster and Wyre	*Lancashire*	*England*
Percentage of half days missed in maintained primary schools due to unauthorised absence			
1997/98	0.2	0.3	0.50
1998/99	0.1	0.4	0.49
1999/2000	0.2	0.35	0.47
2000/01	0.3	0.30	0.49
2001/02	0.3	0.34	0.45
2002/03	0.2	0.31	0.43
2003/04	0.2	0.32	0.41
2004/05	0.2	0.34	0.43
Percentage of half days missed in maintained secondary schools due to unauthorised absence			
1997/98	0.4	0.8	1.10
1998/99	0.5	0.9	1.07
1999/2000	0.6	0.81	1.04
2000/01	0.4	0.80	1.07
2001/02	0.4	0.82	1.09
2002/03	0.5	0.82	1.07
2003/04	0.5	0.88	1.13
2004/05	0.6	0.93	1.23

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps the Government are taking to reduce truancy. [62985]

Jacqui Smith: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given on 9 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 623W.

University Grant

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students from *(a)* Romford, *(b)* Havering, *(c)* Greater London and *(d)* England received the full university grant in each of the last five years. [62988]

Bill Rammell: The new Maintenance Grant, and the equivalent Special Support Grant, of up to £2,700 are being introduced for new full-time students who start their course in September 2006 or later. Data on the numbers of students in receipt of the full Grants are, therefore, not available yet. However, we anticipate that around 30 per cent. of new full-time students in England in 2006/07 will receive the full grant, while around 50 per cent. will receive either a full or partial grant.

No estimates are available at a sub-England level.

VAT

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how she proposes to apply the exemption from value added tax for new buildings for *(a)* city academies with community use and *(b)* other youth and education facilities with community use; and if she will make a statement. [62601]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 30 March 2006]:* There is no specific exemption from VAT in relation to new buildings for youth and education facilities. However, where youth and education facilities are owned and used by charities for the purpose of non-business activities, VAT on a new build at zero rate may apply. This would include academies which are charitable companies. In such cases, new build facilities, or parts thereof, can be zero rated for VAT, provided that they are used exclusively for core education activities or for other activities where no charge is made. VAT relief also applies to those parts of the building used for business-use provided this does not exceed 10 per cent. of the total use.

Vocational Diplomas

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps the Government are taking to encourage students to pursue vocational diplomas. [62990]

Phil Hope: We are working with 14 to 19 partnerships around the country so that schools and colleges are in a position to offer five of the new specialised diploma courses from September 2008. We are also working with the Connexions Service so that young people have the information that they need about the new diplomas. We are planning a major communications campaign next year to coincide with the publication of the first five diplomas.

Substantial resources are already going into initial teacher training, work force remodelling, improved teaching practice and workforce development through mainstream schools and post-16 budgets and through our existing qualifications budgets. Money spent on workforce development to support delivery of specialised diplomas, on which we are engaging the Quality Improvement Agency and the Specialised Schools and Academies Trust (SSAT), will be £5 million in 2006–07 and £45 million in 2007–08.

Voluntary State Organisations

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what her Department's policy is on allowing staff to join *(a)* the Reserves, *(b)* the Special Constabulary and *(c)* other voluntary state organisations; and if she will make a statement. [59811]

Maria Eagle: The Department is committed to members of staff volunteering in their local communities and provides release time to undertake such activities.

The Department allows its staff to join *(a)* the Reserves, *(b)* the Special Constabulary and *(c)* other voluntary state organisations.

HEALTH

Anti-viral Influenza Drugs

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many anti-viral drugs for influenza are held per capita in England. [62640]

Caroline Flint: We do not keep records centrally regarding the number of antiviral drugs available in the national health service to treat seasonal influenza.

We are purchasing a sufficient quantity of oseltamivir (Tamiflu) to treat the 25 per cent. of the population who might fall ill with pandemic influenza. We currently have 7.3 million treatment courses and deliveries will be complete by September 2006.

Apnee Sehat Initiative

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment she has made of South Warwickshire Primary Care Trust's Apnee Sehat initiative; and what representations she has received on this initiative; [59836]

(2) whether she has viewed the South Warwickshire Primary Care Trust's Apnee Sehat DVD; [59837]

(3) whether she plans to visit the Apnee Sehat projects developed by South Warwickshire Primary Care Trust; [59838]

(4) if she will take steps to disseminate the Apnee Sehat initiative to areas with a high percentage of people of South Asian origin. [59839]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has been fully supportive of the production of this prime example of locally led positive action to improve the health of people particularly at risk of heart disease and diabetes. The Secretary of State will consider any invitation to visit such initiatives, and will take any suitable opportunity to ensure that others are aware of them.

Audiology

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance she has issued to *(a)* primary care trusts and *(b)* hospital trusts on dealing with referrals by GPs for hearing tests by an audiologist. [62592]

Mr. Byrne: The Department has issued no guidance with reference to referrals by general practitioners for hearing tests by an audiologist.

BCG Vaccinations

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether schools in the Peterborough city council area will be included in a BCG inoculation programme. [53807]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The change in Bacillus Calmette Guerin (BCG) vaccination policy set out in the Chief Medical Officer's letter of 6 July 2005, states that children who would otherwise have been offered BCG vaccination through the schools programme will now be screened, tested and vaccinated if appropriate. It is therefore the responsibility of the primary care trust to arrange suitable screening opportunities outside of the school setting.

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to ensure that there is sufficient BCG vaccine available to inoculate teenage children; and if she will make a statement. [62825]

Caroline Flint: The chief medical officer's letter of 6 July 2005 announced the end of the universal Bacille Calmette Guerin (BCG) vaccination programme for all children between 10 and 14 years of age in favour of an improved targeted programme.

Contracts are in place for the continued supply of BCG vaccine for those who require it.

Bowel Cancer

Mr. Godsiff: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when her Department plans to roll out the screening programme for bowel cancer *(a)* across England and *(b)* to the West Midlands. [62651]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Government have stated their commitment to a national bowel cancer screening programme, for which funding has been agreed. On 30 January 2006, the new Health White Paper, "Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services", reaffirmed that the programme will be rolled out from April 2006.

Five programme hubs across England will invite men and women to participate in the screening programme, send out the faecal occult blood (FOB) testing kits, interpret kits and send results out. 90 to 100 local screening centres will provide endoscopy services for the 2 per cent. of men and women who have a positive FOB test result.

NHS Cancer Screening Programmes are currently assessing where the five programme hubs will be located. The English bowel cancer screening pilot site at the Hospital of St. Cross, Rugby, Warwickshire, is expected to become the first programme hub when national roll out begins. It is hoped to establish the other four programme hubs by March 2007, with announcements to be made in due course.

NHS Cancer Screening Programmes are currently assessing strategic health authority bids for their local endoscopy units to become local screening centres. Announcements will be made in due course.

Burma

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether there is a licensing regime for the import of fish and seafood from Burma. [55659]

Caroline Flint: Imports of fishery products from Burma are allowed entry into the United Kingdom in accordance with European Union (EU) food hygiene legislation. A licence is not required, but all consignments must come from establishments approved to EU standards and be accompanied by officially signed public health certification. All consignments must also be presented for import at specified UK border inspection posts for mandatory checks prior to entry. Further details on the import requirements and relevant contact points can be found on the Food Standards Agency's website at:

www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/imports/want_to-import/fish_or_shellfish/.

Cancelled Operations

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients whose operations were cancelled

with less than 24 hours notice have been *(a)* offered a new date within 28 days and *(b)* offered a choice of treatment at a different hospital in each quarter since April 2002, broken down by NHS trust. [62597]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 30 March 2006]:* All patients whose operations are cancelled by the hospital on the day of surgery should be offered a new operation date within 28 days. Under the cancelled operations guarantee, if the national health service trust is unable to treat the patient within this 28-day period then it must make provision for the patient to move to the hospital of their choice for treatment.

Data on the number of patients admitted within 28 days of cancellation and on the number of patients offered treatment at an alternative hospital, broken down by NHS trust, for each quarter since April 2002 are available in the Library. Similar data are also available on the Department's website at: www.performance.doh.gov.uk/hospitalactivity/data_requests/cancelled_operations.htm

Cancer

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research she has had conducted into the possible link between industrial processes and the incidence of cancer; and if she will make a statement. [62163]

Mrs. McGuire: I have been asked to reply.

The Health and Safety Executive has been involved in an extensive variety of research over many years linked to industrial processes and the incidence of cancer.

A key current piece of research is an updated assessment of the current and predicted future burden of occupational cancer. HSE is also reviewing the available toxicological and hygiene information on about 100 known or probable carcinogens with a view to enabling identification of those that appear to be most potent or are in wide use today.

Other examples of ongoing research include:

An updated mortality and cancer registration analysis of licensed asbestos workers (HSL/HSE).

A mortality and cancer registration analysis of licensed pesticide applicators (HSL/HSE).

A case-control study of adult brain tumours in relation to electromagnetic field, pesticides and solvents (led by Leeds University).

A case-control study of childhood cancer in relation to parental preconceptional exposure to chemicals (Leeds University).

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what recent research she has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated into the effect of exposure to chemicals in the causation of cancer, with particular reference to pesticides; [62705]

(2) what assessment she has made of the extent to which there is a correlation between the incidence of cancer and the prevalence of chemical use. [62706]

Caroline Flint: There is little convincing evidence to indicate that environmental exposure to chemicals in the United Kingdom causes cancer. However, exposure to environmental tobacco smoke (passive smoking) is known to be associated with a 10 to 30 per cent. increase in lung cancer.

The committees on mutagenicity and carcinogenicity of chemicals in food, consumer products and the environment, which are independent advisory committees reporting to the chief medical officer and the chairman of the Food Standards Agency, are occasionally asked to advise on issues of pesticides and carcinogenic risk. The committee on mutagenicity recently completed a review of biomonitoring studies of genotoxicity in pesticide applicators and the committee on carcinogenicity has conducted a detailed evaluation of whether certain organochlorine pesticides are a cause of breast cancer. These and other reviews by the committees is available on the Department's website at:

www.advisorybodies.doh.gov.uk/com/index.htm and www.advisorybodies.doh.gov.uk/coc/index.htm) or in their annual reports.

Capio Healthcare

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the value is of work contracted to Capio Healthcare by the NHS; what types of treatment the contracts cover; for how many patients; and what miscellaneous payments have been made to Capio Healthcare in relation to the contracted work. [59076]

Mr. Byrne: As part of the national procurement of surgical activity from the independent sector, Capio Healthcare UK provides the so-called spine chain of independent sector treatment centres. The contract provides for 100,521 procedures and 2,000 diagnostic tests over five years from nine facilities. The casemixes vary from facility to facility but comprise ophthalmology, general surgery, gastroenterology, gynaecology, urology, hernias, varicose veins, colonoscopies, minor skin surgery, orthopaedics, trauma, upper scopes, spinal surgery and dermatology. The value of the contract is commercial in confidence and payments to Capio Healthcare has been made in accordance with the contract. A further facility in West Surrey is under negotiation.

Capio Healthcare also provided 12,516 mainly orthopaedic procedures via its existing facilities through a one year centrally funded supplementary contract between May 2004 and June 2005. The value of the contract is commercial in confidence.

Cardiac Screening (Children)

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will put in place arrangements for screening all children for cardiac problems; and if she will make a statement. [62037]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The United Kingdom national screening committee, which advises the Government on all aspects of screening, does not recommend population screening for abnormal heart conditions in children and young people as current evidence does not support this.

Testing for certain heart problems is offered, where appropriate, to close relatives of those who have died suddenly and unexpectedly of a suspected genetic cardiac condition. This is supported by the national service framework chapter for arrhythmias and sudden cardiac death, which was published on 4 March 2005.

Care Costs

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what procedures she is adopting to ensure that social services always advise patients that they cannot be compelled to sell their homes to pay for care in their own lifetime. [60386]

Mr. Byrne: We introduced the deferred payments scheme measures to help people moving into residential care to avoid having to sell their homes against their wishes during their lifetime. The Department issued specific guidance to local authorities to advise people about the deferred payments scheme in LAC(2001)25.

As part of its service inspections the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) looks at the quantity and quality of information that local authorities provide to residents and their representatives about how fees are calculated, and proportions that a service user would have to pay. The CSCI also looks at what complaints were being received by local authorities about who it carries out its social services functions.

Childhood Mortality (Lancashire)

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to reduce the incidence of childhood mortality in the Lancashire area; and if she will make a statement. [61642]

Mr. Byrne: The responsibility for local health services now lies with the local national health service and it is for primary care trusts in conjunction with strategic health authorities and other local stakeholders to plan and develop services to meet the needs of their local populations.

The Department has an infant mortality target of a 10 per cent., reduction in the relative gap between routine and manual socio-economic groups and England as a whole from a baseline year of 1998 (the average of 1997–99) to the target year of 2010.

The Department has a number of initiatives aimed at tackling this gap in infant mortality. These include reducing maternal smoking as it is a risk factor for infant mortality, improving breastfeeding rates through a range of initiatives aimed at new and disadvantaged mothers, and improving neonatal services countrywide. In addition, the Department aims to reduce teenage pregnancy rates, since babies of teenage mothers have a 60 per cent., higher infant mortality rate than other age groups, and offer disadvantaged families greater access to healthy foods through the healthy start scheme.

These initiatives are expected to reduce the infant mortality level nationally, including the Lancashire area.

Childhood Obesity

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to reduce the incidence of childhood obesity in Peterborough and Cambridgeshire; and if she will make a statement. [60872]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The responsibility for local health services lies with the local national health service. It is for primary care trusts in conjunction with strategic health authorities and other local stakeholders to plan and develop services to meet the needs of their local populations.

Reducing obesity in both children and adults is one of the key overarching priorities of the Government White Paper, "Choosing health". The White Paper sets out a comprehensive strategy for tackling obesity and has given a solid foundation for future work. We have also set a national public service agreement target to halt, by 2010, the year-on-year increase in obesity among children under 11 in the context of a broader strategy to tackle obesity in the population as a whole. National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence guidance on the prevention, identification, assessment and management of overweight and obesity in adults and children is currently out for consultation and will also be available in November 2006.

Current action on diet includes investment in the 5 a Day programme including the school fruit and vegetable scheme, promotion of breastfeeding, action to improve diet and nutrition across the whole school as well as work with industry on food promotion to children and reducing salt, fat and sugar. Current action on physical activity includes nine local exercise action pilots to evaluate the impact of community partnerships to increase physical activity, "Schools on the Move" piloting the use of pedometers in schools and an evaluation of the health impact of transport interventions as part of the sustainable travel towns programme.

Choose and Book System

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which primary care trusts have been used as pilots for the choose and book system. [54872]

Mr. Byrne: The choose and book programme concluded its proof of concept (pilot) phase in June 2005 and was conducted in the following primary care trust (PCT) areas:

Huntingdonshire PCT
South Cambridgeshire PCT
Haringey Teaching PCT
Barnsley PCT
Craven, Harrogate and Rural PCT
North Eastern Derbyshire PCT
Derbyshire Dales and South PCT
Richmond, Twickenham and Roehampton PCT
Kingston PCT
Croydon PCT
Isle of Wight PCT
Central Cheshire PCT

Clinical Contracts

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the occasions on which the NHS has entered into national clinical contracts with third party suppliers where the level of remuneration does not depend on the volume of procedures carried out. [55013]

Mr. Byrne: The national contracts that have been awarded centrally for the provision of clinical services under the auspices of the independent sector treatment

centre programme operate on a take or pay basis and the remuneration is for an agreed value rather than volume of activity set out in the contracts.

Clinical Negligence

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many clinical negligence cases were closed by the NHS Litigation Authority in 2005; how many of these cases were funded by *(a)* legal aid, *(b)* conditional fee arrangements and *(c)* private means; and how many cases in each category of funding resulted in (i) an award of damages and (ii) a settlement involving an agreement to pay damages. [62399]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 30 March 2006]:* The number of clinical negligence cases closed by the NHS Litigation Authority (NHSLA) in either the financial year 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006 or calendar year 1 January 2005 to 31 December 2005 is not yet available. The number of clinical negligence claims closed in the financial year 1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005 were 7,860 of which 3,583 had damages payments. The NHSLA does not keep records on the legal funding arrangements arranged by claimants.

Coronary Heart Disease

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how progress against achieving the quality standards laid down in the Coronary Heart Disease National Service Framework is being measured. [58901]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Following the Government's decision to devolve most central funding to local primary care trusts (PCTs) and strategic health authorities, the balance of power has further shifted by moving away from a central target-based focus, to allow PCTs to devise local strategies to meet the specific needs and demands in their own area. The Healthcare Commission produces an annual star ratings report of performance for national health service trusts in England to assess progress against existing standards and targets, and to promote improvement in the quality of healthcare.

Crohn's Disease

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make Crohn's disease a reportable illness. [61119]

Mr. Byrne: Under the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 and associated regulations, notification of a number of communicable diseases is legal requirement. Notifications are necessary to identify and prevent the spread of infectious disease.

No infectious agent has been identified as the cause of Crohn's disease so it would be inappropriate to designate it a notifiable disease for the purposes of the Act.

Dementia (Staff Injuries)

Joan Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the number of health and social care staff injured by people with dementia in each of the last four years for which figures are available. [50209]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Dentistry

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dental practices are *(a)* treating children and *(b)* prepared to accept children as NHS patients in each primary care trust in England. [61039]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 27 March 2006]:* The number of addresses in England with an open general dental services or personal dental services contract on 28 February 2006 and a child registration and/or a child claim in the three months ending on 28 February 2006 has been placed in the Library.

Information on the number of national health service dental practices that are registering new patients is not held centrally.

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what discussions *(a)* she and *(b)* her officials have had with the Royal College of Nursing and other professional bodies concerned with dental nursing on (i) the implications of the General Dental Council's requirements for registration and professional qualifications to be held by all dental nurses from 2008 and (ii) pay and conditions for dental nurses; [57458]

(2) how many and what percentage of dental nurses in England hold a professional qualification, broken down by region; and how many of these qualifications were gained *(a)* by National Certificate, *(b)* by relevant NVQ qualifications and *(c)* through other courses; [57459]

(3) how many dental nurses are employed in each region; [59213]

(4) what recent discussions she has had with the General Dental Council on dental nursing salaries. [59214]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The powers under which the General Dental Council (GDC) is to make dental nursing a registrable profession were included in an Order approved by Parliament in July 2005. Departmental officials have discussed the practicalities of registration with both the GDC and the British Association of Dental Nurses (the representative body for dental nurses). As a result, the Department funded the development of distance learning materials to provide for existing dental nurses to meet the educational requirements for registration.

The pay and conditions of dental nurses are a matter for their employers. Most dental nurses are employed by general dental practitioners who are independent contractors. The Department does not hold information on their numbers and qualifications.

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the number of dental nurses who are members of the NHS pension scheme; and if she will make a statement. [59211]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not held centrally.

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average annual salary of dental nurses is in each region. [59212]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the salaries of dental nurses is not held centrally as the pay and conditions of dental nurses are a matter for their employers. Most dental nurses are employed by general dental practitioners who are independent contractors.

Mr. Pope: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists were treating NHS patients in Hyndburn in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* the last year for which figures are available. [57562]

Ms Rosie Winterton: As at 30 September 2005, there were 65 national health service dentists with a general dental services or personal dental services contract within Hyndburn and Ribble Valley primary care trust. The corresponding figure for 30 September 1997 was 44.
Source: Dental Practice Board

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of national insurance contributions was assigned to funding NHS dentistry for 2005–06. [38916]

Ms Rosie Winterton: It is not the Government's policy to assign a given percentage of national insurance contributions to the finding of dental services. In 2004–05, the national insurance contributions available to the national health service vote were £15,134 million. Total NHS net expenditure including capital was £69,706 million.

The main element of NHS dental services are the primary dental care services provided by dentists working within the general dental services (GDS), or personal dental services (PDS) pilots, and estimated expenditure on GDS and PDS in 2004–05, net of dental charge income contributed by patients, was £1,486 million.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much funding her Department has provided to *(a)* Eastern Leicester primary care trust and *(b)* the NHS for dental services in each year between 1997 to 2005. [51011]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The main element of national health service dental services are the primary dental care services provided by dentists working within the general dental services (GDS) or personal dental services (PDS) pilots. Gross and net expenditure on the GDS is set out in the following table. The table also includes gross expenditure on PDS pilots, but it is not possible to provide similar data for net PDS expenditure as patient charge income is not separately identified in NHS accounts. Based on estimates from Dental Practice Board payments data, we approximate that PDS expenditure in 2004–05 net of patient charge income was around £240 million.

Expenditure on GDS and PDS, England

£ million

	Gross GDS[1]	Net GDS[2]	Gross PDS[3]
1997–98	1,348	959	0
1998–99	1,438	1,018	4
1999–2000	1,477	1,046	13
2000–01	1,561	1,109	22
2001–02	1,638	1,166	36
2002–03	1,709	1,222	41
2003–04	1,767	1,283	48
2004–05	1,671	1,246	[4]280

[1] Expenditure data for 1997–98 to 1999–2000 are based on cash data in Appropriation Accounts. Data from 2000–01 onwards are based on the relevant resource accounts data from health authorities and primary care trusts (PCTs). This is to reflect the change in Department accountancy practices.
[2] Net expenditure represents the cost of the service after taking account of dental charge income collected from patients.
[3] NHS accounts data up to 2004–05 do not separately identify all elements of PDS gross expenditure. See note 4 for 2004–05 data.
[4] An estimate of gross PDS expenditure based on payments data obtained from the Dental Practice Board.

The level of expenditure on hospital and community dental services is decided at local level by PCTs.

GDS is currently a non discretionary service funded from a national budget where expenditure is mainly determined by the volume of NHS work that dentists undertake. Local budget allocations are not assigned to individual PCTs. Data on the level of expenditure within the area of the Eastern Leicester PCT, drawn from payments data obtained from the Dental Practice Board, are set out in the following table. Payment data are only attributable to individual PCT areas from 2000–01 onwards.

GDS and PDS Dental payments within Eastern Leicester PCT

£ million

	Gross GDS and PDS payments[1,2,3]	Net GDS and PDS payments[4]
2000–01	6.564	4.832
2001–02	7.343	5.506
2002–03	7.622	5.816
2003–04	7.764	5.920
2004–05	7.853	6.003

[1] Gross GDS payments include adult fees (including item of service and continuing care payments), child fees (including item of service and capitation payments), commitment payments and point of treatment check payment training (in 2001 only), seniority payments, maternity/paternity/adoptive leave payments, long term sick leave payments, continuing professional development allowances including travel hours, reimbursement of business rates, vocational training grants, vocational trainee salaries and National Insurance contribution costs, clinical audit convenors, clinical audit payments, clinical audit secretarial support and travel expenses. Employer's superannuation costs are excluded.
[2] National PDS data for payments to PDS practices are available for 2004–05 only. This national data do not show PDS payments within Eastern Leicester PCT in 2004–05. However, the data cannot identify the cost of any PDS services that may be provided in Eastern Leicester PCT that are directly managed by local NHS trusts, such as certain dental access centres.
[3] Payments are assigned to PCT areas on the basis of practice postcode data.
[4] Net payments represent the balance of payments due after taking account of NHS dental charge income collected from patients by dental practices.

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the annual salary can be expected by *(a)* a dentist and *(b)* a general practitioner doing NHS work full time. [51477]

Mr. Byrne: Most general dental practitioners and general medical practitioners (GPs) are not paid on a salaried basis, but through fees and payments for the services they provide to national health service patients. The payments they receive from the NHS go towards the costs of running their practices as well as providing the practitioner's net income. As such, there are a range

of factors that influence the final net income, including the range and level of NHS work carried out and the practice expenses they incur.

The forecast intended average net income for all GPs in Great Britain in the 2003–04 financial year was £67,040. By comparison, the estimated average net income for a dentist with a reasonable NHS commitment in 2003–04 in England was £66,700. This is the latest year for which this information is available for both doctors and dentists.

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the oral answer from the Minister of State for Health Services on 31 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 155, on NHS dentistry, if she will clarify the position regarding the increase in dental patient registrations in the Charnwood constituency. [52605]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The table shows the dental patient registrations in the primary care trusts (PCTs) covered by the Charnwood constituency as at 30 November 2004 and 30 November 2005.

	As at 30 November:		
PCT	*2004*	*2005*	*Percentage change*
South Leicestershire	81,925	83,827	2.30
Charnwood and North West Leicestershire	128,355	130,226	1.50
Melton, Rutland and Harborough	58,181	50,618	−13

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she will take to ensure dentists with atypical earnings during the test period are not disadvantaged under the new dental contract. [54502]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has made clear in its guidance to primary care trusts (PCTs) that, under the terms of the statement of financial entitlements, it is for PCTs to agree with dentists how far it is appropriate to take into account factors such as vacancies or absences during the recent reference period in agreeing new general dental services (GDS) contracts or personal dental services (PDS) agreements.

Where the terms of the GDS contracts or PDS agreements cannot be fully resolved by 31 March 2006, dentists have a right to follow the disputes procedure including, where necessary, referral to the NHS Litigation Authority.

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many courses of NHS dental treatment involved *(a)* one filling only and *(b)* one crown only in the last 12 months. [56470]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 6 March 2006]:* In year ending 31 December 2005, the number of claims for treatment by general dental services and personal dental services dentists in England that involved just one filling (and no other treatment) was 1,287,688. The number that involved one crown (and no other treatment) was 44,008.

Source:

Dental Practice Board

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people were registered with a *(a)* personal dental services and *(b)* general dental services dentist in (i) each parliamentary constituency and (ii) England in each year since 1997. [57568]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on general dental services (GDS) and personal dental services (PDS) registrations by parliamentary constituency is not held centrally. A breakdown of GDS and PDS registrations by primary care trust as at 31 March in each specified year has been placed in the Library.

As at 30 November 2005, 24.8 million patients were registered with GDS and PDS dentists.

Mr. Leech: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people under the age of 16 years are not registered with an NHS dentist in *(a)* Manchester and *(b)* Withington constituency. [58861]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department does not hold data on people who are not registered with a national health service dentist. Using population estimates at 2004 it is possible to estimate the percentage of patients registered in the Greater Manchester strategic health authority (SHA) and in South Manchester primary care trust (PCT) and Central Manchester PCT.

Estimate of the percentage of patients registered (using population estimates at 2004)

	Adults	*Children*
South Manchester PCT	41	55
Central Manchester PCT	47	58
Greater Manchester SHA	52	61
England	46	60

Notes:

Patients are registered in the area that the dental surgery is located.

Children are those under 18.

The Department does not hold data for under 16s.

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average pay is for a full-time dental nurse; and if she will make a statement on her plans to improve recruitment and retention in the dental profession. [58900]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the salaries of dental nurses is not held centrally as the pay and conditions of dental nurses are a matter for their employers. Most dental nurses are employed by general dental practitioners who are independent contractors.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance she has issued to the Eastleigh and Test Valley South primary care trust on the *(a)* production and *(b)* monitoring of the implementation of a dental action plan. [59470]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There is no specific requirement for primary care trusts (PCTs) to produce dental action plans. However, the Department has issued guidance to PCTs on the specific actions that are required to implement the new dental contract. It is for PCTs to agree locally how to use local commissioning to reflect local needs and priorities.

The decision to move to 50 per cent. PPA does not produce any dividends to the Department.

No formal assessment has been made of the potential effects of the earlier phasing out of the purchaser parity adjustment scheme within the healthcare system in Suffolk. However, it is recognised that the impact of the decision to phase out PPA may have a disproportionate impact on some commissioners. As a result, strategic health authority transition leads have been advised that they can hold reserves locally, as set out in the NHS operating framework for 2006–07, to help manage financial risk and ease transition in PCTs which are hit hardest.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many times she met the British Dental Association between July 2005 and January 2006 to discuss the NHS dental contracts. [59725]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I have discussed the national health service dental contract at meetings with the British Dental Association on 6 July and 1 December 2005, and 14 February 2006.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether orthodontists are required to sign their NHS dental contract by 1 April 2006; and if she will make a statement. [59726]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Any orthodontist providing national health service treatment after 1 April 2006 must have signed a new personal dental services (PDS) agreement or (if also providing the full range of general dental services) a new general dental services (GDS) contract.

Where a primary care trust (PCT) has provided reasonable opportunities to sign a new PDS agreement or GDS contract by 31 March 2006, dentists, including orthodontists, currently providing PDS or GDS services who have not signed by this date, will no longer be entitled to be offered a new contract. A PCT may, however, agree new contracts with dentists, including orthodontists, at a later date if it wishes.

Where a dentist and a PCT were unable to resolve all aspects of the new PDS agreement or GDS contract by 31 March, the dentist could sign the contract with an indication of which terms are not yet agreed. This will enable the dentists to continue to provide NHS services from 1 April while these outstanding issues are resolved.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average income of NHS dentists in Hampshire will be under the new NHS contract after April 2006 using the Annual Contract Value system. [59728]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Specific data for Hampshire are not held centrally. However, nationally the historical estimates of average earnings and expenses for dentists nationally are calculated by the NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre, based on data on gross fees and payments from the Dental Practice Board (DPB) and data from HM Revenue and Customs on expenses.

DPB payment data show that on average, a dentist with a reasonable national health service commitment in 2004–05 in the general dental services (GDS) received gross GDS income of about £154,350. At 2005–06 remuneration levels, this would be a gross GDS income of around £159,600. Dentists with a reasonable commitment are defined as those with gross fee earnings of £59,100 or more. These averages covered some 7,640 GDS principal dentists who worked throughout the year 2004–05.

HM Revenue and Customs information from dentists' tax returns show that the average ratio of expenses to gross earnings for a highly committed NHS dentist is around 52 per cent. (2003–04 tax year). The same source gives average net income of a highly committed NHS dentist from all sources as £78,600 in the tax year 2003–04, which would equate to an average of about £83,500 in 2005–06. This information is taken from the tax returns of 392 GDS principal dentists who were in non-associate business arrangements for whom the tax year ended between January and March 2004.

Combining the estimate of average gross NHS income of £159,600 for a reasonably committed dentist with the 52 per cent. expenses ratio gives an average net NHS income of £76,600 and average expenses of £83,000 in 2005–06. The average net income of a highly committed NHS dentist would be higher.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in Romsey constituency have been registered with an NHS dentist in each year from 1997 to 2005. [59729]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is as follows.

General dental services and personal dental services: number of people registered with a national health service dentist in Romsey parliamentary constituency as at 31 December in each specified year

	Number registered
1997	32,731
1998	31,139
1999	29,724
2000	26,452
2001	29,553
2002	28,237
2003	33,923
2004	32,439
2005	32,134

Note:
The drop in registrations between December 1997 and December 1998 is mostly attributable to the reduction in re-registration period from two years to 15 months.
Source:
Dental Practice Board

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many dental advisers are employed by each primary care trust in England; [59730]

(2) how many orthodontics advisers are employed by each primary care trust in England. [60389]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This information is not held centrally.

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what access women over 60 years have to free prescriptions provided by dentists; and if she will make a statement. [59893]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Women over 60 years of age do not pay a charge for the dispensing of national health service dental prescriptions issued by a dentist providing NHS services.

If the item being prescribed is not on the dental practitioners' formulary, then the prescription will be issued privately and will have to be paid for by the patient.

Mark Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS patients were registered with NHS general dental practitioners in the Stockport primary care trust area in each year since 1997. [60248]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is shown in the table.

General dental services (GDS) and personal dental services (PDS): Patients registered with a national health service dentist in Stockport primary care trust as at 31 December in each specified year

	Number of patients registered
1997	193,405
1998	176,001
1999	175,883
2000	177,280
2001	175,562
2002	169,157
2003	168,401
2004	169,822
2005	166,773

Notes:

1. The drop in registrations between December 1997 and December 1998 is mostly attributable to the reduction in re-registration period from two years to 15 months.
2. PDS schemes have varying registration periods. To ensure comparability with corresponding GDS data, PDS registrations for established PDS practices are estimated using proxy registrations, namely the number of patients seen by PDS practices in the past 15 months.
3. Data for 2003 and earlier do not include those PDS schemes that do not have any registrations, for example dental access centres, and is therefore not directly comparable with 2004 and 2005 data.

Source:

Dental Practice Board.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health why she did not submit *(a)* the National Health Service (General Dental Services Contracts) Regulations 2005 and *(b)* the National Health Service (Personal Dental Services Agreements) Regulations 2005 for formal 12-week public consultation. [60384]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There was a 12 week public consultation on the National Health Service (Dental Charges) Regulations 2005.

Both the National Health Service (General Dental Services Contracts) Regulations 2005 and the National Health Service (Personal Dental Services Agreements) Regulations 2005 were not subject to the requirement for a formal 12-week public consultation. However, both sets of Regulations were published in draft during the National Health Service (Dental Charges) Regulations 2005 consultation period. During this time, a number of stakeholders commented on the draft Regulations and their comments were taken into account before the publication of the revised regulations on 9 December 2005.

The regulatory impact assessment for these regulations is available on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/12/65/04/04126504.pdf and includes the outcome of this consultation.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dental practices in *(a)* Eastleigh and Test Valley South Primary Care Trust, *(b)* Mid-Hampshire Primary Care Trust, *(c)* Southampton City Primary Care Trust and *(d)* New Forest Primary Care Trust were accepting new NHS patients in each year since 1997. [60385]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Data regarding the number of dentists admitting new National Health Service patients are not available centrally. This information can be obtained from individual primary care trusts.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether she plans to launch a public awareness campaign illustrating the new dental charges and what they will mean for patients. [60387]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department is running a national communications campaign to inform the public about changes to national health service dentistry. A patient information leaflet, covering the new charges, local commissioning of dental services and guidelines for dental recall intervals, has been distributed direct to dental practices, with copies also sent to primary care trusts (PCTs), along with a poster outlining the new patient charges. PCTs will be making the materials available at other community access points in their area. From early April the information will be available in other languages.

The Department is also working with key public-facing information channels such as NHS Direct, Citizens Advice, Which?, Patient Advice and Liaison Services and the British Dental Health Foundation to provide comprehensive information that will support them in responding to inquiries.

This work is supported by an ongoing national consumer media campaign and a toolkit for strategic health authorities and PCT communications leads that will enable them to increase awareness of the changes within their local communities.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* hospital-based orthodontic consultants and *(b)* orthodontic specialists there were in the NHS in England in each year since 1997. [60576]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of hospital based orthodontic consultants and orthodontic specialists in the national health service from 1997 to 2004 is shown in the following table.

Hospital, public health medicine and community health services (HCHS): Hospital medical and hospital dental staff working within the orthodontics group of specialties by grade and year England at 30 September each year

Numbers (headcount)

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
All grades	509	501	504	513	506	508	522	521
Of which:								
Consultant	153	153	157	161	154	161	178	180
Associate specialist	8	8	7	10	11	13	14	18
Staff grade	14	10	10	14	14	9	12	18
Registrar group	96	103	98	93	99	114	102	104
Senior house officer	14	16	18	8	16	16	16	18
House officer	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	—
Clinical assistant	197	184	185	196	186	169	171	150
Hospital practitioner	25	24	27	31	26	26	29	33
Other hospital staff	2	2	1	—	—	—	—	—

Notes:
"—" denotes zero
Source:
Health and Social Care Information Centre Medical and Dental Workforce Census

Mr. Quentin Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether dentists withdrawing from the NHS are required to repay any of the costs of their training; and if she will make a statement. [60597]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Dentistry is a degree course and there are no legal powers by which the costs of higher education may be recovered.

Most dentists treat both national health service and private patients. In order to encourage dentists to maintain or increase their NHS commitment, we have taken measures to make NHS dentistry more attractive. The new NHS contracts will remove the treadmill effect associated with the previous remuneration system and enable dentists to give more time to their patients and spend more time on preventative care.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many places are available on NHS dentists' lists in *(a)* the North East, *(b)* the Tees Valley and *(c)* Middlesbrough, South and East Cleveland constituency. [62834]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists in *(a)* England, *(b)* each English region and *(c)* the Tees Valley have moved to the private sector in each year since 1997. [62835]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Data on the destination of dentists leaving the general dental services or personal dental services are not held centrally.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she intends to begin the review of how future increases in dental funding should be distributed; who will conduct the review; when she expects the review to complete its work; and if she will make a statement. [53081]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has given a commitment that the funding devolved to primary care trusts with which to commission national health service primary dental care services will be ring-fenced for a period of at least three years, that is until the end of 2008–09, and that these arrangements will be reviewed towards the end of that period. We have not yet set a more precise timetable for this work. The work will be undertaken by the Department in consultation with the advisory committee on resource allocation and with other stakeholders.

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists in *(a)* Chesterfield Primary Care Trust and *(b)* Trent Strategic Health Authority are (i) accepting new NHS child patients, (ii) accepting new NHS adult paying patients and (iii) accepting new NHS adult payment exempt patients. [62168]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not held centrally.

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of *(a)* adults and *(b)* children in Chesterfield constituency are registered with an NHS dentist. [62169]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The percentage of adults and children registered with a national health service dentist is not available at constituency level. The number and proportion of patients registered within Chesterfield Primary Care Trust as at December 2005, last available data, are shown in the table.

General dental service and personal dental service (PDS) registrations/PDS patients seen

	Number at 31 December 2005	*Estimate of the percentage patients registered*
Children	19,138	86
Adults	54,147	70
All	73,285	73

Source:
Dental Practice Board

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists were available to NHS patients in the Chichester district on 1 April 2005; and how many she expects to be available on the date on which the new dentists' contract is to be implemented. [61596]

Ms Rosie Winterton: As at 31 March 2005, there were 63 national health service dentists with a general dental services or personal dental services contract within Chichester parliamentary constituency.

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists in Lancaster and Wyre constituency *(a)* operate fully within the NHS and *(b)* only offer NHS treatment for children. [61319]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not available in the format requested. As at 30 September 2005, there were 54 national health service dentists with a general dental services (GDS) or personal dental services (PDS) contract within Lancaster and Wyre parliamentary constituency.

Information about who dentists offer to treat is not collected centrally. However, an analysis of NHS patient registrations data as at 1 June 2005 showed that within Morecambe Bay primary care trust (PCT) there were three dentists having only children registered and in Wyre PCT there were none with only children registered. This analysis is not available at constituency area.

Notes:

A dentist with a GDS or PDS contract may provide as little or as much NHS treatment as he or she chooses or has agreed with the PCT. Information concerning the amount of time dedicated to NHS work by individual GDS or PDS dentists is not centrally available.

Data include all notifications of dentists joining or leaving the GDS or PDS, received by the Dental Practice Board, up to 19 October 2005. Figures for the numbers of dentists at specified dates may vary depending upon the notification period, e.g. data with a later notification period will include more recent notifications of dentists joining or leaving the GDS or PDS.

Dentists consist of principals, assistants and trainees. Prison contracts have been excluded.

The postcode of the dental practice was used to allocate dentists to specific geographic areas. Constituency areas have been defined using the Office for National Statistics All Fields Postcode Directory. Data on the number of dentists working only in private practice are not held centrally.

Source:

NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre

NHS Dentistry

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what factors underlay the decision to introduce the new contracts for NHS dentists. [55845]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The old fee per item remuneration system encouraged high levels of invasive treatment and did not allow sufficient time for preventative work. The new contracts abolish this "treadmill" effect. They will pay dentists for the overall service they provide to patients, rather than on a fee per item basis and provide significantly more time for preventative care and oral health promotion.

The old system has also failed to provide stability for local communities. Dentists could set up practices where they wished and vary the amount of national health service work they did without any influence by primary care trusts (PCTs). Where a dentist left the NHS or reduced the level of NHS service provided, the PCT was relatively powerless to replace this lost service. The new contracts enable PCTs and dentists to agree in advance what level of NHS service the dentists will provide. Where a dentist ceases to provide NHS service, the PCT will retain the funding for that contract and will use it to re-provide services.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what public consultation measures primary care trusts are obliged to carry out prior to the changes to dental commissioning due to the change of contract in April 2006; and if she will make a statement. [56520]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Primary care trusts are required to undertake a proportionate consultation when reconfiguring local health services. In this case, they are not reconfiguring services but exercising their new powers to meet their statutory duty under new section 16CA(1) of the National Health Service Act 1977 to provide or secure the provision of primary dental services to the extent considered necessary to meet all reasonable requirements in their area.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was made available for NHS dentistry in North Yorkshire in 2005–06; and how much is planned for 2006–07. [57414]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The main element of national health service dental services are the primary dental care services provided by dentists working within the general dental service (GDS), or personal dental service (PDS) pilots. The GDS is currently a non discretionary service funded from a national budget and expenditure is mainly determined by the volume of NHS work that dentists choose to undertake. Local budget allocations are not assigned to individual primary care trusts (PCTs).

PDS pilots are managed locally, and the Department has allocated the sums shown in the table to PCTs in the area of the North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire strategic health authority to support PDS pilot schemes in 2005–06. These allocations are net of the expected contribution to service costs from dental charges collected directly from patients.

Final audited GDS and PDS expenditure data for 2005–06 will not be available until some months after the year end.

Personal dental service net funding allocations 2005–06

PCT	*Net funding allocation (£)*
Craven, Harrogate and Rural District	2,680,000
East Yorkshire	1,830,000
Eastern Hull	4,874,000
Hambleton and Richmondshire	1,777,000
North East Lincolnshire	3,401,000
North Lincolnshire	3,738,000
Scarborough, Whitby and Ryedale	4,251,000
Selby and York	6,498,000
West Hull	4,803,000
Yorkshire Wolds and Coast	2,013,000

We have moved to a new system for NHS dentistry from April 2006 under which PCTs are responsible for commissioning all primary dental care services for their local population embracing services currently provided through the GDS and PDS. We have issued PCTs with preliminary budgets to allow them to plan and commission services and expect to issue final budgets including an allowance for a 2006 pay uplift shortly. Preliminary budgets for 2006–07 for PCTs in the area of North and East Yorkshire SHA are shown in the table.

The difference between gross budgets and net allocations is the expected contribution to costs from dental charges collected directly from patients.

Provisional primary dental care allocations 2006–07 (£)

PCT	Gross budget at 2005–06 prices	Net allocation at 2005–06 prices
Craven, Harrogate and Rural District	9,925,553	6,758,000
East Yorkshire	5,125,232	3,409,000
Eastern Hull	6,544,173	5,345,000
Hambleton and Richmondshire	5,850,192	3,925,000
North East Lincolnshire	7,543,906	5,686,000
North Lincolnshire	5,914,460	4,170,000
Scarborough, Whitby and Ryedale	7,485,161	5,214,000
Selby and York	13,233,097	8,999,000
West Hull	8,191,323	6,261,000
Yorkshire Wolds and Coast	4,263,093	2,790,000

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists were employed under the previous NHS dentistry contract in North Yorkshire at the time the new contract was introduced. [57416]

Ms Rosie Winterton: In December 2005, there were 662 dentists with an open general dental services or personal dental services contract in North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire strategic health authority area. The new dental contract was introduced on 1 April 2006.

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of people were registered with an NHS dentist on 31 March 2006 in each constituency in England. [62425]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of people registered with a national health service dentist by constituency as at 31 December 2005 has been placed in the Library. Information on the percentage of people registered with a NHS dentist in each constituency is not available, as population estimates by constituency do not exist.

Data for 31 March 2006 are not yet available.

Departmental Advice

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the Answer of 10 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1818W, on departmental advice, if she will place in the Library the letter to strategic health authority chief executives from the Office of Strategic Health Authorities. [62396]

Mr. Byrne: The letter of 23 September 2005 to strategic health authority chief executives from the Office of Strategic Health Authorities has been placed in the Library and is also available on the Department's website at:

www.dh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance/OrganisationPolicy/Commissioning/CommissioningAPatientledNHS/fs/en.

Departmental Contracts

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what contracts her Department entered into with Medeva BV and its British subsidiary companies between 1 May 1997 and 31 December 2000; [61426]

(2) what contracts her Department entered into with Celltech Chiroscience Limited between 1 January 2000 and 31 December 2003; [61427]

(3) what contracts her Department has entered into with Chiron Corporation and its subsidiary companies since 1 January 2003. [61428]

Jane Kennedy: During 1 May 1997 to 31 December 1999, Medeva plc was contracted for a number of vaccines as part of the childhood immunisation programme. These vaccines were Trivax AD, Diphtheria Tetanus, Diphtheria, Oral Polio, Bacillus Calmette-Guerin (BCG) percutaneous and intradermal and purified protein derivatives (PPD) Tuberculin dilutions.

Some of these contracts will still have been running when the merger of Medeva plc and Celltech Chiroscience was announced in November 1999.

During the early part of the period 1 January 2000 to 31 December 2003, we continued to contract for oral polio vaccine (April 2000 to March 2001). This was still referred to as Medeva oral polio vaccine and indeed Medeva still tendered for and contracted under the Medeva name for both oral polio, BCG and PPD.

Since 1 January 2003, Chiron has been contracted for Diphtheria Tetanus vaccine and Meningitis C. Outside of the childhood programme Chiron have also supplied seasonal flu vaccine as part of the Department's contingency arrangements.

It should also be noted that Chiron have been contracted since well before January 2003 as they were one of the first companies to supply Meningitis C vaccine when this was introduced to the childhood programme in 1999.

These contracts were carried out by the NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency and formerly NHS Supplies on behalf of the Department and do not cover contracts for the national health service.

Departmental Expenditure

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many widescreen televisions have been purchased by her Department for use in London headquarters in each of the last five years; and what the cost was in each year. [39151]

Mr. Byrne: The Department has not purchased any widescreen televisions for use in London headquarters within the last five years.

Departmental Finance

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what her Department's target is for paying invoices to contractors; and what percentage of bills were paid on time in the last period for which figures are available. [60575]

Mr. Byrne: I refer the hon. Member to the written ministerial statement given on 8 November 2005, *Official Report*, columns 14–15WS by the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry.

Depression

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the average waiting time is for a patient waiting for assessment and treatment in primary care for depression; [60043]

(2) what the average waiting time is for a patient waiting for assessment and treatment in secondary care for depression. [60044]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This information is not centrally available. The Department collects waiting times according to consultant specialties and not individual diagnoses.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what representations she has received on action that may be taken to improve services for patients with depression; [60045]

(2) what plans she has to recruit more psychological therapists to the NHS to tackle depression. [60042]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We recognise that for many people with depression, waiting times for psychological therapies have been too long. Furthermore, clinical guidelines on the management of depression in primary and secondary care were issued by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) in 2004. The guidelines recommend effective psychological treatments for people with depression and anxiety, and can be found on NICE'S website at www.nice.org.uk

Therefore, and in line with our manifesto commitment and the White Paper, "Our Health, Our Care, Our Say", we are embarking on a new programme—'Improving Access to Psychological Therapies'—for people with mild to moderate psychological needs. This will extend the availability of psychological therapies of proven effectiveness, such as cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), and connect interventions currently or potentially available in the workplace, in primary care and other community resources.

Since 1997, the capacity of the mental health work force has increased: there are now 75 per cent. more clinical psychologists, 125 per cent. more qualified psychotherapists, 50 per cent. more consultant psychiatrists, 20 per cent. more mental health nurses, and 23 per cent. more art/music/drama therapists. We have also created the new role of graduate primary care mental health worker (graduate workers), trained in brief therapy techniques, to help general practitioners provide mental health interventions in a range of primary care settings. At the end of March 2005, there were 648 graduate workers employed in the national health service, and this number will increase further when current trainees qualify. All of these professions can provide CBT.

Diabetes

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of people identified as having diabetes in England were offered screening for the early detection of diabetic retinopathy in *(a)* each year since 2003–04 and *(b)* the most recent period for which figures are available. [60400]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Performance data show that in 2003–04, 835,900 (52.7 per cent.) of people with diabetes were screened for retinopathy and 1,076,400 (61.3 per cent.) in 2004–05. The most recent data (at December 2005) show that 1,111,773 (59.6 per cent.) of people with diabetes have received screening for diabetic retinopathy in the preceding 12 months.

DNA Vaccine

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for South Cambridgeshire of 15 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 2216–7W, on influenza vaccine, what assessment she has made of the particular benefits of developing a DNA vaccine; and for what reasons it may be some years before one is available. [62370]

Caroline Flint: Departmental officials have considered the potential benefits Deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) vaccine may offer and have met a company developing a DNA vaccine to discuss progress in development.

DNA vaccine manufacture is at an early stage of development and clinical trials must be conducted to demonstrate the safety and quality of these novel vaccines, and the level of protection they may offer. Such trials usually take several years to complete. It takes further time for regulatory authorities to fully evaluate the data generated from these trials, and thus it will be several years before such vaccines are likely to be licensed for use.

In addition to technical issues relating to safety and efficacy, the means of administering DNA vaccines will require a great deal of development work for widespread population use.

Electroconvulsive Therapy

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what information leaflets for members of the public are produced by her Department on the use of electroconvulsive therapy; and if she will make a statement. [57584]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has not produced any information leaflets on the use of electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) for members of the public. The Mental Health Act Commission published a leaflet for detained patients about consent to ECT, which is available at www.mhac.org.uk.

The guidance on the use of ECT published by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) in 2003 included additional information for service users, their advocates and carers, and the public. This is available on NICE'S website at www.nice.org.uk.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the *(a)* risks and *(b)* potential benefits to the individual associated with the use of electroconvulsive therapy; and if she will make a statement. [57585]

Ms Rosie Winterton: No such assessment has been made by the Department. However, as part of its appraisal of the use of electroconvulsive therapy for depressive illness, schizophrenia, catatonia and mania published in 2003, the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence assessed the available evidence on its clinical and cost effectiveness.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the guidance produced by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence on electroconvulsive therapy was last reviewed; what conclusions were reached; and if she will make a statement. [57586]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) published its technology appraisal guidance on electroconvulsive therapy in April 2003. A copy of the conclusions are available in the Library. NICE is currently considering whether a review of the guidance is necessary at this time.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research her Department has undertaken in each of the last 20 years into the longer-term *(a)* benefits and *(b)* risks of electroconvulsive therapy; if she will place the research in the Library; and if she will make a statement. [57587]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The main agency through which the Government supports medical and clinical research is the Medical Research Council (MRC). The MRC is an independent body funded by the Department of Trade and Industry via the Office of Science and Technology.

The MRC supports a large portfolio of research related to mental health disorders, parts of which may be relevant to electroconvulsive therapy (ECT). One project specifically concerned with ECT has been funded since 1995. This is a trial grant given to Professor K. Ebmeier of the University of Edinburgh to fund research aimed at reducing adverse ECT effects on memory by magnetic stimulation. Earlier information is not available.

The Department funds research programmes that support policy and provide the evidence needed to underpin quality improvement and service development in the NHS.

Among these, the health technology assessment programme has, since its formation in 1993, supported two projects concerned with schizophrenia:

Clinical and cost-effectiveness of electroconvulsive therapy for depressive illness, schizophrenia, catatonia and mania: systematic reviews and economic modelling studies (Greenhalgh)

and

Clinical effectiveness and cost of repetitive transcranial magnetic stimulation versus ECT in severe depression: a multi-centre randomised controlled trial and economic analysis (Project not yet published)

The policy research programme has supported one relevant project:

Systematic review of the efficacy and safety of electroconvulsive therapy (UK ECT Review Group).

Copies of the published project reports are available in the Library.

Over 75 per cent. of the Department's total expenditure on health research is devolved to and managed by NHS organisations. Details of individual projects begun during the course of the last eight years, including some concerned with ECT, are available on the national research register on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/research. Earlier information is not available.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the estimated cost has been of a treatment session of electroconvulsive therapy in each year since 1996. [57595]

Ms Rosie Winterton: As part of its appraisal of the use of electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) for depressive illness, schizophrenia, catatonia and mania published in 2003, the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) estimated the cost of six treatment sessions of ECT at £2,475. This does not include inpatient costs, which NICE estimated as £171 per day.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent discussions her Department has had with *(a)* hon. Members, *(b)* Members of the House of Lords, *(c)* the British Medical Association, *(d)* members of the public and *(e)* the Royal College of Surgeons about the administration of electroconvulsive therapy in hospitals; and if she will make a statement. [57598]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Departmental officials have not had any recent discussions with hon. Members, Members of the House of Lords, the British Medical Association, members of the public or the Royal College of Surgeons about the administration of electroconvulsive therapy in hospitals.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of whether electroconvulsive therapy is used on pregnant women; and if she will make a statement. [59357]

Ms Rosie Winterton: No such assessment has been made by the Department. The guidance on the use of electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) published by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) in 2003 recommends clinicians to be particularly cautious when considering ECT treatment for women who are pregnant because they may be at higher risk of complications with ECT. Clinicians are expected to take full account of NICE guidance.

Emergency Contraception

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the retail price of emergency contraception was in each year since 2002; and how much valued-added tax was charged on the price in each year. [63047]

Caroline Flint: Information on the retail price of emergency hormonal contraception since 2002 is not held centrally.

Medication purchased direct from a pharmacy, is a private transaction and is not controlled by the Government. Prices are set competitively by retailers and include value-added tax (VAT).

Currently, the VAT for these items is charged at 17.5 per cent. With effect from 1 July 2006, this will be reduced to 5 per cent.

Energy Efficiency

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to increase energy efficiency within her Department; and if she will make a statement. [60324]

Mr. Byrne: The Department supports the Government's strategy to reduce carbon emissions and improve the energy efficiency of the Government estate. The Department has rationalised and reduced the size of its estate and by 2004–05 had reduced its overall energy consumption by 10 per cent., relative to 1999–2000.

We have recently taken further action to conserve energy, by reducing the ambient temperature in those buildings where we have control of utilities.

We are working with our information technology (IT) contractors to ensure that the energy used by our IT equipment is minimised.

We intend further to reduce energy consumption with initiatives to replace ageing and energy inefficient equipment, and by implementing new working practices, and by replacing local printers with high capacity multifunction devices.

We have recently signed up with the Carbon Trust for an energy audit of our three main buildings.

Erythropoietin

Mr. Havard: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment she has made of the likely impact on *(a)* patients' quality of life, *(b)* national blood stocks and *(c)* demand for blood transfusions of the final appraisal from the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence on erythropoietin as a treatment for cancer-based anaemia; [61269]

(2) what assessment she has made of the likely impact of the decision to withdraw erythropoietin on the Government's target to bring the care of UK cancer patients up to European standards. [61270]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) is an independent body and we trust it to produce clinical and cost effective guidance to the national health service based on the latest available evidence and having considered comments they receive during consultation.

The recommendations on erythropoietin do not constitute NICE'S final guidance to the NHS as they are subject to a period of appeal.

I understand that NICE is likely to publish its final guidance on the use of erythropoietin for the management of anaemia induced by cancer treatment in May 2006 (subject to appeal). Further information is available from NICE website at www.nice.org.uk.

We have no plans to carry out the assessments referred to.

Mr. Havard: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if she will review the cost assumptions used in the assessment of the efficacy of erythropoietin as a treatment for cancer-induced anaemia by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence; [62056]

(2) what assessment she has made of the relative weighting given to *(a)* survival and *(b)* quality of life in the assessment procedures adopted by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence, with particular reference to its recent recommendation to withdraw erythropoietin as a treatment for cancer-induced anaemia; [62057]

(3) what assessment she has made of the amount of time spent undergoing blood transfusions by patients with cancer-induced anaemia as a result of the withdrawal of erythropoietin; [62058]

(4) what estimate she has made of the change in cost per patient as a result of the withdrawal of erythropoietin as a treatment for cancer-induced anaemia. [62059]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave on Thursday 6 April 2006.

Financial Irregularities

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many cases of financial irregularities have been recorded in her Department in each of the last five financial years; and if she will make a statement. [57548]

Mr. Byrne: The only cases recorded by the Department that can be construed as financial irregularities in each of the last five years are shown in the following table.

	Number of cases
2000–01	0
2001–02	5
2002–03	2
2003–04	3
2004–05	4

The suggested reply to the question lists number of cases, as per the statement. The detail is as follows.

2001–02: No information as to the type of fraud or theft readily available.

2002–03: One travel and subsistence claim and one procurement fraud tendering.

2003–04: One travel and subsistence claim, one fraud related to payment process and one investigation at community engagement agency approximate sum involved: £1.16 million brokered; of that £513,000 transferred into a private bank account. Outcome/action: disciplinary action taken against individual; bank accounts closed and monies returned to the Department by the bank.

2004–05: Two travel and subsistence claims, one procurement fraud tendering and one fraud related to payment process.

Fluoridation

Mr. Crausby: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will take steps to ensure that the public consultation process strategic health authorities follow in relation to fluoridation gives equal access to information and resources for those against and in favour of artificial fluoridation of water supplies. [62027]

Caroline Flint: In September 2005, the then chief dental officer issued guidance advising strategic health authorities of the need

"to organise consultations in which both supporters and opponents of fluoridation have the opportunity to participate."

Mr. Crausby: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funds she makes available to national groups who disseminate information *(a)* in favour of and *(b)* against water fluoridation. [62028]

Caroline Flint: For the 2005–06, financial year we paid grants of £90,000 to the British Fluoridation Society, which promotes the benefits of water fluoridation, and £125,000 to the National Fluoride Information Centre, which provides scientific information on research studies carried out into the effect of adding fluoride to water and other mediums such as milk and table salt.

Mr. Crausby: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research her Department has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* funded on artificial water fluoridation and (i) social inequalities and (ii) thyroid disorders in each year since 2000. [62125]

Caroline Flint: The Department has commissioned and funded two research studies.

"A Systematic Review of Public Water Fluoridation" published by the University of York in 2000 concluded that "the association between water fluoridation, caries and social class needs further clarification" and identified two studies which found no significant association between thyroid disorders and water fluoridation and one study with a positive association. However, the positive study looked at combined fluoride/iodine intakes and has not been published in a peer review journal.

"Water Fluoridation and Health" published by the Medical Research Council in 2002 endorsed the University of York's recommendation on the need for research into fluoridation and social class, but awarded further research on thyroid disorders low priority.

Food Labelling

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the Government have commissioned research to investigate current mineral levels in *(a)* soils and *(b)* fresh foods; and if she will consider the merits of labelling fresh foods according to their overall mineral content. [61803]

Caroline Flint: The representative soil sampling scheme shows that overall the nutrient status of soils in England and Wales is satisfactory. The Food Standards Agency funds a rolling programme of analytical surveys that provide information on the nutrient content, including minerals, of all food types, including fresh foods. The nutrition labelling of pre-packed foods is currently under discussion in the European Union.

Generic Drugs

Mr. Quentin Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what her estimate is of the savings that would accrue to the NHS if the principle of compulsory dispensing of the cheapest generic version of all ex-patent compounds were introduced. [61498]

Jane Kennedy: Data from the Prescription Pricing Authority indicate that for the three months October to December 2005, the estimated savings that could have been achieved through the compulsory generic dispensing of the top 40, in terms of the amount of potential saving that could be achieved, proprietary drugs for which a generic alternative is available and where the proprietary drug is suitable for substitution, was £10.3 million.

Government Contracts

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what investigations are undertaken as part of the evaluation of companies bidding for government contracts in the Department; and whether criminal investigations in *(a)* the UK and *(b)* other countries are taken into consideration. [62191]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 30 March 2006]:* As part of the procurement process, the Department has a standard expression of interest (EOI) questionnaire. In parts D, E and F suppliers are asked to declare whether or not they have been subject to criminal convictions, proceedings, or failure to fulfil obligations. The questionnaire asks for details regardless of whether the offences were in the United Kingdom or abroad.

When the completed responses are received a sifting exercise is conducted. Suppliers have always stated no to all questions in parts D to F in the EOI questionnaire. So there has not been a need to take any further action. However, if any supplier did state yes to any of the questions, then the team responsible for awarding the contract would take this into consideration and decide on an investigation and appropriate action.

Additionally the EOI questionnaire also asks the supplier to submit financial information (part G(i)) which is taken into consideration and in some cases requires the Department to conduct a detailed financial analysis.

A copy of the EOI questionnaire has been placed in the Library.

GPs/Pharmacists (Hertfordshire)

Mr. Walker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures she has introduced in Hertfordshire to encourage greater collaboration between GPs and pharmacists; and if she will make a statement. [61781]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 30 March 2006]:* Nationally the Department has introduced a number of measures to encourage greater collaboration between general practitioners (GPs) and pharmacists, such as repeat dispensing and medicine use reviews. While support has been provided nationally, it is for primary care trusts to oversee the implementation of these new services locally. I understand there has been collaborative and educational work in Hertfordshire to encourage GPs to work more closely with pharmacists.

Greater Manchester Health Trusts

Paul Rowen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on her plans to increase funding for Greater Manchester health trusts. [61600]

Mr. Byrne: Revenue allocations are made to primary care trusts (PCTs) to enable them to commission health care for their local populations. The most recent round of revenue allocations, covering 2006–07 and 2007–08, was announced in February 2005. The 2006–07 and 2007–08 revenue allocations represent £135 billion investment in the national health service, £64 billion to PCTs in 2006–07 and £70 billion in 2007–08.

The revenue allocations for 2006–07 and 2007–08 for PCTs in the Greater Manchester strategic health authority are shown in the table.

PCT recurrent revenue allocations 2006–07 to 2007–08

PCT	2006–07 allocation £ thousand	2007–08 allocation £ thousand	Two year increase £ thousand	Two year increase Percentage
Ashton, Leigh and Wigan	410,731	449,115	73,829	19.7
Bolton	355,301	388,481	63,832	19.7
Bury	226,689	247,864	40,737	19.7
Central Manchester	269,581	298,924	62,522	26.4
Heywood and Middleton	102,997	113,338	19,257	20.5
North Manchester	256,356	283,377	50,443	21.7
Oldham	304,145	332,588	54,725	19.7
Rochdale	185,706	202,989	33,262	19.6
Salford	346,814	374,615	54,766	17.1
South Manchester	210,058	233,129	51,324	28.2
Stockport	349,861	379,343	55,872	17.3
Tameside and Glossop	308,593	337,310	55,272	19.6
Trafford North	123,843	135,581	22,116	19.5
Trafford South	151,599	163,955	23,770	17.0

Health and Safety (NHS Trusts)

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the progress made in implementing the recommendations of the Committee of Public Accounts 42nd Report of 2002–03, HC 704, on the management of health and safety risks to staff in NHS trusts. [59964]

Mr. Byrne: NHS Employers now has the remit to advise and share good practice on health and safety with national health service organisations.

The development of an occupational health and safety strategy for the NHS in England is being undertaken by the health care health and safety sub-group of the NHS Staff Council. They will take account of recent developments, including the establishment of NHS Employers, the cross-Government ministerial taskforce on health and safety and productivity, the Department for Work and Pensions' health, work and well-being strategy and NHS reforms, all of which will impact on the delivery of a safer, healthier workplace.

NHS Employers issued updated guidance on needle sticks in January 2005. NHS Employers is also currently facilitating the collection of up-to-date data from NHS organisations on the use of safer needles and the implementation of the latest guidance. The guidance will be further updated with the assistance of the safer needles network and new guidance is due to be re-issued through their website in May.

The NHS Pensions Agency is working with NHS Employers on the review of NHS ill health retirement and of NHS injury benefits. The review will consider options including support to facilitate better rehabilitation into work for staff who request ill health retirements due to work-related injuries and proper controls over the extent of payments.

NHS Employers and the Health and Safety Executive will promote new health and safety e-learning materials from the NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement, which are to be released to the NHS in April. These materials provide the basis of health and safety induction and support the hands on training that is already being offered by NHS trusts. The 2005 Healthcare Commission staff survey shows the number of staff receiving training on health and safety has increased to 71 per cent. compared with 60 per cent. in 2003.

New guidance to NHS trusts on their responsibility for the management of health and safety for agency staff and contractors was issued in January 2005. The guidance is available at www.nhsemployers.org/practice/healthy-workplaces.cfm

Safer Recruitment

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps her Department takes to identify individuals *(a)* employed and *(b)* seeking employment in the health care profession who might pose a risk to the patients they care for. [53866]

Mr. Byrne: The responsibility for carrying out pre and post-employment checks, including Criminal Records Bureau, Protection of Children's Act and Protection of Vulnerable Adults checks where applicable, rests with the relevant employer, whether a national health service organisation or other regulated provider of health care. The NHS is required to follow the guidance, "Safer Recruitment" issued in May 2005 which covers all the pre and post-appointment checks that NHS employers are required to make before appointing anyone—including employees, volunteers, students and trainees—to a position in the NHS.

Health Expenditure

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what level of expenditure will be committed to support *(a)* the improvements in renal care announced on 15 October, *(b)* the provision of more scanning facilities announced on 11 October and *(c)* the improvements to prostate cancer awareness announced on 31 October by the Minister of State for Health Services; how much expenditure there has been on each programme; and

whether the expenditure is financed from the centrally funded initiatives and services and special allocations budget of her Department in each case. [39285]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There were no announcements on improvements in renal care on 15 October 2005, although renal patientview was launched at a national renal symposium at Conway Hall, London on 19 October 2005. The event was organised by the South West Thames renal and transplantation unit and the South West Thames institute for renal research, both based at St. Helier hospital in Carshalton where the Department gave £55,000 to the project.

The funding of £100,000 announced on 31 October 2005 will be issued shortly.

The national framework for the development of positron emission tomography (PET) Services in England was published in October 2005 to support the development of PET-CT services and ensure equitable access for patients. The additional £20 million capital funding has been made available over the next two years (2006–08) to support the national health service in improving access and developing this service. The funding for 2006–07 has been issued to strategic health authorities. In addition, a further 25,000 scans per year will be made available from the independent sector, via the wave two diagnostic procurement programme, over the next five years to support the NHS.

Health Professionals

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the number of *(a)* nurses, *(b)* midwives, *(c)* physiotherapists, *(d)* podiatrists, *(e)* radiographers, *(f)* doctors, *(g)* dentists and *(h)* members of professions complementary to dentistry from EU accession states (i) in training and (ii) practising in England since 1 May 2004. [60391]

Mr. Byrne: Information on the number of nurses, midwives, physiotherapists, podiatrists, radiographers and members of professions complementary to dentistry from former European Union accession states is not collected centrally.

Table one shows the number of doctors by specified country of primary medical qualification as included in the national health service census of September 2004.

Table 1: Number of doctors by country of qualification—England

	All doctors (headcount)
All specified countries	*638*
Cyprus	—
Czech Republic	160
Estonia	3
Hungary	107
Latvia	13
Lithuania	8
Malta	106
Poland	214
Slovakia	21
Slovenia	6

Information on the nationality of dentists is not available. Country of qualification is the only indicator that can be used for providing breakdowns of dentists by country. Country of qualification is not available for dentists in training therefore no country breakdown is available for such dentists.

Table two shows the number of dentists by country of qualification for the relevant countries in England, as at 30 September each year.

Table 2: Number of dentists by country of qualification

	2004	*2005*
Czech Republic	1	7
Cyprus	0	0
Estonia	1	0
Hungary	3	0
Latvia	0	6
Lithuania	1	0
Malta	2	6
Poland	5	341
Slovakia	0	0
Slovenia	0	0

Health Services

Ann Keen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients waited more than 17 weeks for an out-patient appointment in the constituency of Brentford and Isleworth in the last period for which figures are available; and if she will make a statement. [62209]

Jane Kennedy: Latest published information shows no patients waited more than 13 weeks for an out-patient appointment in the North West London Strategic Health Authority area where the constituency is based.

Ann Keen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people are waiting for operations in the constituency of Brentford and Isleworth; and if she will make a statement. [62210]

Jane Kennedy: Waiting list data are collected at national health service trust and primary care trust (PCT) level. At the end of January 2006, there were 3,082 patients from Hounslow PCT waiting for elective admission.

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether she expects *(a)* NHS staff to be made redundant, *(b)* NHS appointments to be cancelled and *(c)* bed closures in Gloucestershire as a result of budget deficits; and if she will make a statement. [57614]

Caroline Flint: Strategic health authorities (SHAs) are responsible for assessing and managing performance of local national health service organisations within their geographical area. Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire SHA has advised that all NHS organisations in their region are taking action to reduce expenditure in all areas that will not directly impact on issues of clinical safety. They are also exploring ways of providing NHS services locally so that they are more efficient and cost-effective.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the likely cost of redundancies in *(a)* Shropshire and Staffordshire

strategic health authority and *(b)* primary care trusts within Shropshire and Staffordshire strategic health authority as a result of planned hospital mergers. [58100]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There are currently no definite proposals for hospital trust mergers in the Shropshire and Staffordshire strategic health authority (SHA) area.

With respect to the proposed reconfiguration of [illegible] and primary care trusts and associated redundancies, until any boundary changes are agreed it is not possible to calculate the number of job losses in any particular area nor any associated costs of redundancies. SHAs have been asked to minimise the cost of severance.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what is the financial position of each hospital in the Shropshire and Staffordshire strategic health authority area. [58101]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The financial position, according to the unaudited month six forecast, for each national health service trust in the Shropshire and Staffordshire strategic health authority economy is shown in the table.

Organisation name	*2005–06 full year forecast outturn surplus/(deficit) as at month six (£000)*
Burton Hospitals NHS Trust	(1,200)
Mid Staffordshire General Hospitals NHS Trust	0
North Staffs Combined HC NHS Trust	0
Rob Jones and A Hunt Orthopaedic NHS Trust	0
Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust	(10,000)
South Staffordshire Healthcare NHS Trust	0
University Hospital of North Staffordshire Hospital NHS Trust	(18,147)

Health Trainers

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how long she estimates it will take to train a health trainer; and if she will make a statement. [62527]

Caroline Flint: The employment requirements are that health trainers satisfy the mandatory core competences supplied by the Department. The core competences have been finalised during the early adopter phase which finishes 31 March 2006.

The scheme and training is organised locally through primary care trusts and, as such, varies from area to area. There are approximately 200 national health service health trainers recruited to the programme currently undergoing training.

Heart Disease/Diabetes

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the average rate of *(a)* heart disease and *(b)* diabetes was among people of South Asian origin in the latest period for which figures are available; and if she will make a statement; [59833]

(2) what steps her Department is taking to reduce the rates of *(a)* diabetes and *(b)* heart disease in people of South Asian origin; and if she will make a statement; [59834]

(3) what *(a)* funding and *(b)* other support she plans to provide to primary care trusts to reduce the rates of (A) heart disease and (B) diabetes among people of South Asian origin in the next three financial years. [59835]

Ms Rosie Winterton: These data are not held centrally. However, non-departmental data suggest that United Kingdom Asians have an approximately 50 per cent. higher risk of coronary heart disease[1], with 20 per cent. diagnosed with type 2 diabetes compared to 3 per cent. of the general population[2]. South Asian men and women are more likely than the general population to have abdominal obesity (shown by a large waist circumference), which has been identified as a leading risk factor for cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes[3, 4, 5].

There is a raft of cross-Government public health measures to help prevent obesity which is a major cause of type 2 diabetes. Our White Paper, "Choosing Health", sets out a range of actions to improve health and tackle the health inequalities that can lead to poor diet and ill health. Reducing obesity is one of our key priorities and work under way includes a new cross-Government obesity campaign and food labelling to help people buy healthier food and further work with industry to reduce salt, fat, sugar and portion sizes.

The White Paper, "Our Health, Our Care, Our Say", sets out a new direction for health and social care services and we are reorganising health and social care services to focus together on prevention and health promotion. For 2008, primary care trust (PCT) local delivery plans will have to include a clear strategy for the development of preventative services, including tackling health inequalities across socio-economic and ethnic minority groups requiring targeted, innovative and culturally sensitive responses.

The White Paper also includes details of the self-assessment, "Life Check", which everyone will have at key points in life. This will support individuals and communities at high risk of developing diabetes to get involved in more healthy lifestyles and environments. If the results show that a person is at risk of poor health, they will be able to talk to a health trainer about the help available from local services, specialist services, referral for further medical advice and develop a personal health plan.

A "Healthy Living" digital versatile disc (DVD) was launched recently to help raise awareness of and address potential inequalities in the identification and treatment of people from the Asian population with diabetes. The collaboration, backed by the Department, Diabetes UK and South Warwickshire PCT, aims to raise awareness of the growing incidence of cardiovascular disease and diabetes among the Asian population and illustrate how small changes to diet and lifestyle can have a big impact on diabetes.

[1] Petersen S, Peto V, Scarborough P, Rayner M, editors. Coronary Heart Disease Statistics—2005 edition. British Heart Foundation Health Promotion Research Group (fact sheet on the internet). Oxford c2005. (cited 3 February 2006). Available from: http://www.heartstats.org/temp/CHD_2005_Whote_spdocument.pdf

[2] Existing Clinical Indicators. Diabetes UK (GMS response on the internet). London c2005. (cited 3 February 2006). Available at: http://www.diabetes.org.uk/infocentre/state/GMS_response.doc

[3] Patel S, Bhopal R, Unwin N, White M, Alberti KGMM, Yallop J. Mismatch between perceived and actual overweight in diabetic and non-diabetic populations: a comparative study of South Asian and European women. J Epidemiol Community Health. 2001; 55;332–333.

[4] Rexrode KM, Carey VJ, Hennekens CH, Walters EE, Colditz GA, Stampfer MJ et al. Abdominal adiposity and coronary heart disease in women. JAMA. 1998; 280:1843–8.

[5] Wang Y, Rimm EB, Stampfer MJ, Willett WC, Hu FB. Comparison of abdominal adiposity and overall obesity in predicting risk of type 2 diabetes among men. Am J Clin Nutr; 81:555–63.

Herceptin

Mr. Dunne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what criteria her Department uses to determine whether primary care trusts should prescribe Herceptin for early stage breast cancer. [62457]

Ms Rosie Winterton: It is for individual clinicians to decide whether it is suitable to prescribe Herceptin for early breast cancer. Primary care trusts (PCTs) may have to be involved to decide whether to support the clinician's decision and supply the drug at national health service expense.

The National Cancer Research Institute has produced a United Kingdom clinical guideline on the use of Herceptin for early breast cancer. This provides useful information to those considering prescribing Herceptin for this indication in advance of a decision on licensing and the publication of the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence guidance. PCTs have been alerted to the availability of these guidelines.

Decisions on funding Herceptin for early stage breast cancer are a matter for local determination within the following parameters set by the Secretary of State for Health:

PCTs should not refuse to fund Herceptin solely on the grounds of its cost; and

PCTs should not rule out treatments on principle but consider individual circumstances.

Mr. Dunne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which primary care trusts are making Herceptin available for early stage breast cancer. [62459]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This information is not collected centrally.

Mr. Dunne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients who participated in the HERA Herceptin adjuvant trial are receiving Herceptin on the NHS. [62460]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This information is not collected centrally.

Hillingdon Primacy Care Trust

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting time for a hip replacement was in *(a)* Hillingdon primary care trust and *(b)* England in each of the last five years. [60289]

Jane Kennedy: Waiting time data are collected at speciality level, for example trauma and orthopaedics, and it is not possible to split this data down to show waiting list data for specific operations, for example, hip replacement operations. Median waiting time data for the trauma and orthopaedics speciality for Hillingdon primary care trust (PCT) and England is shown in the table. These data were collected from the first quarter of 2002–03.

	Median waiting time within:	
	Hillingdon PCT	*England*
2002–03		
Q1	16.98	17.67
Q2	10.94	17.66
Q3	12.47	16.98
Q4	12.43	15.63
2003–04		
Q1	12.78	15.85
Q2	11.25	15.25
Q3	10.44	14.31
Q4	11.18	12.55
2004–05		
Q1	11.01	12.89
Q2	9.01	12.59
Q3	10.46	12.20
Q4	10.43	11.34
2005–06		
Q1	9.58	10.79
Q2	9.19	10.31
Q3	8.48	9.36

Source:
QF01—Commissioner Based Waiting Time Data.

Hospices

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent representations she has received from adult and childrens' hospices on funding; and if she will make a statement. [56513]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Ministers in the Department have recently met with a number of commissioners and providers of palliative care for adults and children to discuss a range of issues affecting provision of palliative care, including funding. These have included a meeting on 9 February with representatives of the children's hospice movement and other interested parties and on 7 March a meeting with the all party parliamentary group on hospices and palliative care.

Primary care trusts (PCTs) are responsible within the national health service for commissioning and funding services for their resident population, including palliative care. It is for PCTs to determine how to use the funding allocated to them to commission services to meet the healthcare needs of their local populations. PCTs having assessed their local priorities, can invest more. This investment should be in line with local strategic plans.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions she has had regarding the inclusion of hospice care within the payment by results system; when these discussions took place; what the content of these discussions was; and if she will make a statement. [53084]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Work to develop healthcare resource groups for specialist palliative care, which will inform the implementation of payment by results, is ongoing. Part of this work will include consideration of the funding implications of introducing payment by results in specialist palliative care.

Hospitals (Mobile Telephones)

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what type of machines in hospitals are affected by mobile telephone signals. [61571]

Jane Kennedy: The use of mobile phones and other communication equipment in close proximity to certain electrically sensitive medical equipment is not advised, as the consequences of disrupting such equipment may cause direct harm to patients.

The types of equipment that may be affected by electromagnetic interference from mobile phones include infusion pumps, electrocardiogram (ECG) monitors, anaesthetic machines, pulse oximeters, and defibrillators. The use of these medical devices is widespread throughout healthcare organisations in the United Kingdom and the number in use at any time will be high, but difficult to estimate precisely.

The effects of this interference may range from stopping the equipment working when a mobile phone is in close proximity, to interference with displays or alarm circuits in the medical device.

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) published a detailed study on the effects of mobile phones and other communication equipment on a range of medical devices in their device bulletin, "Electromagnetic Compatibility of Medical Devices with Mobile Communications", in March 1997 (Medical Devices Agency at that time).

Further advice on mobile phones and other communication equipment and their effects on medical devices is available on the MHRA's website at www.mhra.gov.uk.

Immunisation

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to her answer of 14 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 2194–95W, on immunisation, if she will place in the Library a copy of the analysis referred to in her answer. [62397]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 30 March 2006]:* The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Independent Complaints Advocacy Service

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the effect on the Independent Complaints Advocacy Service of the decision to end the Citizen's Advice Bureau's contract. [62492]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Following a rigorous procurement exercise, the Department has awarded contracts to three organisations who will deliver a new and improved independent complaints advocacy service (ICAS) from 1 April 2006 across England. Those successful organisations submitted tenders that more closely matched the Department's requirements under the new contract specification than the tender submitted by the Citizen's Advice Bureau. All of the successful organisations have been delivering ICAS under contract to the Department since 1 September 2003, bringing a wealth of experience and expertise in general and specialist advocacy service delivery and the Department is confident that this new and improved service will be successfully delivered.

The Citizen's Advice Bureau is working closely with the new providers in order to ensure a smooth transition for clients. Detailed transition plans have been drawn up, the implementation of which is being monitored by Departmental officials.

Independent Sector Treatment Centre

Mr. Denham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what powers she has to compel the Southampton City primary care trust to commission operations from the proposed Southampton Independent Sector Treatment Centre. [57754]

Caroline Flint: The Secretary of State has power to give directions to primary care trusts (PCTs) about their exercise of any functions. Their functions include that of providing medical services under the National Health Service Act 1977, and arranging with any person or body for that person or body to provide, or assist in providing, such services. The Secretary of State has not, however, used these powers to compel any PCT to procure services from independent sector treatment centres.

Infant Mortality

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to reduce the incidence of infant mortality in the Greater Peterborough area; and if she will make a statement. [60871]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The responsibility for local health services now lies with the local national health service and it is for primary care trusts in conjunction with strategic health authorities and other local stakeholders to plan and develop services to meet the needs of their local populations.

The Department has an infant mortality target of a 10 per cent., reduction in the relative gap between routine and manual socio-economic groups and England as a whole from a baseline year of 1998 (the average of 1997–99) to the target year of 2010.

The Department has a number of initiatives aimed at tackling this gap in infant mortality. These include reducing maternal smoking as it is a risk factor for infant mortality, improving breastfeeding rates through a range of initiatives aimed at new and disadvantaged mothers, and improving neonatal services countrywide. In addition, the Department aims to reduce teenage pregnancy rates, since babies of teenage mothers have a

60 per cent., higher infant mortality rate than other age groups, and offer disadvantaged families greater access to healthy foods through the healthy start scheme.

These initiatives are expected to reduce the infant mortality level nationally, including the Greater Peterborough area.

Influenza

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 31 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 464W, on influenza, what additional production capacity of influenza vaccines will the tenders give rise to in the UK; and over what time scale. [61554]

Caroline Flint: The proposal to purchase in advance the capacity needed to make pandemic flu vaccine will make sure that an effective vaccine is available for use in the United Kingdom as quickly as possible after a 'flu pandemic starts. We would envisage that such contracts will provide manufacturers with incentive to expand production capacity.

It will not be possible to give a precise indication of production capabilities for pandemic vaccine until the pandemic virus emerges.

Intensive Broiler Poultry Farming

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what information she has collated on the possible health effects arising from air pollution caused by intensive broiler poulty farming. [52581]

Caroline Flint: The Department have not collated any information on the possible health effects arising form potential air pollution caused by intensive broiler poultry farming.

London Hospitals

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many staff redundancies there have been in each London hospital in each of the last five years. [62507]

Jane Kennedy: This information is not collected centrally.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many wards have closed in each London hospital in each of the last five years. [62508]

Jane Kennedy: This information is not collected centrally.

Macfarlane Trust

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how much has been paid out by the Macfarlane Trust since 1988; and what proportion of the Trust's total assets such payments comprise; [61876]

(2) how many haemophiliacs infected with HIV as a result of NHS blood transfusions have received payments from the Macfarlane Trust in each year since its inception in 1988; and what assessment she has made of the efficacy of the Macfarlane Trust in providing financial support in such cases; [61877]

(3) how many haemophiliacs infected with HIV are currently receiving payments from the Macfarlane Trust; and if she will make a statement; [61878]

(4) if she will make a statement on the future of the Macfarlane Trust. [61879]

Caroline Flint: The Macfarlane Trust was created in March 1988. The number of haemophiliacs infected with HIV as a result of national health service blood transfusions who have received payments from the Macfarlane Trust in each year since the trust's inception is shown in the table.

Year to 31 March	*Number of registrants*
1989	700
1990	674
1991	[1]970
1992	947
1993	905
1994	850
1995	767
1996	731
1997	660
1998	651
1999	642
2000	579
2001	422
2002	411
2003	401
2004	396
2005	380

[1] Reflects increased registrations

From its creation in March 1988 until 31 March 2005, the Macfarlane Trust paid out £38,740,399 to haemophiliacs with HIV, infected intimates and infected widows, non-infected widows, dependants, etc. Comparisons with the trust's total assets would not be meaningful, since the Department provides additional funding to the trust, as needed.

368 haemophiliacs infected with HIV are currently receiving payments from the Macfarlane Trust.

Maternity Services

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of whether payment by results has had an impact on the number of *(a)* home births and *(b)* caesarean section; and if she will make a statement. [58046]

Mr. Byrne: No assessment has yet been made on the impact of payment by results on the number of home births and caesarian sections.

Mental Health

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the ratio of patients aged over 80 to staff in mental health care settings in each hospital in England. [62496]

Mr. Byrne: An estimate of the ratio of patients aged over 80 to staff in mental health care settings in each hospital in England has not been made.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to increase partnership working between mental health trusts and drug and alcohol services. [55365]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We are committed to modernising mental health services, and one of our national priorities is to ensure that people with severe and enduring mental illness, including those with mental illness and substance misuse illness—dual diagnosis—receive more responsive and appropriate services.

Many mental health trusts have existing partnership working with drug and alcohol services through in-house specialist substance misuse services. In addition, the mental health dual diagnosis good practice policy implementation guide recommends suitable arrangements for developing partnership services for adults with severe mental illness and substance misuse problems.

We are also promoting increased partnership working between the national health service and drug and alcohol services by responding to the advisory council on misuse of drugs (ACMD) report, published in January by the Home Office. The Department, in partnership with the Home Office, the Department for Education and Skills, the National Treatment Agency and the National Institute for Mental Health in England is supporting a number of activities which respond to the ACMD findings, including publishing research briefings for professionals and reviewing current dual diagnosis treatment interventions to inform future partnership working policy.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many individuals suffering from depression attempted suicide in each of the last 10 years for which information is available. [57583]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not available.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research her Department has undertaken into schizophrenia in each of the last 10 years; if she will place the research in the Library; and if she will make a statement. [57588]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The main agency through which the Government supports medical and clinical research is the Medical Research Council (MRC). The MRC is an independent body funded by the Department of Trade and Industry via the Office of Science and Technology.

The MRC supports a large portfolio of research related to mental health disorders. Much of this research will be relevant to schizophrenia. A list of MRC-funded schizophrenia research projects has been placed in the Library.

The Department also funds research programmes that support policy and which provide underpinning evidence for quality improvement and service development in the national health service. Of these, the health technology assessment programme has over the last 10 years supported six projects concerned with schizophrenia. Five of these projects have been published and are available online as follows:

1. Depot antipsychotic medication in the treatment of patients with schizophrenia: (1) Meta-review; (2) Patient and nurse attitude (David) 69 pages, volume 5, number 34 www.hta.ac.uk/project.asp?PjtId=1028.

2. A systematic review of atypical antipsychotic drugs in schizophrenia (Bagnall) 204 pages, volume 7, number 13 www.hta.ac.uk/project.asp?PjtId=1235.

3. Clinical and cost-effectiveness of electroconvulsive therapy for depressive illness, schizophrenia, catatonia and mania; systematic reviews and economic modelling studies (Greenhalgh) 170 pages, volume 9, number 9 www.hta.ac.uk/project.asp?PjtId=1295.

4. Long-term outcome of cognitive behaviour therapy clinical trials in central Scotland (Durham) 174 pages, volume 9, number 42 www.hta.ac.uk/project.asp?PjtId=1081.

5. Systematic reviews of the effectiveness of day care for people with severe mental disorders: (1) Acute day hospital versus admission; (2) Vocational rehabilitation; (3) Day hospital versus outpatient care (Marshall) 75 pages, volume 5, number 21 www.hta.ac.uk/project.asp?PjtId=1018.

6. Cost utility of the latest antipsychotics in severe schizophrenia (CUtLASS): a multi-centre, randomised, controlled trial (Project not yet published—publication due date May 2006).

More than 75 per cent. of the Department's own expenditure on health research is devolved to and managed by NHS organisations. Details of individual projects, including a large number concerned with schizophrenia, can be found on the national research register on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/research.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patient episodes took place in each mental health trust in *(a)* 2005–06, *(b)* 2004–05 and *(c)* 2003–04. [60290]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the number of admissions under mental illness specialties in each national health service trust in 2003–04 and 2004–05 has been placed in the Library. This information is not yet available for the current financial year.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* crisis resolution, *(b)* early intervention and *(c)* assertive outreach teams are operating from each mental health trust. [60308]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The latest data available are at March 2005.

The number of assertive outreach, early intervention and crisis resolution teams in England at 31 March 2005 by mental health trust are shown in the table. All primary care trusts that provide mental health services are included in the table.

Mental health service: Number of assertive outreach, early intervention and crisis resolution teams in England by mental health providers at March 2005

Trusts	*Number of assertive outreach teams*	*Number of early intervention teams*	*Number of crisis resolution teams*
England	262	109	343
5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Trust	5	3	7
Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust	9	2	9
Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health NHS Trust	5	—	7
Barnsley PCT	1	1	2
Bedfordshire and Luton Community NHS Trust	2	2	2
Berkshire Healthcare NHS Trust	6	6	6
Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Trust	8	4	10.5

Mental health service: Number of assertive outreach, early intervention and crisis resolution teams in England by mental health providers at March 2005

Trusts	Number of assertive outreach teams	Number of early intervention teams	Number of crisis resolution teams
Bolton, Salford and Trafford Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust	3	1	6
Bradford District Care Trust	2	—	4
Buckinghamshire Mental Health NHS Trust	2	1	2
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust	4	1	1
Camden and Islington Mental Health and Social Care Trust	2	1	4
Central and North West London Mental Health NHS Trust	5	1	8
Cheshire and Wirral Partnerships NHS Trust	4	4	7
Cornwall Partnership NHS Trust	3	1	2
County Durham and Darlington Priority Services NHS Trust	5	1	4
Coventry PCT	1	1	2
Craven, Harrogate and Rural District PCT	1	1	1
Derbyshire Mental Health Services NHS Trust	3	1	6
Devon Partnership NHS Trust	4	3	6
Doncaster and South Humber Healthcare NHS Trust	4	3	6
Dorset Health Care NHS Trust	2	1	3
Dudley, Beacon and Castle PCT	1	1	2
East Kent Community NHS Trust	5	—	4
East London and The City Mental Health NHS Trust	6	3	10
East Sussex County Healthcare NHS Trust	2	—	3
Gloucestershire Partnerships NHS Trust	2	1	3
Hambleton and Richmondshire PCT	1	1	1
Hampshire Partnership NHS Trust	6	—	6
Herefordshire PCT	2	—	1
Hertfordshire Partnership NHS Trust	6	—	6
Hillingdon PCT	1	—	1
Hull and East Riding Community Health NHS Trust	2	1	4
Isle of Wight Healthcare NHS Trust	1	—	1
Lancashire Care NHS Trust	6	1	9
Leeds Mental Health Teaching NHS Trust	2	—	6
Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust	4	1	5.5
Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Trust	4	1	4
Manchester Mental Health and Social Care Trust	—	—	5
Mersey Care NHS Trust	3	3	6
Milton Keynes PCT	1	—	1
Morecambe Bay PCT	3	—	3
Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland Mental Health NHS Trust	3	2	6
Norfolk Mental Health Care NHS Trust	3	2	5
North Cumbria Mental Health and Learning Disabilities NHS Trust	2	1	4
North Dorset PCT	5	1	1
North East London Mental Health NHS Trust	4	1	6
North Essex Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust	3	1	6
North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust	2	2	3
North Warwickshire PCT	2	1	2
North West Surrey Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust	1	—	2
Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Trust	2	—	3.5
Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust	6	4	7
Oxfordshire Mental Healthcare NHS Trust	2	—	3
Oxleas NHS Trust	3	—	5
Pennine Care NHS Trust	5	4	9
Plymouth PCT	1	1	2
Portsmouth City PCT	1	—	1
Sandwell Mental Health NHS and Social Care Trust	1	1	2.5
Selby and York PCT	1	1	1
Sheffield Care Trust	2	4	4
Shropshire County PCT	2	1	2
Somerset Partnership NHS and Social Care Trust	4	1	2
South Downs Health NHS Trust	1	1	2
South Essex Partnership NHS Trust	3	1	5
South London and Maudsley NHS Trust	11	4	11
South of Tyne and Wearside Mental Health NHS Trust	5	1	5
South Staffordshire Healthcare NHS Trust	2	1	4
South Warwickshire PCT	1	1	2
South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust	5	1	8
South West Yorkshire Mental Health NHS Trust	5	—	7
Suffolk Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust	3	—	2
Surrey Hampshire Borders NHS Trust	1	—	2
Surrey Oaklands NHS Trust	2	2	2
Tees and North East Yorkshire NHS Trust	6	5	6
Walsall PCT	1	1	2
West Kent NHS and Social Care Trust	7	1	5
West London Mental Health NHS Trust	4	2	6
West Norfolk PCT	1	1	1
West Sussex Health and Social Care NHS Trust	3	1	4
Wolverhampton City PCT	1	—	2
Worcestershire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust	2	1	3
Unallocated	4	5	—

"—" denote no teams in place

Source:

Durham mapping exercise

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the expenditure by each mental health trust on agency staff in the 2005–06 financial year. [60310]

Ms Rosie Winterton: No estimate has been made. Actual expenditure in 2004–05 on all agency staff costs by each national health service trust providing health and social care services for people with mental health problems is shown in the table.

NHS mental health services provider trust	Agency staff costs 2004–05 (£000)
NE London Mental Health NHS Trust	12,699
South Downs Health NHS Trust	3,011
Dorset Healthcare NHS Trust	2,959
Somerset Partnership NHS and Social Care Trust	2,685
Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust	7,493
Oxford Learning Disability NHS Trust	1,440
Cornwall Partnership NHS Trust	1,533
West London Mental Health NHS Trust	6,877
North Staffs Combined Healthcare NHS Trust	1,643
Norfolk and Waveney Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust	3,325
Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust	488
Nth Cumbria MH and Learning Disability NHS Trust	808
Newcastle, N Tyneside and Northumberland Mental Health NHS Trust	3,563
Oxfordshire Mental Healthcare NHS Trust	596
Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Trust	2,990
Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Trust	2,409
Oxleas NHS Trust	3,835
SW London and St. George's Mental Health NHS Trust	22,301
Isle of Wight Healthcare NHS Trust	845
N Essex MH Partnership NHS Trust	11,501
South Staffs Healthcare NHS Trust	1,613
Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health NHS Trust	7,450
Cambs and Peterborough Mental Health Partnership Trust	4,159
Pennine Care NHS Trust	5,243
Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust	4,105
Suffolk MH Partnership NHS Trust	2,148
County Durham and Darlington Priority Services NHS Trust	1,929
East Kent NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust	1,933
Gloucestershire Partnership NHS Trust	2,049
5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Trust	3,022
Central and North West London MH NHS Trust	8,306
South London and Maudsley NHS Trust	19,051
Bedfordshire and Luton Mental Health and Social Care NHS Trust	2,332
Humber Mental Health Teaching NHS Trust	3,591
Avon and Wiltshire MHP NHS Trust	5,973
Tees and North East Yorkshire NHS Trust	1,882
Hampshire Partnership NHS Trust	4,684
Mersey Care NHS Trust	8,095
Lancashire Care NHS Trust	5,013
West Sussex Health and Social Care NHS Trust	4,838
South of Tyne and Wearside Mental Health NHS Trust	1,402
East London and The City Mental Health NHS Trust	7,122
South Essex Partnership NHS Trust	2,549
Worcestershire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust	312
Hertfordshire Partnership NHS Trust	6,083
Buckinghamshire Mental Health NHS Trust	627
Devon Partnership NHS Trust	4,247
Berkshire Healthcare NHS Trust	5,517
Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Trust	3,080
East Sussex County Healthcare NHS Trust	2,484
Doncaster and South Humber Healthcare NHS Trust	1,603
South West Yorkshire Mental Health NHS Trust	4,120
West Kent NHS and Social Care Trust	4,284
Derbyshire Mental Health Services NHS Trust	4,480
Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Trust	4,328
Bolton Salford and Trafford Mental Health NHS Trust	3,998
Bradford District Care Trust	4,856
Manchester Mental Health and Social Care Trust	1,994
Camden and Islington Mental Health and Social Care Trust	3,787
Sheffield Care Trust	3,962
Sandwell Mental Health NHS and Social Care Trust	258
Barnsley PCT	1,242
Coventry Teaching PCT	5,546
Craven, Harrogate and Rural District PCT	306
Dudley Beacon and Castle PCT	1,615
Hambleton and Richmondshire PCT	189
Herefordshire PCT	1,823
Hillingdon PCT	2,549
Leeds Mental Health Teaching NHS Trust	5,268
Milton Keynes PCT	1,214
Morecambe Bay PCT	1,620
North Dorset PCT	967
North Warwickshire PCT	2,794
Plymouth Teaching PCT	1,668
Portsmouth City Teaching PCT	2,236
Selby and York PCT	338
Shropshire County PCT	2,103
South Warwickshire PCT	3,033
Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Trust	1,708
Walsall Teaching PCT	1,559
West Norfolk PCT	197
Wolverhampton City PCT	2,694

Source:
Annual Financial Returns of NHS Trusts and Annual Financial Returns of Primary Care Trusts.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the average waiting time for patients referred for *(a)* psychotherapy and *(b)* cognitive behavioural therapy was in the last period for which figures are available; [60311]

(2) what the longest time is that a patient has waited for *(a)* psychotherapy and *(b)* cognitive behavioural therapy in each mental health trust in the last 12 months; [60318]

(3) how many patients waited longer than *(a)* six months and *(b)* 12 months for (i) psychotherapy and (ii) cognitive behavioural therapy in each mental health trust in the last 12 months; [60319]

(4) what the waiting time is for *(a)* psychotherapy and *(b)* cognitive behavioural therapy in each mental health trust. [60320]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department does not routinely collect information on waiting times for appointments for treatments such as psychotherapy and cognitive behavioural therapy. Data are collected only for consultant-led services, but not when services have been provided by other mental health practitioners.

Information is available for estimated average waiting times from general practitioner written referral to first outpatient appointment with a psychiatric consultant in each mental health provider trust in each of the last five years and has been placed in the Library. The data are broken down into categories of provider trust, strategic health authority and Government office region where possible.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the medical vacancy rate is in each mental health trust; and how many consultant vacancies there are in each mental health trust. [60321]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the three-month vacancy rate and the number of consultant vacancies in each mental health trust is available in the Library.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the mental health trusts which are operating restrictions on recruitment. [60541]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department does not prescribe recruitment policies for trusts. These are decided locally, so this information is not collected centrally.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans her Department has for reforming the process of treatment of mental illness in prisons; and if she will make a statement. [60637]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Prison Health, a joint Home Office and Department of Health unit, has been working since 2000 to improve health care provision for prisoners. It has led and managed a work programme to modernise services, step up national health service engagement and improve performance monitoring. The responsibility for commissioning health services, including mental health services, in the publicly run prisons will have fully transferred from the Prison Service to NHS primary care trusts by April 2006.

Mental health services for prisoners have been a key part of these reforms. The Department is investing nearly £20 million a year in NHS mental health in-reach services for prisoners. These are community mental health teams working within prisons and are now available in 102 prisons, with some 360 extra staff employed. By the spring, every prison in England and Wales will have access to these services.

The Department of Health and the Home Office produced joint guidance in November 2005 to help facilitate quicker transfers to hospital for people whose mental health difficulties mean they are too ill to remain in prison. This guidance, "The transfer of prisoners to and from hospital under sections 47 and 48 of the Mental Health Act (1983)", is available on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/12/36/31/04123631.pdf

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research her Department has evaluated concerning the effects on people with mental illnesses of being in prison; and what assessment her Department has made of that research. [60638]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There is currently little information about the impact of imprisonment on people with mental health problems. In 2003, a small focus group study[1] looked at the influence of environmental factors on mental health within prisons.

The national forensic mental health research and development programme is currently funding two research projects; one on factors mediating the effect of prison on mental health, and another on the effect of prison on mental health in young offenders institutions in the North West region. Both are due for completion in summer 2008. Further details are available on the programme's website at www.nfmhp.org.uk.

Source:

[1] Nurse, J., Woodcock, P. and Ormsby, J. (2003) Influence of environmental factors on mental health within prisons: focus group study. BMJ, 327, 480–485

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent assessment her Department has made of the length of time it is appropriate for mentally ill patients to be detained without leave to appeal against their detention. [62240]

Ms Rosie Winterton: No patient detained under the Mental Health Act is ever detained without a right to seek a review of the lawfulness of their detention. All civil patients have a right to apply to a mental health review tribunal directly, and patients detained for assessment can apply once in the first 14 days of their detention.

A period of assessment, under normal circumstances, will last no longer than 28 days. Patients who are detained for treatment have a right to apply once every six months in the first year of their detention and once a year thereafter. There is a further safeguard for patients who do not, for whatever reason, exercise their right to apply to the tribunal. For civil patients the safeguard of a referral by the hospital managers is initiated at six months into their detention for treatment. For patients who are subject to a hospital order, or who are transferred from prison to hospital, a first referral is at three years.

Patients transferred from prison to hospital by the Secretary of State may, if subject to restrictions, apply to the tribunal once in the second six months of their first year of detention and once a year thereafter. If they are transferred without restrictions or if their restrictions expire while in hospital, they may additionally apply to the tribunal within the first six months of their transfer or the expiry of the restrictions.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether she plans to conduct a consultation exercise on her new mental health proposals prior to their publication; and what consideration she has given to those who will be consulted. [62245]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We have spent the last seven years consulting on possible changes to the Mental Health Act 1983 and there has been pre-legislative scrutiny. The changes that we are now planning to make to the Mental Health Act 1983 are within the wide range of issues that we have previously consulted on.

We made a commitment last year to extend consultation for the race equality impact assessment. There are no current plans for other formal consultation exercises.

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many exercise referrals have been prescribed by general practitioners for the treatment of mild to moderate depression in each year since 2001; and if she will make a statement. [59432]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This information is not held centrally. The "Choosing Health" White Paper recognises that regular physical activity reduces the risk of depression and has positive benefits for mental health including reduced anxiety, enhanced mood and self-esteem.

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment her Department has made of the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence guidelines for advising or prescribing physical activity as partial treatment for mild to moderate depression; and if she will make a statement. [59433]

Ms Rosie Winterton: No assessment has been made of the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidelines on depression for advising or prescribing physical activity as partial treatment for mild to moderate depression. Local national health service bodies should review their policies against NICE

guidelines and put in place the services recommended. NICE guidelines state that patients of all ages should be advised of the benefits of following a structured and supervised exercise programme of typically up to three sessions per week of moderate duration (45 minutes to one hour) for between 10 and 12 weeks.

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment her Department has made of the waiting times for *(a)* NHS counselling services and *(b)* cognitive behavioural therapy for (i) adults and (ii) children and young people with mild to moderate depression; and if she will make a statement; [59527]

(2) what research her Department has undertaken on the extent of regional differences in *(a)* referrals and *(b)* waiting lists for (i) cognitive behavioural therapy and (ii) counselling on the NHS for treatment of mild to moderate depression; and if she will make a statement. [59529]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information about waiting times for counselling or cognitive behavioural therapy services is not available in the requested format, because the data are available only for consultant-led services. Since the majority of referrals for psychological therapies are to other mental health professionals, such as to clinical psychologists or psychotherapists, the data do not capture the waiting times for these services accurately.

In line with our manifesto commitment, we are embarking on a new programme to provide improved services for people with mild to moderate psychological needs, by extending the availability of psychological therapies of proven effectiveness and connecting interventions currently or potentially available in the workplace, in primary care and other community resources.

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funding her Department has allocated in 2006–07 for young people in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area with mental health problems. [60938]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Revenue allocations are made directly to primary care trusts (PCTs) on the basis of the relative needs of their populations and are determined using a weighted-capitation formula. This is a fair funding formula that directs funding to those areas of greatest need. The mental health needs index in the weighted capitation formula recognises the mental health needs of young people, students, the homeless and refugees.

On 9 February 2005, PCTs were informed of their revenue allocations up to 2007–08. The 2006–07 and 2007–08 revenue allocations represent £135 billion investment in the national health service, £64 billion to PCTs in 2006–07 and £70 billion in 2007–08.

It is for PCTs to determine how to use the funding allocated to them to commission services to meet the health care needs of their local populations.

No final decisions have yet been made on what additional funding for child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) PCTs may receive in 2006–07 from the Department, over and above what they might already decide to dedicate from their baseline allocations.

Cambridgeshire county council will receive £549,734 and £560,733 in 2006–07 and 2007–08 respectively and Peterborough council £292,823 and £298,684 for the development of CAMHS in collaboration with local CAMHS partners which will include their partners in local PCTs.

Dr. Evan Harris: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has for *(a)* formal consultation, *(b)* informal consultation and *(c)* parliamentary scrutiny of the new proposals to amend the Mental Health Act 1983. [62214]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We have spent the last seven years consulting on possible changes to the Mental Health Act 1983 and there has been pre-legislative scrutiny. The changes that we are now planning to make to the Mental Health Act 1983 are within the wide range of issues that we have previously consulted on.

We made a commitment last year to extend consultation for the race equality impact assessment. There are no current plans for other formal consultation exercises.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the impact of short-term commissioning arrangements for specialist mental health services on recruitment and retention of staff; and if she will make a statement. [54792]

Ms Rosie Winterton: No such assessment has been made by the Department. Through the commissioning arrangements available to them, primary care trusts (PCTs) can secure the full range of mental health services to meet their populations' needs. Unified allocations are given to PCTs for three years to enable them to plan their finances and commission services in a way that will deliver improvements in performance and workforce planning.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the impact on mental health services of the implementation of payment by results. [58766]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Payment by results (PbR) has not yet been introduced for mental health services, and the Department is exploring the feasibility of doing so. We expect to publish a report later this year, outlining our plans for PbR in 2007–08 and beyond, and this will include an update on our plans for PbR in relation to mental health.

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the number of mental health therapists which will be needed to meet the demand for their services in the next five years; and if she will make a statement. [60242]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has made no formal assessment. However, compared to work force levels in 1997 the mental health work force has increased its capacity to provide psychological therapies: since 1997, there are now 75 per cent. more clinical psychologists, 125 per cent. more qualified psychotherapists, 50 per cent.

more consultant psychiatrists, 20 per cent. more mental health nurses, and 23 per cent. more art/music/drama therapists.

We have also created a new role, the graduate primary care mental health worker, trained in brief therapy techniques of proven effectiveness, such as cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), to help general practitioners provide mental health interventions in a range of primary care settings. At the end of March 2005, there were 648 graduate workers employed in the national health service, and this number will increase further when current trainees qualify. All of these professions can provide CBT.

Merlin Biosciences Ltd.

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether she has met *(a)* Sir Christopher Evans and *(b)* representatives of Merlin Biosciences Ltd. on official business in the past 12 months; and if she will make a statement. [61477]

Mr. Byrne: The Secretary of State for Health has not met Sir Christopher Evans or representatives of Merlin Biosciences Ltd. on official business since she took up post in May 2005.

Between March 2005 and May 2005, the then Secretary of State for Health did not meet with Sir Evans or Merlin Biosciences on official business in his capacity as the Secretary of State for Health.

Mesothelioma

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what clinical guidelines are in place on best practice for diagnosis and management of mesothelioma; [59003]

(2) if she will make mesothelioma a priority for the National Cancer Director. [59013]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has a lung cancer and mesothelioma advisory group which is chaired by the national cancer director. This group has established a mesothelioma working group to ensure that the needs of mesothelioma patients and the services they require are given due consideration.

The British Thoracic Society has published guidance entitled "Statement on malignant mesothelioma in the United Kingdom" (Thorax (2001), 56; 250–265). There is insufficient evidence at this time for the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence to be asked to produce evidence-based clinical guidelines on mesothelioma.

However, the advisory group and its associated mesothelioma working group are developing a framework to provide advice to strategic health authorities, cancer networks, primary care trusts and national health service trusts in England on how best to organise services for mesothelioma patients in order to improve standards of care to a uniformly high level across the country.

Midwifery Vacancies

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 23 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1853W to the hon. Member for Stroud (Mr. Drew), on midwifery vacancies, how the information was gathered; and whether NHS trusts which fail to respond to surveys are recorded as having no vacancies. [48025]

Mr. Byrne: The data are collected by national health service trusts on 31 March each year, on the number of vacancies that trusts are actively trying to fill that have lasted three months or more (full time equivalents).

The 2005 vacancy survey did not receive a valid return from one trust and it has been excluded from all applicable vacancy totals and calculations. This information is highlighted in the release notes of the vacancy survey.

Morning-after Contraception

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many morning-after pills have been distributed by the St. Albans Primary Care Trust in each of the last five years. [62205]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information available is shown in the following tables. Information on emergency hormonal contraception supplied under a patient group direction (PGD), by school nurses and pharmacists is not held centrally.

Information for St. Albans and Harpenden Primary Care Trust (PCT) is not available separately. Family planning clinic services for that PCT are provided by West Hertfordshire Hospitals national health service trust, which provides services also for Dacorum PCT and Hertsmere PCT.

West Hertfordshire took over these services from April 2001 and comparable data prior to this are not available.

Occasions on which hormonal post-coital contraceptives dispensed at family planning clinics provided by West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust, 2001–02 to 2004–05

	Number
2001–02	1,375
2002–03	1,328
2003–04	1,253
2004–05	1,253

Source:
Information Centre return KT31

Number of items (prescriptions) for hormonal post-coital contraception prescribed by general practitioners for the last four years in St. Albans PCT, January 2002-March 2006

	Number
2001–02 (Fourth quarter only)	184
2002–03	793
2003–04	813
2004–05	680
2005–06 (up to third quarter only)	509

Source:
ePACT data

National Blood Service

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the National Blood Service uses predictive dialling. [59146]

Caroline Flint: The National Blood Service, an operational division on National Health Service Blood and Transplant, uses predictive dialling.

National Physical Laboratory

Mr. Vaizey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions her Department has had with the National Physical Laboratory on the funding of radiotherapy calibrations; and if she will make a statement. [59106]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has been discussing the transitional arrangements with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and the National Physical Laboratory (NPL) following the withdrawal of the DTI subsidy for the radiotherapy calibration services. The withdrawal of the subsidy means that health users will pay for the services they require in the same way as other users of the measurement services.

Officials continue to participate in discussions with regard to the future development of NPL's services.

NHS (Complaints Procedure)

Gordon Banks: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions she has had on reforming the *(a)* arrangements for and *(b)* approach to dealing with complaints within the NHS. [62072]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 28 March 2006]:* Following devolution, responsibility for the policy on handling complaints about the National health service in Scotland is the responsibility of the Scottish Executive Health Department.

With regard to the NHS in England, "NHS Complaints Reform—Making Things Right", published on 28 March 2003, set out a programme to improve management of the whole complaints system, elements of which were included in the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003. Between 1 January 2003 and 31 March 2004, the Department undertook a public consultation on a set of draft regulations aimed at taking forward the proposals set out in "Making Things Right" Following an approach from the solicitor to the Shipman Inquiry, Ministers decided on a phased implementation of the new framework to ensure that the findings of recent public inquiries were included in the longer-term development of a patient centred complaints procedure.

During 2004 and 2005, workshops were held with a range of key NHS stakeholders, patient oriented organisations, and front line NHS staff to consider what a patient centred complaints procedure might look like and how it would operate.

"Our health, our care, our say", the White Paper published in January 2006, outlined the Government's commitment to "develop by 2009 a comprehensive single complaints system across health and social care", that will "focus on resolving complaints locally with a more personal and comprehensive approach to handling complaints".

The merger of the Healthcare Commission and Commission for Social Care Inspection, planned for 2008, provides an opportunity to review the current systems to deal with individual's feedback generally as well as complaints about the services they have received.

The individual voices for improvement (IVI) project has been set up to design and implement an approach to capture a holistic view of individual's experience of using services and promote the routine use of that experience to inform service improvement. The IVI project is supported by a policy forum, consisting of senior representatives from major stakeholders across health and social care, including the health service and local government ombudsmen and health and social care regulators.

NHS Deficits

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the deficit was in each *(a)* primary care trust and *(b)* NHS hospital trust in Suffolk in each of the last four years. [57237]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The end-of-year financial position for national health service trusts, primary care trusts and strategic health authorities for the years 2001–02 to 2004–05 is available in the Library.

In addition, the 2005–06 month six forecast outturn position for individual NHS organisations is also available in the Library.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the financial position is of each *(a)* primary care trust and *(b)* NHS hospital trust in Suffolk for 2005–06; and what financial penalty will be incurred as a result of a deficit. [57247]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The 2005–06 month six forecast outturn position for individual national health service organisations (strategic health authorities (SHA), primary care trusts and NHS trusts) is available on the Department's website at:

www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/FreedomOfInformation/ClassesOfInformation/fs/en.

Copies of this information are also available in the Library.

Any net overspending by the Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire SHA at the end of 2005–06 will be deducted from the resources available to them in 2006–07. This is in line with Government resource accounting and budgeting rules on the carry forward of over and under spending. In addition, the net overspend for the SHA will be subject to a penalty of 10 per cent., as part of the scheme developed by the NHS bank to incentivise sound financial management. The SHA has discretion in how the carry forward and penalty are applied to individual organisations.

NHS Expenditure

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what total expenditure has been on the NHS *(a)* after

inflation, *(b)* after public sector inflation and *(c)* after NHS inflation in each year since 1997–98 at constant 2005–06 prices. [42954]

Mr. Byrne: The following table shows net national health service expenditure in cash terms and converted into 2005–06 prices using the gross domestic product (GDP) deflator index.

The latest available index for NHS specific inflation is 2003–04 so net NHS expenditure has been converted into 2003–04 prices.

An index for public sector inflation is not available.

The figures are not on a consistent basis over the years, hence comparisons cannot be readily made between some years.

£ billion

		Net NHS expenditure[1]	*Net NHS expenditure 2005–06 prices adjusted by GDP*	*Net NHS expenditure 2003–04 prices adjusted by NHS inflation*
Cash[2]				
1997–98	Outturn	34.664	28.825	26.979
1998–99	Outturn	36.608	31.231	29.603
1999–2000	Outturn	39.881	34.692	33.737
Resource Budgeting Stage 1[3]				
1999–2000	Outturn	40.201	34.971	34.008
2000–01	Outturn	43.932	38.716	38.684
2001–02	Outturn	49.021	44.269	45.221
2002–03	Outturn	54.042	50.353	51.600
Resource Budgeting Stage 2[4,5]				
2003–04	Outturn	63.001	60.253	63.001
2004–05	Estimated outturn	69.706	68.087	—
2005–06	Plan	76.387	76.387	—
2006–07	Plan	84.324	86.398	—
2007–08	Plan	92.643	97.445	—

[1] Based on the GDP deflator series as at 23 December 2005.
[2] Expenditure pre 1999–2000 is on a cash basis.
[3] Expenditure figures from 1999–2000 to 2002–03 are on a Stage 1 Resource Budgeting basis.
[4] Expenditure figures from 2003–04 to 2007–08 are on a Stage 2 Resource Budgeting basis.
[5] The Resource Budgeting Stage 2 expenditure figures shown for 2004–05 to 2007–08 are consistent with the 2005 Departmental Report and Chief Executive's Report.
Note:
NHS inflation index is only available up to 2003–04.

NHS Sites (Crimes)

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 9 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 1487W, on NHS Sites (Crimes), what information her Department holds on the number of crimes committed on NHS sites. [52957]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information is not available in the format requested.

NHS Staff

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* managers, *(b)* directors and *(c)* administrators of (i) strategic health authorities, (ii) primary care trusts and (iii) NHS hospital trusts earned more than (A) £133,997 and (B) £183,932 in 2005/06. [60868]

Mr. Byrne: This information is not held centrally.

Information on salaries of executives of national health service organisations is published in their annual reports and accounts.

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the percentage increases in numbers of *(a)* nurses, *(b)* doctors and *(c)* NHS managers were in each year since 1997. [42366]

Mr. Byrne: Percentage increases in number of nurses, doctors and national health service managers in each year since 1997 is shown in the following table. The number of managers increased between 2001 and 2003 with the establishment of primary care trusts to strengthen commissioning and community but these will reduce with the reconfiguration currently out to consultation.

England

headcount

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
All NHS staff	1,058,686	1,071,562	1,097,376	1,117,841	1,166,016	1,223,824	1,282,930	1,331,087
Increase from previous year	—	12,876	25,814	20,465	48,175	57,808	59,106	48,157
Percentage increase from previous year	—	1.2	2.4	1.9	4.3	5.0	4.8	3.8
of which:								
All doctors	89,619	91,837	93,981	96,319	99,169	103,350	108,993	117,036
Increase from previous year	—	2,218	2,144	2,338	2,850	4,181	5,643	8,043
Percentage increase from previous year	—	2.5	2.3	2.5	3.0	4.2	5.5	7.4
Qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff	318,856	323,457	329,637	335,952	350,381	367,520	386,359	397,515

England

headcount

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Increase from previous year	—	4,601	6,180	6,315	14,429	17,139	18,839	11,156
Percentage increase from previous year	—	1.4	1.9	1.9	4.3	4.9	5.1	2.9
Administrative managers	22,173	22,693	24,287	25,256	27,424	32,294	35,321	37,726
Increase from previous year	—	520	1,594	969	2,168	4,870	3,027	2,405
Percentage increase from previous year	—	2.3	7.0	4.0	8.6	17.8	9.4	6.8

NHS Standards

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the minimum standards set out in the Government publication "Your guide to the NHS—getting the most from your national health service" published in January 2001 remain applicable. [59848]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on current standards is available through a variety of publications and services, which supersede and improve upon the previous minimum standards in "Your guide to the NHS". These publications and services, which take account of the changes in recent years to the national health service and new policy directions, include:

Primary care trusts locally producing "Your guide to local health services";

the leaflet, "It's Your NHS; developing a more personal service";

the annual "Get the right treatment" campaign;

"National Standards, Local Action: Health and Social Care Standards and Planning Framework 2005–06–2007–08—the national service frameworks;

nhs.uk and NHS direct online (www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk) websites; and

NHS direct telephone service.

As more comprehensive information is now available, the Department no longer publishes "Your guide to the NHS" and the minimum standards set out in the publication no longer apply.

NHS-specific Inflation

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 6 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1204W, on health-specific inflation, what family health services inflation has been in each year since 1997–98; if she will define NHS-specific inflation, as referred to in Table 3.2.3 of her Department's written evidence to the Health Committee of 1 December 2005, HC 736-iii; and what NHS-specific inflation was in each year since 1997–98. [60406]

Mr. Byrne: The movement in the family health service and national health service indices since 1997–98 are shown in the table.

Percentage

	FHS index	*NHS index*
1997–98	3.0	2.1
1998–99	3.0	3.9
1999–2000	4.1	4.6
2000–01	2.7	4.2
2001–02	2.1	4.8
2002–03	3.9	3.5
2003–04	4.6	4.9

NHS index shows the changes in cost of goods and services in the health service. It is calculated by considering expenditure in the hospital and community health service pay, prices and capital; family health service and other, which includes revenue and capital expenditure on central health miscellaneous services and departmental administration. There was annual movement in these indices prior to 1997–98; for example in 1992–93 the FHS index change was 4.3 per cent. and the NHS index was 5.8 per cent.

Nursing Vacancies

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the nursing vacancy levels were at each prison in each of the last 12 months. [62782]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Obesity

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2637W, on obesity, if she will clarify the action which the Department plans to take on the establishment of the National Partnership for Obesity. [61753]

Caroline Flint: I regret that part of the reply I gave the hon. Member for Falmouth and Camborne (Julia Goldworthy) on 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2637W, was incorrect. The third paragraph of the answer on the national partnership for obesity should read as follows:

"Over the coming months the Department will explore with relevant non governmental organisations how it can support the establishment of a national partnership for obesity. The objective will be to promote practical action on the prevention and management of obesity and provide a source of information and evidence of effectiveness."

Ophthalmology

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if she will make eye solution available on prescription for keratoconus patients; [58555]

(2) what financial assistance her Department gives to support groups that provide help to keratoconus patients; [58556]

(3) what recent representations she has received on behalf of keratoconus patients, with particular reference to the provision of eye solution on prescription; [58557]

(4) what steps the NHS is taking to minimise the expense of eye lenses and eye solutions to keratoconus patients. [58558]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The hospital eye service (HES) provides contact lenses to those who require them as a clinical necessity. This will include many patients with keratoconus, but in some cases spectacles can be used to correct their vision.

There is a charge for contact lenses supplied through the HES of £48 per lens. Children, those aged under 19 in full time education, and patients who would be eligible for vouchers for their spectacles are entitled to free contact lenses through the HES scheme. Patients who have a valid HC3 certificate pay up to a maximum of £96 for a pair of lenses.

It is recognised that the provision of solutions to maintain contact lenses is an integral part of the provision of the lenses. When contact lenses have been fitted for a recognised clinical need, hospitals should make arrangements for patients to receive contact lens solutions for which normal prescription charges rules apply. All classes of patients who are exempt from paying prescription charges, or who have a valid pre-payment certificate, should not be charged for their contact lens solutions.

We have received no representations on behalf of keratoconus patients regarding the provision of eye solutions on prescription.

The Department provides financial support via the Section 64 general scheme to a number of organisations that provide advice to individuals with a full range of visual impairment which will include keratoconus. This includes:

£30,000 over three years from 2004–05 to 2006–07 for the national association of local societies for visually impaired people;

£40,000 over three years from 2004–05 to 2006–07 for Vision 2020 UK; and

£131,698 over three years from 2005–06 to 2007–08 for the Royal National Institute of the Blind, for a volunteer counselling project.

Patient Transfers

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the Department of Health Winter Report 2005–06, page 17, how much income is lost by a hospital on average *(a)* when a patient chooses to be treated elsewhere under the Cancelled Operations Guarantee and *(b)* when a patient chooses to go to another hospital with lower levels of cancellations; and how much income has been lost by hospitals in total in each of these ways in each year since 2001–02, broken down by NHS trust. [62556]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested in not centrally collected.

PCTs (Greater Manchester)

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many of Greater Manchester's primary care trusts met the 48-hour target for access to GPs in the latest period for which figures are available. [62228]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is shown in the following table.

Organisation name	*Percentage of patients offered first appointment with a general practitioner within two working days (inc. Walk in centres)*
Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority (SHA)	99.70
South Manchester Primary Care Trust (PCT)	100.00
Central Manchester PCT	100.00
North Manchester PCT	100.00
Trafford South PCT	100.00
Heywood and Middleton PCT	100.00
Salford PCT	100.00
Trafford North PCT	100.00
Stockport PCT	100.00
Ashton, Leigh and Wigan PCT	97.38
Bolton PCT	100.00
Oldham PCT	100.00
Bury PCT	100.00
Rochdale PCT	100.00
Tameside and Glossop PCT	100.00

Source:
Primary care and specialist performance collections

Pesticides

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action she is taking to reduce exposure to pesticide residues in food; and if she will make a statement. [62164]

Caroline Flint: The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is committed to minimising pesticide residues in food and has developed a detailed action plan to achieve this. The action plan recognises that many consumers prefer pesticide residues in their food to be kept to a minimum, and reduced further than current safe levels. The FSA's action plan includes the development of crop guides offering a consolidated source of best practice for pesticide residue minimisation on specific crops. Research is also under way to explore the information needs of consumers regarding pesticide residues in food.

I am advised by the FSA that the current levels of pesticides residues in the United Kingdom food supply do not present a significant concern for human health.

PET Scans

Mr. Paul Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what process is used to commission PET scans for patients; and if she will make a statement. [62707]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Commissioning of positron emission tomography scans is for local determination depending on local priorities and circumstances.

Mr. Paul Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many PET scanners there are in England; and where they are located. [62708]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There are currently seven fixed-location scanners routinely available for national health service patients in England. These are located in London and the south-east, with one new scanner now in Birmingham.

There are also three private clinics which offer positron emission tomography (PET)-computed tomography (CT) services and three mobile scanners

which provide services across the United Kingdom. Additionally, research facilities are available in London, Cambridge and Manchester.

Full details of PET scanners can be found in annex C of "The National Framework for the Development of Positron Emission Tomography (PET) Services in England". This is available on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/12/10/30/04121030.pdf.

Mr. Paul Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what criteria are applied when deciding which patients receive PET scans. [62814]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Patients are normally referred for scans by clinicians using locally agreed criteria.

In October 2005, the Department published "The National Framework for the Development of Positron Emission Tomography (PET) Services in England". The framework identifies some of the key indicators that clinicians may use to identify patients for referral for a positron emission tomography scan.

The framework is available on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/12/10/30/04121030.pdf.

PFI Contracts

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the estimated maximum cost is of liabilities indemnified by the NHS arising from private finance initiative contracts; and if she will make a statement. [54833]

Jane Kennedy: The need for indemnities to be given by the national health service to the private sector, or by the private sector to the NHS, normally arises in cases where it is not clear if a liability will ever arise, or, if it does, what the amount of that liability will be. An example would be where, at some point in the future, an NHS employee deliberately damages the contractor's property while on duty at work. It is impossible to predict this sort of event, but it is clear that this would be the NHS's responsibility if it ever occurred. It is better value for money for the NHS to give an indemnity than to make the contractor take the risk, because the contractor is likely to include an allowance in its price in case this should ever happen.

However, this means that it is impossible to provide a meaningful estimate of the maximum costs of liabilities covered by these indemnities. The liabilities are normally contingent and may never arise. The same applies to many of the indemnities given by the private sector to the NHS.

The Department is not aware of any examples of claims having been made under contractual indemnities in NHS private finance initiative projects.

Pharmaceutical Industry

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will place in the Library minutes of recent meetings she has had with the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry to discuss the conduct of the pharmaceutical industry. [61128]

Jane Kennedy: The Department is the sponsor of United Kingdom pharmaceutical industry, and provides a channel for communication between the Government and the industry. Ministers and leaders in the pharmaceutical industry meet twice a year through the ministerial industry strategy group. The minutes of these meetings are placed on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk. Ministers have held no meetings in the past 12 months to discuss the conduct of the pharmaceutical industry.

Pharmacies

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what estimate she has made of the funds received by pharmacies as a result of the difference between the price paid for drugs by *(a)* the Prescription Pricing Authority and *(b)* pharmacists in each financial year since 2000–01; and what estimate she has made of the funds received in (i) 2005–06 and (ii) 2006–07; [58322]

(2) which 10 drugs contributed most to the total funding of pharmacies because of the difference between the price paid by the pharmacies and the price paid by the Prescription Pricing Authority (PPA) in each year since 2000–01; what estimate she has made of the total funding from that source in the next two financial years; and what the price paid was by *(a)* the pharmacy and *(b)* the PPA for each of those 10 drugs. [58323]

Jane Kennedy: There was a survey to measure the margin on drugs available to community pharmaceutical contractors (the discount inquiry) in October 2000. The discount inquiry asked a random sample of pharmacy contractors what prices they had paid for a sample of medicines including rebates from suppliers. As a result of this survey, the claw-back used to calculate reimbursement prices paid to pharmacists was increased by about 0.6 per cent., depending on size of pharmacy, from an average of about 10.6 per cent. to 11.2 per cent. Under the terms of its agreement between the Department and the pharmaceutical services negotiating committee, the data used in the discount inquiry remain confidential.

Although there have been no discount inquiries since 2000, the Department has monitored drug prices using market information from manufacturers and wholesalers. As a result of this, and following a public consultation paper, the Department reduced the reimbursement prices of four recently out of patent medicines on two occasions: the first with effect from December 2003 and the second with effect from September 2004. In total, this reduced the retained margins available to community pharmacy contractors by £300 million per annum.

When the current community pharmacy contractual framework was implemented in April 2005, the amount of retained margins in England was assessed as £500 million per year. This money is an integral part of the total of £1,766 million agreed during the contract negotiations, and will help to pay for services to patients. The Department is currently undertaking surveys of community pharmacy contractor invoices to determine the current amount of retained margin available to pharmacy contractors. If the current survey shows that total retained margins differ substantially from £500 million, the Department will make

adjustments by varying reimbursement prices or the claw-back to bring it in line with the sum agreed as part of the contractual framework. The Department will continue to assess the level of retained margin but does not believe it is realistic to prepare forecasts as the actual sums retained will be determined by the market prices for generic medicines which can change significantly over time.

From a survey in October 2005, the 10 drug presentations that contributed most to the total funding of pharmacies due to the difference between the price paid by the pharmacies and the price paid by the Prescription Pricing Authority (PPA) were as in the following table.

Drug presentation	*PPA reimbursement price, October 2005*
Simvastatin tablets 40mg, pack size 28	4.14
Simvastatin tablets 20mg, pack size 28	1.79
Omeprazole capsules enteric coated 20mg, pack size 28	10.59
Amlodipine tablets 5mg, pack size 28	5.48
Citalopram Hydrobromide tablets 20mg, pack size 28	2.59
Amlodipine tablets 10mg, pack size 28	7.96
Pravastatin Sodium tablets 40mg, pack size 28	3.33
Ramipril capsules 10mg, pack size 28	2.78
Gabapentin capsules 300mg, pack size 100	53.26
Ramipril capsules 5mg, pack size 28	2.55

When assessing the prices paid by the PPA, it is important to note that there is a claw-back such that the reimbursement to pharmacies is reduced currently by 6 per cent. to 12.5 per cent., depending on the size of the pharmacy; this reduction is not allowed for in the table.

Disclosure of prices paid by pharmacy contractors for the purchase of these medicines might prejudice co-operation in future and make it impossible to undertake these surveys, and hence make the monitoring of total payments under the pharmacy contract very difficult.

Steve McCabe: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether it is her policy that patients should continue to have access to pharmacists for advice and support following the enactment of the Health Bill. [61708]

Jane Kennedy: Patients will continue to have access to pharmacists for advice and support following enactment of the Health Bill. Provisions in the Bill will allow pharmacists greater flexibility in how they use their clinical skills to offer patients a wider range of pharmacy services.

Post-traumatic Stress Disorder

Peter Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what treatment is available for post-traumatic stress disorder *(a)* in England and *(b)* in the Gosport area; and what delays in the availability of treatment have occurred in the last 12 months. [60050]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Psychological and drug treatments for the treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) are available for people eligible for national health service treatment. NHS organisations were given guidance on the management of PTSD in primary and secondary care by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence in March 2005. Local NHS organisations should review their existing clinical guidelines, care pathways and protocols in the treatment and management of PTSD in the light of this guidance, and revise them accordingly.

The Hampshire and Isle of Wight strategic health authority reported that there had been delays in accessing the psychological therapy service in Fareham and Gosport over the last year but that plans are in hand to address this.

Premature Babies

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many babies were born under 25 weeks in each hospital in England in the last five years; and how many of these survived. [62503]

Mr. Byrne: This information is not collected centrally.

Primary Care Trusts

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the respondents to the public consultation on the reconfiguration of primary care trusts in Cambridgeshire to date; and if she will make a statement. [60869]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This information is not held centrally.

The local consultation on primary care trust reconfiguration in Cambridgeshire is the responsibility of Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire strategic health authority (SHA). It is for the SHA to provide information about respondents to the local consultation.

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what *(a)* the target level of funding and *(b)* the proposed accrual level of funding for each primary care trust in Essex is for (i) 2006–07 and (ii) 2007–08. [62817]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Revenue allocations are made to primary care trusts (PCTs) on the basis of the relative needs of their populations. A weighted capitation formula is used to set targets, which then inform allocations. The formula does not determine allocations. Actual allocations reflect decisions on the speed at which PCTs are brought nearer to target through the distribution of extra funds (pace of change policy).

The following tables show the target and actual levels of funding, the percentage increases and closing distances from target for the years 2006–07 and 2007–08 for PCTs in Essex.

2006–07

PCT	Target allocation (£000)	Recurrent allocation (£000)	Closing DFT (percentage)	Closing DFT (£000)
Basildon	144,571	137,269	−5.1	−7,302
Billericay, Brentwood and Wickford	153,606	154,036	0.3	430
Castle Point and Rochford	195,347	187,964	−3.8	−7,383
Chelmsford	130,810	130,594	−0.2	−216
Colchester	187,330	181,421	−3.2	−5,908
Epping Forest	128,279	131,877	2.8	3,598
Harlow	105,509	107,862	2.2	2,353
Maldon and South Chelmsford	88,879	84,733	−4.7	−4,146
Southend on Sea	211,308	217,056	2.7	5,748
Tendring	210,852	200,202	−5.1	−10,649
Thurrock	192,050	181,711	−5.4	−10,338
Uttlesford	74,226	73,835	−0.5	−392
Witham, Braintree and Halstead	158,144	150,157	−5.1	−7,987

2007–08

PCT	Target allocation (£000)	Recurrent allocation (£000)	Closing DFT (percentage)	Closing DFT (£000)
Basildon	158,589	153,039	-3.5	-5,551
Billericay, Brentwood and Wickford	167,876	168,212	0.2	336
Castle Point and Rochford	214,512	207,004	-3.5	-7,508
Chelmsford	143,105	143,032	-0.1	-73
Colchester	205,504	199,216	-3.1	-6,288
Epping Forest	140,981	142,642	1.2	1,661
Harlow	115,188	116,667	1.3	1,479
Maldon and South Chelmsford	97,792	94,369	-3.5	-3,423
Southend on Sea	231,041	234,771	1.6	3,730
Tendring	231,818	223,705	-3.5	-8,114
Thurrock	211,783	204,371	-3.5	-7,412
Uttlesford	81,429	81,090	-0.4	-339
Witham, Braintree and Halstead	174,426	168,321	-3.5	-6,105

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 10 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1828W, on primary care trusts (expenditure), if she will provide details of the allocations per *(a)* weighted and *(b)* unweighted head for each primary care trust in (i) 2005–06, (ii) 2006–07 and (iii) 2007–08 in the same format as that provided in the answer to the hon. Member for East Worthing and Shoreham (Tim Loughton) on 30 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 1766W, on primary care trusts. [60405]

Mr. Byrne: Information on the allocations per weighted and unweighted head for each primary care trust in 2005–06, 2006–07 and 2007–08 has been placed in the Library.

Mr. Godsiff: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which of the primary care trusts in the West Midlands have informed her of plans to make redundancies; and *(a)* how many and *(b)* in what locations redundancies have been proposed. [62650]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Local consultation on boundary changes to strategic health authorities and primary care trusts concluded on 22 March. No decisions on boundary changes will be taken until the outcomes of local consultation have been fully considered. Until any boundary changes are agreed, it is not possible to calculate the number of job losses in any particular area.

Primary Healthcare (Brentford and Isleworth)

Ann Keen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action her Department has taken to improve primary healthcare services in Brentford and Isleworth constituency since 1997. [62119]

Jane Kennedy: The Government have put in place a programme of national health service investment and reform since 1997 to improve service delivery in England. There is significant evidence that these policies have yielded considerable benefits for the Brentford and Isleworth constituency. For example:

In June 2002, 46 per cent., of patients were able to be offered an appointment with a general practitioner within two-days whereas the latest figures available show that all local patients now have this opportunity.

In September 2001, there were 120 general medical practitioners, which excludes retainers and registrars, in the primary care trust (PCT) area. By June 2005, this had increased to 104, an increase of 17 per cent.

As at December 2005, there are 154 general dental service (GDS) and personal dental service (PDS) dentists in the Hounslow PCT area. This is an increase of seven per cent., from December 2004 where there were 144 CDS and PDS dentists.

Adult GDS and PDS registrations in the Hounslow PCT area have increased by approximately 7 per cent., from December 2004 to December 2005.

Child GDS and PDS registrations in the Hounslow PCT area have increased by approximately 9 per cent, from December 2004 to December 2005.

As at December 2005, there are 50 dental practices in the Hounslow PCT area.

Work has already commenced on the Thelma Golding Health Centre Local Improvement Finance Trust scheme. The current buildings will be demolished and a new health centre developed which is expected to be completed January 2007.

Prisons

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the impact of *(a)* overcrowding and *(b)* inter-prison transfers of inmates on the delivery of prison health care; and if she will make a statement. [58238]

Ms Rosie Winterton: No such assessment has been made. We accept that overcrowding and the consequent need to move prisoners around has its effects on prisoners' health and well being. However, we are in the process of reforming prison healthcare services. We have increased investment in healthcare in the public prisons by £40 million a year, a rise of over one third since 2002–03, and have transferred the responsibility for commissioning services from the Prison Service to national health service primary care trusts. In addition to this, NHS investment in mental health services for prisoners totalled just under £20 million in 2005–06.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment she has made of the quality of healthcare provision in prisons; [60702]

(2) what steps she is taking to ensure that *(a)* the quality of healthcare provision in prisons is improved and *(b)* access to treatment in prisons is widened. [60713]

Ms Rosie Winterton: From April 2006, all national health service primary care trusts have been responsible for commissioning primary healthcare for the public prisons in their areas. This milestone completes the transfer of prison healthcare from the Prison Service to the NHS in order to improve prison healthcare so that that all prisoners have access to health services that are broadly equivalent in range and quality to those available to the general public.

We are supporting these improvements with extra revenue; in 2002–03, some £118 million was available, in 2005–06 this rose to nearly £176 million.

The Department is working with the Home Office to improve further health and social care for prisoners through a shared programme that includes extending access to NHS-funded mental health in-reach teams to all prisons, further improving in primary care services, developing the prison health workforce and improving the prison health estate.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the impact on the *(a)* provision and *(b)* accessibility of dental services in prisons of the new contractual arrangements for dentists. [60714]

Ms Rosie Winterton: In April 2003, the Department and HM Prison Service produced a strategy for modernising national health service prison health services. All prisons in England have produced action plans outlining how they will meet the requirements of the strategy including improving access to dental care. In April 2005, primary care trusts (PCTs) which host prisons became responsible for commissioning services to meet the health care needs of prisoners including dental services. As such, PCTs have the responsibility for providing the services required to meet the oral health needs of prisoners.

General dental practitioners providing dental services for prisoners will now be doing so under the new NHS contractual arrangements.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to improve the accuracy of healthcare records of inmates in prison; and if she will make a statement. [57757]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Since 2005, most national health service primary care trusts (PCTs) have been responsible for commissioning healthcare services in the publicly run prisons in England and Wales. From April 2006, all PCTs have had this responsibility. NHS standards, as overseen by NHS professional bodies, now apply to the accuracy and quality of healthcare records of inmates in prisons. Local improvements and developments in respect of accuracy or quality will be taken forward by PCTs.

The National Programme for Information Technology will include prison healthcare centres. This will ensure that prisoners' clinical records adhere to NHS standards of quality and accuracy for electronic records. These records will be electronically transferable not only between prisons, but also to and from the wider NHS, which will help ensure accuracy and continuity of healthcare.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what discussions she has had with the Prison Service about the treatment of inmates with long-term mental health problems; [62773]

(2) what steps she is taking to increase mental health provision for those detained in prison with severe mental health problems. [62776]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department and the Prison Service are working in partnership to improve the health services available to prisoners. Discussions are ongoing and take place at ministerial and Prison Service management board level, with the coordination of a joint Department of Health and Home Office Directorate.

Under the national partnership agreement on the transfer of responsibility for prison health from the Home Office to the Department, prison health services, including mental health services, have moved from the Prison Service and are now part of the mainstream national health service, with primary care trusts becoming responsible for commissioning these services for the public prisons from April 2006.

The Department is investing nearly £20 million a year in NHS mental health in-reach services for prisoners with severe and enduring mental health problems. These in-reach teams are based on community mental health team models working within prisons and therefore help to provide continuing care as prisoners move between prison and the community. Mental health services are based on the mental health national service framework standards and incorporate use of the care programme approach to ensure assessment, treatment planning and review of individuals' needs. By the spring, every prison in England and Wales will have access to these services.

It is our policy that prisoners with severe mental health problems should be transferred and treated in hospital whenever possible. To help facilitate quicker transfers to hospital, the Department and the Home Office produced joint guidance in November 2005, to help staff delivering mental health services in prisons work more effectively with community health services. This guidance, "The transfer of prisoners to and from hospital under sections 47 and 48 of the Mental Health Act (1983), Prison Service Instruction 03/2006" is available on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/12/36/31/04123631.pdf.

Private Procedures (Unpaid Bills)

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much is owed to NHS trusts arising out of unpaid bills for private medical procedures. [61556]

Jane Kennedy: The information is not collected centrally. However, we expect national health service trusts to follow up and take appropriate action to recover all outstanding unpaid bills.

Prostate Cancer

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of prostate cancer patients received an appointment with a specialist within two weeks of being referred to one by their general practitioner in the last period for which figures are available. [59722]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Data are not collected separately on referrals for prostate cancer but they are included in monitoring of patients with urological cancers. In the last quarter (October to December 2005) 99.8 per cent., of urgent general practitioner referrals for urological cancers were seen by a specialist within two weeks.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much funding has been provided for specialist nursing posts in prostate cancer treatment centres. [59723]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on funding of specialist nursing posts is not collected centrally. It is for cancer networks to work in partnership with strategic health authorities and work force development directorates to assess, plan and review their work force needs and the education and training of all staff linked to local and national priorities for cancer.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how the money provided by her Department for a public awareness programme for prostate cancer announced on 31 October 2005 has been spent. [59724]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department is providing £50,000 towards the development of the prostate public awareness pilot, which is being jointly funded by signatories to the Prostate Cancer Charter for Action. The Department is providing a further £50,000 to design and commission the evaluation of the pilot. The pilot will start later this year.

Protection of Children Act

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many registered doctors are included on the list kept under section 1 of the Protection of Children Act 1999. [47114]

Ruth Kelly: I have been asked to reply.

My Department can produce this information only at disproportionate cost.

Purchaser Parity Adjustment Scheme

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment she has made of the potential effects of the earlier phasing out of the purchaser parity adjustment scheme within the healthcare system in Suffolk; and if she will make a statement; [58961]

(2) what assessment she has made of the likely savings arising from the phasing out of the purchaser parity adjustment scheme within the NHS; [58962]

(3) for what reasons her Department is phasing out the purchaser parity adjustment scheme. [58963]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The decision to reduce the level of purchaser parity adjustments (PPA) involved a fine judgement about the need for stability, maintaining support in full, as in 2005–06, versus the need to move back to a position where primary care trusts' (PCTs) spending power is more closely aligned with their fair share of national health service resources, as determined by the weighted capitation formula.

Pure Tone Audiometry

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting time has been for patients waiting for pure tone audiometry since January 2006. [61709]

Mr. Byrne: Data on waiting times for pure tone audiometry have been collected since January 2006. We hope to commence routine monthly publication of diagnostic waiting time data in the spring once we are assured that they are of sufficient quality.

Resource Allocation Target (West Norfolk)

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the estimated cumulative difference is between the National Health Service Advisory Committee on resource allocation target for West Norfolk and the *(a)* actual and *(b)* expected funding over the five year period from 2003–04 to 2007–08 inclusive; and if she will make a statement. [59192]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Revenue allocations are made to primary care trusts (PCTs) on the basis of the relative needs of their populations. A weighted capitation formula is used to set targets, which then inform allocations. The formula does not determine allocations. Allocations reflect decisions on the speed at which PCTs are brought nearer to target through the distribution of extra funds (pace of change policy).

In addition to moving PCTs closer to their fair share of the allocation, we must balance the need to maintain

continuity and stability across the nation. This will ensure stability of funding for PCTs, and allow them to make progress nationally and in local priority areas.

Pace of change policy is decided by Ministers for each allocations round. For the 2006–08 revenue allocations, it has been decided to move PCTs more quickly towards their fair share of funds. As a result of this allocation round, no PCT will be more than 3.5 per. cent, below its fair share

Distance from target (DFT) and cumulative DFT for West Norfolk PCT for the years 2003–04 to 2007–08 is provided in the following table.

	DFT (percentage)	*DFT (£ million)*	*Cumulative DFT (£ million)*
2003–04	−6.0	−8.5	−8.5
2004–05	−5.7	−8.8	−17.3
2005–06	−5.6	−9.4	−26.7
2006–07	−5.1	−10.0	−36.7
2007–08	−3.5	−7.5	−44.2

Salt

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what representations she has received on the decision of the Food Standards Agency to revise targets for salt levels in food; [62226]

(2) how much salt was consumed on average per person in each year from 1997 to 2005. [62227]

Caroline Flint: I have not received any representations following the publication of the Food Standard Agency's (FSA) salt reduction targets.

Salt consumption figures are not collected annually, and the most recent data, obtained in 2000–01 from the national diet and nutrition survey of adults aged 19 to 64, found average adult salt intake to be about 9.5 grams per day.

The FSA has taken the decision to set up a new rolling programme of national diet and nutrition surveys to provide data on trends in nutrient intakes, so strengthening the ability to track changes over time. The rolling programme will cover all age groups, and the first results from the rolling programme should be available from 2008–09.

Schizophrenia

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how her Department *(a)* defines and *(b)* categorises schizophrenia for the purposes of allocating drugs; and if she will make a statement. [59294]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department does not allocate drugs. The international standard diagnostic classification for all general epidemiological and many health management purposes is currently the International Classification of Diseases 10th Edition (ICD-10) published by the World Health Organisation. ICD-10 classifies schizophrenia as a mental and behavioural disorder which is characterized in general by fundamental and characteristic distortions of thinking and perception, and effects that are inappropriate or blunted. ICD-10 is available at www.who.int/classifications/icd/en. Decisions about treatments are taken on an individual basis by the clinicians involved.

Selective Seratonin Re-uptake Inhibitors

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what interim guidance her Department plans to give to GPs on *(a)* the prescribing of selective serotonin re-uptake inhibitors and *(b)* the referral to a counsellor or therapist of individuals suffering from mild or moderate depression in those areas without access to first-line recommended therapists; and if she will make a statement. [59530]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Clinical guidelines on the management of depression in primary and secondary care were issued by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) in 2004. The guidelines outline appropriate prescribing practices for selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor (SSRI) drugs and recommend effective psychological treatments for people with depression and anxiety. They will set national standards for care across England and Wales and can be found on the NICE website at www.nice.org.uk.

The safety of SSRIs has been under continual review by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) since the products were first marketed in the 1980s. This was considered by the committee on safety of medicines (CSM)—now the commission on human medicines—on a number of occasions, particularly their use in association with suicidal behaviour and withdrawal reactions. The CSM and its expert working group published their key findings on the MHRA website at www.mhra.gov.uk.

The MHRA/CSM reminded all prescribing doctors and pharmacists of the risks and benefits of SSRIs and related antidepressants in children and adolescents in 2003. A fact sheet on SSRIs to aid discussion between prescribers and patients was also issued by the CSM in 2003. In 2004, a reminder of key prescribing advice was issued to prescribers of the recommended dose regimen for the major SSRI drug Paroxetine (Seroxat). The expert working group's key findings, which focused on three key areas—withdrawal reactions, dose changes and suicidal behaviour—were communicated to health professionals in the United Kingdom in December 2004.

Other guidance is available for general practitioners. In 2001, the Department issued an evidence based guideline, "Treatment choice in psychological therapies and counselling" to help general practitioners and other professionals know more about the most effective treatments for particular conditions. A booklet for service users and carers, "Choosing talking treatments"?, was also published in 2001 to aid service users and carers when seeking GP referrals to talking therapies. In 2004, the Department also published a best practice guide, "Organising and delivering psychological therapies, to help inform general practitioners and other local services deliver acceptable, accessible, equitable, cost effective and safe psychological therapy services.

Sexual Health

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in *(a)* the North East, *(b)* the Tees Valley and *(c)* the area corresponding as closely as possible to Middlesbrough, South and East Cleveland constituency were diagnosed with (i) gonorrhoea, (ii) hepatitis, (iii) chlamydia, (iv) epididymitis and (v) syphilis in each year since 1997. [59930]

Mr. Byrne: The data for the number of gonorrhoea, chlamydia and syphilis diagnoses made at genito-urinary medicine (GUM) clinics are only collected at strategic health authority (SHA) level, and the relevant data for County Durham and Tees Valley SHA are available on the Health Protection Agency's website at:

www.hpa.org.uk/infections/topics_az/hiv_and_sti/epidemiology/dataresource.htm

There is no current surveillance system which collects data on the number of epididymitis diagnoses. However, the KC60 statistical return collects information on the total number of complicated sexually transmitted infections (B5, C4B and C5) which includes epididymitis in males. These data are shown in table 1.

New diagnoses of viral hepatitis B and hepatitis C in males and females made at GUM clinics in County Durham and Tees Valley SHA for 2000 to 2004 are shown in table 2.

Table 1: Diagnoses of complicated sexually transmitted infections in males including epididymitis, made at genito-urinary medicine clinics in County Durham and Tees Valley strategic health authority: 2000 to 2004

	Number
2000	47
2001	25
2002	21
2003	24
2004	48

Source:
KC60 Returns.

Table 2: New diagnoses of viral hepatitis B and C in males and females made at genito-urinary medicine clinics in County Durham and Tees Valley SHA: 2000 to 2004

Condition description	Sex	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Viral hepatitis B (HbsAg positive): first diagnosis[1]	Female	0	0	0	0	0
Viral hepatitis B (HbsAg positive): first diagnosis[2]	Male	0	0	0	2	1
[1]Number of which were acute viral hepatitis B	Female	0	0	0	0	0
[2]Number of which were acute viral hepatitis B	Male	0	0	0	0	0
Viral hepatitis C: first diagnosis	Female	5	0	2	2	3
Viral hepatitis C: first diagnosis	Male	5	3	6	5	5

Source:
KC60 Returns.

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the Answer of 10 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1830W, on sexual health, what assessment she has made of chlamydia levels in Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire Strategic Health Authority; and if she will make a statement. [60155]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Chlamydia is the most common sexually transmitted infection in England which has no obvious symptoms and can cause infertility. We are therefore tackling this through the national chlamydia screening programme (NCSP).

The White Paper, "Choosing Health: Making healthier choices easier", a copy of which is available in the Library, announced an accelerated timetable to achieve national roll out of the NCSP by 2007. We are well ahead of this target.

The Health Protection Agency is now leading on the roll out of the programme and is supporting local areas, including Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire to drive up the number of people screened.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health who the head of the Sexual Health and Substance Misuse Directorate is; what relevant specialist qualifications he or she holds; and what his or her career has been to date. [60863]

Caroline Flint: Following a reorganisation, the Sexual Health and Substance Misuse Directorate now forms part of the health improvement directorate (HID). Dr. Fiona Adshead, Deputy Chief Medical Officer (DCMO), is the director of the HID.

Dr. Adshead holds the qualifications of Bachelor of Science, MB BS, Fellow Royal College of Physicians, Master of Science, Fellow Faculty of Public Health.

Dr. Adshead has extensive experience of effectively leading, managing and delivering both clinical services and public health programmes at director level, both as DCMO and latterly as director of public health in inner London. She has significant experience at international, national and local levels, working with key stakeholders to drive forward policy development and strengthen service delivery.

As DCMO and director of health improvement, Dr. Adshead leads on health improvement policy development and ensures effective delivery of health care programmes to improve population health in areas which include obesity, sexual health, substance misuse and smoking cessation.

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of sexual health education provision in Hertfordshire; and if she will make a statement. [41116]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Primary care trusts (PCTs) are responsible for providing sexual health promotion services which meet local needs, and they have the

freedom and flexibility to decide how best to configure these services. The Department has provided best practice guidance, through the "Recommended Standards for Sexual Health Services", and the "Effective Sexual Health Promotion Toolkit" to support them in this role. Sexual health and access to genitourinary medicine clinics is included as one of the six key priorities for the national health service for 2006–07.

Smoking

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment her Department has made of the compatability with the Human Rights Act 1998 of the Health Bill with reference to its proposed prohibition of smoking in public places. [62253]

Caroline Flint: I have made a statement under section 19 of the Human Rights Act 1998 that the Bill is, in my view, compatible with the European Convention on Human Rights.

Various issues are considered to be particularly engaged in relation to the Bill, although careful consideration has been given to all aspects of human rights in relation to these proposals.

On the smoke-free provision of the Bill, the question of whether taking measures of the kind provided for in this Bill to control the use of products which are lawfully on sale to persons over 16 would breach the rights in Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life) was considered. However, it was not felt that, even if such rights were engaged, there would be any breach of such rights. Any interference with such rights is justified on grounds of protection of health. This is set out in the explanatory notes published alongside the Heath Bill introduced in the House of Commons on 27 October 2005. A copy is available in the Library.

Strategic Health Authorities (Pensions)

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much money is to be paid into the pension of each strategic health authority chief executive officer who is being made redundant. [58428]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Streptococcal Diseases

Mr. Andy Reed: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research her Department has commissioned on severe group A streptococcal diseases in the last five years. [59701]

Jane Kennedy: None. The main agency through which the Government supports medical and clinical research is the medical research council (MRC). The MRC, an independent body funded by the Department of Trade and Industry via the Office of Science and Technology, is currently funding one relevant study, Group A streptococcal fimbriae—novel surface structures interacting with human tonsil.

Over 75 per. cent, of the Department's total expenditure on health research is devolved to and managed by national health service organisations. Details of individual projects, including a number concerned with group A streptococcal diseases, are available on the national research register on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/research.

Stroke

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of people under the age of 65 years suffered from *(a)* ischaemic and *(b)* haemorrhagic stroke in each year since 1997. [62411]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is shown in the table.

All diagnoses count of patients aged under 65 for Haemorrhagic[1] stroke and Ischaemic[2] stroke in national health service hospitals in England, 1997–98 to 2004–05

Data year	*Haemorrhagic stroke*	*Ischaemic stroke*
1997–98	8,534	5,542
1998–99	8,488	6,146
1999–2000	8,180	6,504
2000–01	7,825	6,670
2001–02	7,990	7,142
2002–03	8,011	8,202
2003–04	7,991	8,261
2004–05	7,972	8,734

[1] Haemorrhagic Stroke defined as ICD-10 = I60-I62 diagnoses codes recorded in primary or in any of the secondary diagnoses fields

[2] Ischaemic Stroke defined as ICD-10= 163 diagnosis code recorded in primary or in any of the secondary diagnoses fields

Patient counts

Patient counts are based on the unique patient identifier Hospital Episode Statistic identification (HESID). This identifier is derived based on patient's date of birth, postcode, sex, local patient identifier and NHS number, using an agreed algorithm. Where data is incomplete, HESID might erroneously link episodes or fail to recognise episodes for the same patient. Care is therefore needed, especially where duplicate records persist in the data. The patient count cannot be summed across a table where patients may have episodes in more than one cell.

All diagnoses count of patients

These figures represent a count of patients where the diagnosis was mentioned in any of the 14 (seven prior to 2002–03) diagnosis fields in a Hospital Episode Statistic (HES) record.

Diagnosis (primary diagnosis)

The primary diagnosis is the first of up to 14 (seven prior to 2002–03) diagnosis fields in the HES data set and provides the main reason why the patient was in hospital.

Secondary diagnosis

As well as the primary diagnosis, there are up to 13 (six prior to 2002–03) secondary diagnosis fields in HES that show other diagnosis relevant to the episode of care.

Source:

Hospital Episode Statistics, NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of people suffering a stroke received a brain scan within *(a)* three hours, *(b)* 24 hours and *(c)* 48 hours in each year since 1997. [62412]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This information is not collected centrally.

Superannuation Liability

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what total amount of employers' normal

contributions accruing superannuation liability charge has been accounted for by her Department in each of the last five years for which data is available. [61363]

Mr. Byrne: The amount of employers' accruing superannuation liability charges in respect of members of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme in the last five years is shown in the following table.

£000

	Amount
2004–05[1]	14,985
2003–04[1]	21,096
2002–03[1]	20,022
2001–02	21,167
2000–01	19,782

[1] From October 2002, new entrants have been able to opt for a partnership pension account, a stakeholder arrangement with an employer contribution. Employers' contributions to partnership pension accounts are not included in the above figures.

Sustainable Building

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of her Department's building programme budget was allocated to *(a)* energy self-generation and *(b)* water recycling measures in the last financial year. [58753]

Mr. Byrne: The Department has not allocated any funds to either energy self-generation or to water recycling measures in the past financial year.

Talking Therapies

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what information she has received on compliance with National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence guidance on talking therapies for patients with depression in *(a)* Birmingham and *(b)* England; and if she will make a statement. [59111]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department does not routinely collect information on local national health service organisations' compliance with the guidelines published by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE). Local health communities are expected to review their existing practice in the treatment and management of various mental health problems against NICE guidelines. The reviews should consider the resources required to implement any recommendations relating to the use of psychological interventions and the timeline over which full implementation is envisaged. As announced in the recent White Paper, "Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community service", the Government are committed to expanding access to psychological therapies. To this end, two demonstration sites are being established for people of working age with mild to moderate mental health problems with the aim of helping them to remain in or return to work. The sites will also aim to establish an evidence base for the effectiveness of such therapies and to support the extension to non-working age people and those with moderate to severe mental illness.

Telephone and Entertainment Systems

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* composition and *(b)* remit is of the review group on hospital telephone and entertainment system charges. [60201]

Mr. Byrne: The Department has set up a review group to explore the issue of costs to users of the bedside television and telephone systems in national health service hospitals.

The review group includes representation from the Department, the NHS, Connecting for Health, patient representation, the private sector, the Department's commercial solicitors, the Healthcare Commission and Ofcom.

The terms of reference of the review group are:

Review all aspects of the charging structure:

Level of inbound call charges.

Requirement to cap outbound call charges at the standard national call rate.

The availability of some free television and radio, and free television for children.

Whether the cross subsidisation across the various services is appropriate or desirable.

Whether it is appropriate for a recorded message to be played in its entirety at the outset of each and every call.

Review the requirement to install, with limited clinical exceptions, units at every bedside within a hospital site, irrespective of use. Could this be altered in respect of all new installations and the repair and renewal of units already installed?

Review the requirement to offer services through a combined unit, offering television and telephone and capable of offering added value services. It should consider not only the extent to which NHS trusts have made use of the added functionality, or could make use in the future, but should consider what the appropriate minimum standards should be for all future installations and renewals.

Review and clarify the guidance issued by the Department in respect of NHS trusts exercising their own discretion in determining the local policy on the use of mobile phones in hospitals.

It will produce its concluding report in June 2006.

Temporary Staff

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the temporary staff costs were for *(a)* doctors, *(b)* nurses, *(c)* other health care professionals and *(d)* administrative staff for each NHS trust in England in each year for which figures are available. [54574]

Mr. Byrne: Information relating to temporary staffing spend, for the relevant staff groups from 1997–98 to 2004–05, the last year for which information is available, has been placed in the Library.

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* temporary staff costs and *(b)* temporary staff costs as a percentage of total staff costs in the specified staff group, for (i) doctors, (ii) nurses, (iii) other healthcare professionals and (iv) administrative and clerical staff in each strategic health authority area for each year for which figures are available. [47394]

Mr. Byrne: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave on 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 172W. Information relating to temporary staffing spend for the relevant staff groups, expressed as a percentage of total national health service staff spend for 2004–05, the last year for which information is available is shown in the table.

Percentage

SHA	*SHA name*	*Medical*	*Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting staff*	*Administrative and Clerical*	*Healthcare Assistants and Other Support staff*
Q01 Total	Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridge	6	3	3	2
Q02 Total	Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	7.81	4.76	5.07	2.98
Q03 Total	Essex	9.39	4.13	8.74	8.06
Q04 Total	North West London	4.96	5.73	8.75	4.15
Q05 Total	North Central London	4.48	6.43	9.50	10.22
Q06 Total	North East London	5.25	9.81	13.06	4.93
Q07 Total	South East London	3.96	5.18	7.88	10.78
Q08 Total	South West London	5.75	6.31	9.68	12.44
Q09 Total	Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	2.91	0.90	3.83	1.29
Q10 Total	County Durham and Tees Valley	3.85	1.22	3.38	1.79
Q11 Total	North and East Yorkshire and N. Lincs.	3.85	1.79	2.86	1.12
Q12 Total	West Yorkshire	4.86	1.58	4.32	3.23
Q13 Total	Cumbria and Lancashire	5.78	1.22	2.83	4.18
Q14 Total	Greater Manchester	3.98	3.09	4.61	2.41
Q15 Total	Cheshire and Merseyside	4.16	1.79	3.01	1.77
Q16 Total	Thames Valley	5.49	3.34	4.67	5.81
Q17 Total	Hampshire and Isle of Wight	3.49	4.14	4.22	4.51
Q18 Total	Kent and Medway	6.45	3.10	4.18	7.50
Q19 Total	Surrey and Sussex	7.27	4.85	3.87	6.18
Q20 Total	Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	3.75	3.90	2.68	7.06
Q21 Total	South West Peninsula	4.81	3.11	2.59	1.63
Q22 Total	Dorset and Somerset	3.93	3.07	3.80	8.95
Q23 Total	South Yorkshire	5.66	1.80	3.64	2.00
Q24 Total	Trent	4.69	2.42	4.23	2.67
Q25 Total	Leics, Northants and Rutland	5.17	2.83	4.40	1.62
Q26 Total	Shropshire and Staffordshire	2.38	1.79	3.41	2.17
Q27 Total	Birmingham and the Black Country	4.04	3.46	5.10	2.87
Q28 Total	West Midlands South	6.91	3.96	2.83	1.28

Transfats

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether *(a)* her Department has and *(b)* its agencies have (i) assessed and (ii) plans to assess the effect that placing a legal maximum limit on the occurrence of transfats in food would have on the reduction of health inequalities. [62185]

Caroline Flint: Data from national diet and nutrition surveys show little evidence of socio-economic differences in fatty acid intakes, consequently no assessment has been made of the effect that placing a legal maximum on the occurrence of trans fatty acids (TFA) in foods would have on health inequalities, and there are currently no plans to make such assessments.

Average intakes of TFA by consumers were 1.1 per cent. of total energy in 2000–01, and well within the maximum level of 2.0 per cent. recommended by the committee on medical aspects of food policy (COMA) in 1994. COMA's recommendation was based on evidence on the adverse effects of TFA on coronary heart disease risk.

University Hospital of North Staffordshire

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health at which board meeting of the University hospital of North Staffordshire the issuing of the Service and Financial Recovery Workforce Changes Consultation Document was *(a)* discussed and *(b)* approved. [62642]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not held centrally.

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress has been made in recruiting a new chairman for the University Hospital of North Staffordshire. [62643]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Responsibility for appointments to national health service boards has been delegated to the NHS Appointments Commission. The chairman of the NHS Appointments Commission, Sir William Wells, has been asked to respond directly to my hon. Friend.

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what role she expects the accountancy firm Deloittes to perform at the University Hospital of North Staffordshire during 2006. [62892]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The turnaround teams were announced by the Secretary of State for Health in a written ministerial statement on 1 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 35WS.

Following the baseline assessment of University Hospital of North Staffordshire which was undertaken by KPMG before Christmas, the local national health service appointed Deloittes to give the trust tailored turnaround support to help them to achieve financial balance and provide services more efficiently. The detail of the support provided to the trust is specified by the trust and strategic health authority to suit local circumstances.

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) when she expects the University Hospital of North Staffordshire to conclude the service level agreements with local health commissioning bodies for the year ending 31 March 2007; [62893]

(2) when she expects the board of the University Hospital of North Staffordshire formally to agree a budget for the year ending 31 March 2007. [62901]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Shropshire and Staffordshire strategic health authority reports that the annual financial plan and associated financial recovery plan are scheduled for the agenda of the University Hospital of North Staffordshire National Health Service Trust Board meeting on 24 April 2006.

The trust has agreed draft service level agreements with its main commissioners and intends to finalise these arrangements during April for final approval at the board meeting on 24 April.

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) whether the University Hospital of North Staffordshire will be required to include the cost of redundancies from its financial recovery plan in the savings it needs to make to restore its reserves into surplus; [62894]

(2) whether the redundancy costs attributable to the service and financial recovery workforce changes at the University Hospital of North Staffordshire will be met by *(a)* the Department, *(b)* the strategic health authority and *(c)* the hospital; [62895]

(3) what estimate has been made of the redundancy costs of the implementation of the service and financial recovery workforce changes at the University Hospital of North Staffordshire. [62896]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The cost of any redundancies must be borne by the trust and is reflected in the recovery plan.

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment has been made by *(a)* the Department, *(b)* the Shropshire and Staffordshire Strategic Health Authority and *(c)* the University of North Staffordshire Hospital of the proportion of the hospital's increase in staffing levels since 1999 which has been necessary to meet national performance targets. [62897]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not held centrally. The assessment of how many and what mix of staff are required to deliver national health service services is a matter for the local NHS community.

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if she will publish the joint audit letter and commentary prepared by the Audit Commission and Bentley Jennison in 2005 on the financial situation and governance at the University Hospital of North Staffordshire; [62898]

(2) if she will publish the audit letter sent by the Audit Commission to the University Hospital of North Staffordshire in respect of its review of the hospital's statutory financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2005; [62917]

(3) if she will publish *(a)* the written audit questions asked by the Audit Commission of the statutory financial statements prepared by the University Hospital of North Staffordshire for the year ended 31 March 2005 and *(b)* the replies given by the hospital; [62918]

(4) who carried out the external audit of the accounts of the University Hospital of North Staffordshire on behalf of the Audit Commission for the year ended 31 March 2005; [62919]

(5) if she will ask the Audit Commission to publish its review into the financial situation of the University Hospital of North Staffordshire as a public interest report when it is completed; [62922]

(6) when she expects the Audit Commission to complete its review of the financial situation at the University Hospital of North Staffordshire. [62923]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The questions raised fall within the Audit Commission's responsibility. I have asked the Chief Executive of the Commission to respond to my hon. Friend directly.

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what role she expects the board of the Shropshire and Staffordshire strategic health authority and its successor body to play in *(a)* approving the budget of and *(b)* monitoring the performance of the University hospital of North Staffordshire for the year ending 31 March 2007. [62900]

Ms Rosie Winterton: It is the duty of strategic health authorities (SHAs) to performance manage the organisations within their area, including delivering financial balance across the SHA. The SHA board is responsible for ensuring that the duties of the SHA are delivered. The board can decide how best to deliver these responsibilities, including agreeing the plans for individual organisations and monitoring the organisations' delivery of their plans.

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the reasons are for the change in the estimated cost of the fit for the future project at the University hospital of North Staffordshire since November 2002; [62902]

(2) what assessment her Department has made of the full business case for fit for the future presented by the University hospital of North Staffordshire; [62903]

(3) what the total accumulated *(a)* revenue costs and *(b)* capitalised costs have been to (i) the University hospital of North Staffordshire and (ii) Shropshire and Staffordshire strategic health authority of the fit for the future project under the private finance initiative. [62907]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The scheme and the full business case are currently being re-appraised by the University hospital of North Staffordshire national health service trust, to ensure that all investments are affordable and sustainable in the long term. The full business case was drafted initially in the autumn but was not approved by either Shropshire and Staffordshire strategic health authority (SHA) or the Department because of the trust's financial situation.

The team at the trust has been refining its plans for the scheme and will be working closely with officials in the coming weeks to develop a sustainable and affordable solution to meet the health needs of people in North Staffordshire.

The SHA reports that almost all of the cost increase is construction cost inflation. Cost parameters have been kept to but the cost of the project rises with inflation. Construction inflation is rising considerably more than inflation in the general economy, which creates cost pressures on the project through higher unitary payments.

The total accumulated revenue costs are £10.4 million. £11.8 million capital funding has been issued, of which £8.9 million has been spent.

Revenue expenditure is entirely by the NHS trust. Capital expenditure is from the strategic capital allocation but incurred by the NHS trust.

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what financial estimates have been made by *(a)* the Department, *(b)* the hospital, *(c)* Bentley Jennison, *(d)* Ernst and Young, *(e)* the financial turnaround team, *(f)* the Shropshire and Staffordshire health authority and *(g)* the Audit Commission of the inefficiencies attributable to split site working between the City General and Royal Infirmary sites at the University hospital of North Staffordshire. [62904]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Neither the Department nor the turnaround team working with the University hospital of North Staffordshire national health service trust has made any estimate of the inefficiencies of split site working between the City General hospital and the Royal Infirmary sites.

Information on whether the trust, Bentley Jennison, Ernst and Young, Shropshire and Staffordshire strategic health authority, or the Audit Commission have done so is not held centrally.

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how much is accounted for by each element which makes up the total planned savings at the University Hospital of North Staffordshire over the next two years; [62905]

(2) how much is accounted for by each element making up the estimated loss of service level agreement income to the University Hospital of North Staffordshire for the year ending 31 March; [62913]

(3) how much is accounted for by each element which makes up the estimated gap between income and expenditure at the University Hospital of North Staffordshire for the year ending 31 March 2007. [62906]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not held centrally.

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if she will ensure that future funding for the University hospital of North Staffordshire covers in full the financial effects of *(a)* the new consultants' contract, *(b)* the implementation of the working time directive for junior doctors, *(c)* agenda for change and *(d)* the clinical negligence scheme premium; [62908]

(2) what her estimate is of the difference between the costs to the University hospital of North Staffordshire of and the funding made available by the Department for *(a)* the new consultants' contract, *(b)* the implementation of the working time directive for junior doctors, *(c)* agenda for change and *(d)* the clinical negligence scheme premium; [62909]

(3) why the Department has not funded in full the financial effects at the University hospital of North Staffordshire of *(a)* the new consultants' contract, *(b)* the implementation of the working time directive for junior doctors, *(c)* agenda for change and *(d)* the clinical negligence scheme premium in the 2005–06 financial year. [62921]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department does not allocate funding to national health service trusts. NHS trusts, as providers of services, receive the bulk of their revenue funding from commissioning by primary care trusts (PCTs). They also receive revenue funding from the Department for medical staff education services and for research and development. In addition trusts can charge staff, visitors or patients for services provided, such as catering or provision of private patient facilities.

Funding is allocated to PCTs on the basis of the relative needs of their populations. North Stoke PCT will receive an increase of £31 million over the current two allocation years (18.7 per cent.) and South Stoke PCT will receive an increase of £32 million over the current two allocation years (19.5 per cent.), taking its total allocation to £196 million.

It is for PCTs in partnership with strategic health authorities and other local stakeholders to determine how best to use their funds to meet national and local priorities for improving health, tackling health inequalities and modernising services.

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the estimated deficits incurred by the University Hospital of North Staffordshire in the year ending 31 March 2006 attributable to the introduction of the Payment by Results policy. [62910]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Payment by results requires commissioners to pay for activity at a fair price which is based on the same national tariff for all providers. Providers were given advance notice of the implementation of the national tariff and supported it with a transition process. It is the responsibility of providers to ensure they are sufficiently efficient that their costs are no higher than their income from the national tariff. Payment by results does not take money out of the system and has a neutral impact on the overall national health service balance sheet.

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the loss of income by the University Hospital of North Staffordshire in the year ending 31 March 2006 attributable to the RSA Cardiac contract loss. [62911]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This is a matter for the local health community.

Strategic health authorities are responsible for ensuring that their primary care trusts adopt effective collaborative arrangements for commissioning specialised services.

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the estimated actual income is of the University Hospital of North Staffordshire for the years ending 31 March *(a)* 2005, *(b)* 2006, *(c)* 2007, *(d)* 2008 and *(e)* 2009. [62914]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Actual income in 2004–05 for University Hospital of North Staffordshire National Health Service Trust was £295,327,000. Details of the trust's income for 2005–06 will be available later in the year. Estimated income for future years is not held centrally.

Income includes income from activities and other operating income from the audited summarisation schedules for the trust.

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health who at the Shropshire and Staffordshire Strategic Health Authority *(a)* had prior sight of and *(b)* approved the issue of the Service and Financial Recovery Workforce Changes Consultation Document issued by the University Hospital of North Staffordshire. [62915]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This is a matter for Shropshire and Staffordshire Strategic Health Authority.

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the Service and Financial Recovery Plan for the University Hospital of North Staffordshire was *(a)* considered and *(b)* approved by the Board of the Shropshire and Staffordshire Strategic Health Authority. [62916]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This is a matter for Shropshire and Staffordshire Strategic Health Authority.

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the projected deficit at the University Hospital of North Staffordshire for the year ending 31 March 2006 was in *(a)* its monthly financial monitoring returns to her Department and *(b)* financial returns made to her Department by the Shropshire and Staffordshire Strategic Health Authority in each month since April 2005. [62920]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Strategic health authorities (SHAs) are responsible for monitoring the financial position of their national health service organisations. SHAs submit the financial position of their NHS organisations to the Department on a monthly basis.

The 2005–06 month six forecast outturn position for individual NHS organisations (SHAs, primary care trusts and NHS) is available in the Library and is also available on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/FreedomOfInformation/ClassesOfInformation/fs/en

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the date of appointment was of each executive and non-executive director of the University hospital of North Staffordshire. [63050]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Executive appointments are a matter for the specific national health service trust concerned.

Since 1 April 2001, the Secretary of State has delegated appointments functions relating to the appointment of chairs and non-executive members of NHS trusts, health authorities and primary care trusts to the NHS Appointments Commission. All non-executive appointments to the boards of these bodies are now made by the commission rather than by the Secretary of State.

Urgent Care Centres

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many urgent care centres have intensive care beds; [62417]

(2) how many urgent care centres there are in England; and how many were previously general hospital accident and emergency departments. [62419]

Mr. Byrne: Intensive care is not a service an urgent care centre would provide. Major accident and emergency departments, which take severely ill or injured patients, are always attached to hospitals that have critical care services. Urgent care describes a service offering care for injury or illness that is not immediately life threatening.

Information is not collected centrally on numbers of urgent care centres or whether any of these were previously major accident and emergency departments.

Voluntary and Community Groups

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the impact on health and social care voluntary and community groups of the delay in announcing grant allocations for 2006–07. [61334]

Mr. Byrne: The Department recognises the implications of the delay in notifying voluntary and community organisations of the result in their Section 64 applications. These organisations have been regularly informed of the situation by e-mail and telephone for those organisations that have directly contacted the Department.

Waiting Times

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the mean waiting time was for an *(a)* out-patient and *(b)* in-patient appointment in each year since 1997; and what the mean waiting times in each category were in the most recent period for which figures are available. [59844]

Jane Kennedy: The mean and median waiting times are shown in the table.

Estimated average waiting times, all specialties, 1997 to 2005, England, commissioner based

	Weeks	
Quarter ended	*Mean wait*	*Median wait*
Out-patients[1]		
June 1997	9.0	6.3
March 1998	9.5	6.4
March 1999	10.5	7.0
March 2000	11.7	7.7
March 2001	10.9	7.5
March 2002	11.1	7.6
March 2003	9.0	7.4
March 2004	8.5	7.1
March 2005	7.5	7.0
December 2005	6.9	6.6
In-patients[2]		
March 1997	18.1	13.2
March 1998	20.0	14.9
March 1999	18.6	12.9
March 2000	18.7	12.9
March 2001	18.1	12.6
March 2002	17.4	12.7
March 2003	15.6	11.9
March 2004	12.4	10.2
March 2005	10.6	8.5
December 2005	8.8	7.6

[1] Average time waited from general practitioner written referral to first out-patient appointment.

[2] Average waiting time for elective admission.

Note:

Commissioner based out-patient data were first collected in June 1997.

Source:

Department of Health forms QM08R and QF01.

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting time was for an appointment to see a general practitioner in *(a)* the constituency of Ruislip-Northwood, *(b)* the London borough of Hillingdon and *(c)* Greater London in each year since 1997. [61144]

Jane Kennedy: This information is not collected centrally. Figures for the percentage of patients offered a first appointment with a general practitioner within two working days by London strategic health authorities and primary care trusts (PCT) for June 2002 to February 2006 has been placed in the Library.

Since 2001, the Department has collected information from PCTs on whether patients are being offered the opportunity to be seen by a GP or a primary care professional within the target timeframes specified in "The NHS Plan". It does not however collect information on actual waiting times.

From April 2004, access to a GP or primary care professional at a local national health service walk-in centre may count towards the 24–48 hour primary care access target, but only for practices that have an agreement with an NHS walk-in centre, which offer GP or primary care professional services, that includes referring and/or diverting practice patients.

Watford General Hospital

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the progress of the proposed private finance initiative redevelopment of Watford general hospital. [61303]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The development of the new acute hospital for West Hertfordshire adjacent to the site of the current Watford general hospital is currently progressing through the Department's business case process.

Following publication of "The NHS in England: the operating framework for 2006/7" on 26 January, the trust will now need to revalidate the approval parameters for the scheme by responding to a range of questions from the Department concerning factors such as long-term affordability, assumptions on efficiency gains and income growth, liquidity, activity shift and reference cost. The trust will then need to have its conclusions ratified by the Department before proceeding. Departmental officials will shortly be writing to all trusts with private finance initiative schemes explaining how this process will proceed.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Accession State Workers

Mr. Betts: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what grants have been given to local authorities to deal with matters related to accession state workers; and for what purposes the grants have been given. [63575]

Mr. McNulty: Grants supported by the Home Office under the joint Treasury and Cabinet Office "Invest to Save" initiative that impact in whole or in part on nationals of EU accession states have been awarded to local authorities in Barnsley, Crewe and Westminster. Grants have been given for the following projects:

Barnsley: A multi-agency project to research, formulate and implement a corporate integration strategy for refugees and migrant workers, including a "new arrivals" handbook and a reference guide for front line service delivery staff.

Crewe: "Support for the Changing Community in Crewe", a project that aims to co-ordinate an improved response to the needs of the migrant worker population and reduce the stress to service providers at district and county level.

Westminster: A project that seeks to reduce the number of accession state nationals sleeping rough, to discourage individuals who are ill-prepared for economic migration and to assist them to return home and to provide economic migrants with support into employment.

Alcohol-related Crime (Wirral, West)

Stephen Hesford: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many alcohol-related crimes were recorded in Wirral, West in each of the last 12 months. [62349]

Hazel Blears: The information requested is not collected centrally. It is not possible from the recorded crime statistics to identify those offences which are alcohol related.

Antisocial Behaviour

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of local authorities have antisocial behaviour officers. [62551]

Hazel Blears: All of the 351 Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRP) in England and 22 Community Safety Partnerships (CSP) in Wales have responded positively to our seed funding for Antisocial Behaviour Co-ordinators in each CDRP area. Many areas have now gone further and are using funding from a range of sources to establish and support antisocial behaviour teams. Findings from the Antisocial Behaviour Unit's second national survey of CDRPs in 2005 indicated that 60 per cent. of those CDRPs who responded had more staff than a year ago.

Arrest Statistics

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many drink-driving arrests there have been in *(a)* Romford and *(b)* Havering in each of the past 10 years; [62992]

(2) how many non-UK citizens have been arrested for sexual misconduct in each of the last eight years in *(a)* Romford, *(b)* Havering and *(c)* England and Wales; [63010]

(3) how many arrests have been made following raids on nightclubs in *(a)* London, *(b)* Havering and *(c)* England and Wales in each of the last seven years. [63017]

Paul Goggins: The information requested is not available centrally.

Asylum Seekers

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many complaints of racism by removal centre employees his Department received from detained asylum seekers in each of the last five years. [50648]

Mr. McNulty: The total number of complaints of racism made against all contracted staff, including those employed in removal centres can be found in the Complaints Audit Committee reports on the Immigration and Nationality Directorate website. However, information on the number of complaints of racism made by detained asylum seekers against removal centre employees is not readily available except on examination of Immigration and Nationality Directorate case files at disproportionate cost.

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his estimate is of the number of asylum seekers resident in *(a)* the constituency of Clwyd, West, *(b)* the county borough of Conwy and *(c)* the county of Denbighshire whose applications have not yet been determined. [63052]

Mr. McNulty: Data for the numbers of asylum seekers whose applications have not yet been determined are not available by region and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many failed asylum seekers left the UK in *(a)* January and *(b)* February under the pilot voluntary assisted return and reintegration programme. [63832]

Mr. McNulty: In order to be eligible for return under VARRP (Voluntary Assisted Return and Reintegration Programmes) the applicant must have either a current asylum application awaiting consideration or they must be a failed asylum seeker.

The number of people who left the UK under VARRP in January was 318 and in February 452.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many failed asylum seekers, who had exhausted all appeals, absconded prior to deportation in 2005. [63833]

Mr. McNulty: Information on the number of failed asylum seekers who having exhausted all appeals, absconded prior to deportation in 2005 is not readily available. This information could only be obtained by examination of individual case files at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Carswell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether an asylum seeker who has made a voluntary return and who later returned to the UK has the right to make a further claim for asylum. [63983]

Mr. McNulty: Where the person's original claim was refused and the further submissions they make on return to the United Kingdom do not satisfy us they are a refugee and contain nothing that is both new and creates a realistic prospect of success we will not regard it as a fresh asylum claim and may remove the person with no in country right of appeal. Even if we accept the further submissions amount to a fresh asylum claim there are provisions to prevent any appeal against refusal of that claim where there is no satisfactory reason why the details of the new claim were not provided earlier, or to prevent any in country appeal where we consider the claim to be clearly unfounded.

In assessing the claims made by those who have previously returned voluntarily we will take appropriate account of that return when assessing the merits of their present claim to fear persecution in their country of origin.

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers with a criminal record have been given indefinite leave to remain in *(a)* the last 12 months and *(b)* the last five years. [43168]

Mr. McNulty: Applications for asylum can be refused where a person has committed a serious non-political crime outside the UK or has committed a particularly serious crime in or outside the UK. Information about any criminal record is held on the individual case records but is not collated centrally: the total number of asylum seekers with criminal records who have been granted indefinite leave to remain, therefore, is not available and could be calculated only at disproportionate cost.

Bad Character Evidence

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment his Department has made of the impact on criminal proceedings of the provisions governing the admission of bad character evidence in the Criminal Justice Act 2003. [62557]

Fiona Mactaggart: We have commissioned a research project to assess the impact on the courts of the bad character provisions of the Criminal Justice Act 2003. The researchers are due to complete their work by the end of 2006.

Bail

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of *(a)* male and *(b)* female defendants in England and Wales charged with (i) summary only (ii) triable either way and (iii) indictable only matters in the latest year for which figures are available (A) received police bail, (B) did not receive police bail but subsequently received court bail and (C) remained in custody pending resolution of their case. [62521]

Fiona Mactaggart: The table shows figures for police bail decisions in 2004 with a further breakdown of the magistrates court bail decision for those arrested and held in custody. The remand data received by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform are often incomplete and custodial remands are believed to be under-recorded. The figures are estimates for England and Wales based on those areas providing reasonably complete data. Due to the poor quality of the data we are unable to present separate figures for triable either way and indictable only offences.

Persons directed to appear at magistrates courts by type of offence, how directed to appear and subsequent court bail decision, 2004

Percentage

	Indictable[1]			*Summary*			*All offences*		
	Male	*Female*	*All*	*Male*	*Female*	*All*	*Male*	*Female*	*All*
Summoned	10	12	10	73	84	75	57	69	59
Arrested and bailed	73	74	73	24	15	22	36	28	35
Arrested and held in custody	18	14	17	3	1	2	7	4	6
Who then received the following magistrates court bail decision:									
Remanded in custody	5	2	4	0	0	0	1	1	1
Remanded on bail[2]	7	6	7	1	0	1	3	2	2
Not remanded	7	5	6	1	1	1	3	2	2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

[1] Including triable either way offences.
[2] Including those remanded for part of the time in custody and part on bail.

Biometric Data

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what health and safety studies have been carried out on the long-term effects of iris scans conducted as part of biometric data collection. [59687]

Andy Burnham: It is envisaged that iris scans for the National Identity Register will be recorded on application to register and then once every 10 years as individuals renew their passport and/or identity card.

The Identity Cards Programme has sought advice with regard to the health and safety aspects of iris scanning. This advice suggests that no long term effects arise from iris scanning as planned by the Identity Card Scheme. For instance, the amount of infrared light that iris scanners emit is very small and is of a level far

smaller than many everyday appliances, such as desk lamps.

In addition, iris cameras for consumer use require CE health and safety certification before they can be sold. Thus, such technologies are tested against agreed EU health and safety standards.

As part of the implementation of the Identity Cards Programme, the Identity Cards Scheme will be designed to comply with all relevant health and safety standards.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to page 10, point 1.2.2.3, first bullet point of the UKPS Biometrics Enrolment Trial, what percentage of *(a)* all participants and *(b)* disabled people were (i) not very and (ii) not at all concerned about having their biometrics recorded prior to enrolment, broken down by type of biometric. [63594]

Andy Burnham: The percentage of participants who were "not very or not all" concerned about having their biometrics recorded prior to enrolments is shown in the following table, broken down by type of biometric.

	Iris image	*Facial image*	*Fingerprint*
Queta sample[1]	90	91	91
Opportunistic sample[2]	87	91	90
Disabled sample	84	90	89

[1] Representative cross-section of the UK population.
[2] Self-selected participants

British Nationality Act

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have had British citizenship removed under section 40(2) of the British Nationality Act 1981 and its subsequent amendments. [63326]

Mr. McNulty: I refer my right hon. Friend to the answer I gave to a similar question on 27 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 76W.

British Transport Police

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received on the possible amalgamations of the British Transport police with other forces; and if he will make a statement. [57197]

Hazel Blears: As the hon. Gentleman will be aware, the Department for Transport are currently undertaking a review of the British Transport police. As such, it would be inappropriate for me to make a statement on this matter until the review has reported its findings.

Business Crime

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps his Department is taking to reduce crime against business in the North-East. [63282]

Hazel Blears: The Home Office has previously funded Business Crime Reduction Advisors (BCRAs) in each of the Regional Government Offices. In the north-east the BCRA has been instrumental in the promotion of effective partnership working between local businesses, local authorities and local police forces. This work has led to a number of partnerships being accredited with the "Safer Business Award".

Much work has also been done to provide crime prevention advice and support for businesses in the north-east, and we are grateful to organisations such as Business Link for their continued help in disseminating this information.

In Hartlepool, the BCRA has worked closely with the town centre shopwatch partnership (Hartlepool Crime Net) to help them achieve accredited status. He has also worked with the local council, Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and police crime reduction officers on a range of issues, including the reduction of crime committed on industrial estates.

Carlile Report

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the Carlile Report on the use of restraint and isolation in secure training centres. [63421]

Fiona Mactaggart: My colleague, Baroness Scotland, met Lord Carlile, on 29 March to discuss his report. The Home Office and the Youth Justice Board are looking at the recommendations in the report. We will announce in due course any action we propose to take in relation to them.

"Clean Up Week"

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many offenders will be participating in 'Clean Up Week' 2006. [63007]

Fiona Mactaggart: As part of the year-round, nationwide Community Payback scheme, "Clean Up Week" aims to give communities a greater say in the kind of work offenders undertaking unpaid work do. Through this the objective is to increase the involvement of communities in criminal justice activities.

As such, although "Clean Up Week" did not involve members of the public voting for projects in all probation areas, it is hoped that interest in Community Payback will be stimulated nationwide. And of course in all probation areas offenders will continue to do unpaid work which benefits their communities, as they do every week.

In the eight "Clean Up Week" areas, projects vary in size and numbers of offenders working on them: from seven offenders for one day this week (and seven or eight every week until the project is complete) on the winning project in Warwickshire; to 90 offenders across the week on the winning project in Manchester. In Norfolk, since the projects (and votes) were spread out across the county, probation staff decided to go ahead with all five nominated projects, so approximately 250 offenders will take part.

So across the eight probation areas taking part in "Clean Up Week", around 486 offenders will be taking part in projects that were voted for by members of the public. But across the country as a whole, thousands

more offenders will be doing work which has been suggested by members of local communities and which benefits them.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the likely effects of "Clean Up Week" 2006 in Romford and Havering. [63008]

Fiona Mactaggart: Romford and Havering were not part of one of the Clean Up Week areas this year. The Probation Areas taking part (Avon and Somerset, Manchester, Leicestershire and Rutland, Humberside, Norfolk, South Wales, Teesside and Warwickshire) were chosen in consultation with the Communication Managers in local probation areas.

However, in Romford and Havering offenders continue to undertake a range of unpaid work this week, as in any other. Local Probation staff estimate that around 50 offenders will attend every weekday, and up to 120 per day at weekends. These offenders will do a range of tasks which benefit the communities of Romford and Havering. During the week much of the work takes place in community centres, where offenders will help permanent staff and do repair and decorating work. Or the work will take place outside, where they will clear overgrown footpaths or clean graffiti. On housing estates they will clear communal areas. Meanwhile at weekends much of the work takes place in schools: painting, decorating and cleaning. Through this work people who have offended can pay back and provide benefits to the community.

Correspondence

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Immigration and Nationality Directorate will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Hornsey and Wood Green of 7 November 2005 to regarding a constituent Mr. Hasan Gun (Home Office reference G306739). [53592]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 27 February 2006]:* The Director General of the Immigration and Nationality Directorate wrote to the hon. Lady on 31 March.

Mr. Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter of 15 February 2006 from the hon. Member for Walsall, North concerning a constituent, ref M4153/6. [60762]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 23 March 2006]:* I wrote to my hon. Friend on 31 March 2006.

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Immigration and Nationality Directorate will reply to the letters from the hon. Member for Hartlepool of 29 September 2005, 20 December 2005 and 6 March 2006 regarding the status of the case of Mrs. Brigitte Rowell (Reference P1046572). [61021]

Mr. McNulty: The Immigration and Nationality Directorate wrote to my hon. Friend on 24 March 2006.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Minister of State for Crime, Security and Communities expects to reply to the letter from the hon. Member for the Isle of Wight of 15 February on the Bichard report. [61630]

Hazel Blears *[holding answer 27 March 2006]:* I will be writing to the hon. Member very shortly with a full response to his letter of 15 February 2006.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) when he will reply to the letter dated 13 February from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, with regard to Mr. Wasim Buksh; [62438]

(2) when he will reply to the letter dated 13 February from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, with regard to Mr. D. Tekele. [62433]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I wrote to my right hon. Friend on 30 March 2006.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Immigration and Nationality Directorate will reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Warley of 5 December on behalf of Mr. Naim Urshini, Waterloo Road, Smethwick. [63328]

Mr. McNulty: The Immigration and Nationality Directorate replied to my right hon. Friend on 4 April 2006.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Immigration and Nationality Directorate will reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Warley of 9 January on behalf of Mr. and Mrs. Bent, 77 Albright Road, Oldbury. [63332]

Mr. McNulty: The Immigration and Nationality Directorate replied to my right hon. Friend on 4 April 2006.

Covert Surveillance (Prisons)

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what conclusions were drawn by the study by the Office of Surveillance Commissioners on covert human intelligence sources in London prisons; what plans the Government have to respond to the issues arising from the study; and if he will place the report in the Library. [63356]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Office of the Surveillance Commissioners (OSC) concluded that the Prison Service required more robust procedures and policies for covert human intelligence sources identification and management. An action plan is being implemented.

OSC inspection reports are written for the public authority that has been inspected. It is not standard practice to share findings widely. A copy of the report will not be placed in the Library.

Criminal Law Revision Committee

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent discussions he has had with the Criminal Law Revision Committee on the issue of anonymity for the accused prior to conviction in sex offence cases. [62025]

Paul Goggins: The work of the Criminal Law Revision Committee has been superseded by the Law Commission. The Home Secretary has had no recent

discussions with the Law Commission about anonymity for the accused prior to conviction in sex offence cases.

Criminal Records

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of *(a)* adult males and *(b)* adult females in England and Wales has a criminal record. [62523]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information which has been requested is not routinely produced.

Figures on the proportions of the population with a criminal history can be found in 'criminal careers of those born between 1953 and 1978' at: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs/hosb401.pdf. This publication focuses on samples of those born in particular years (1953, 1958, 1963, 1968, 1973 and 1978) to estimate the percentage of the population with a criminal history. Table 1 of the publication shows that by the age of 45, 33 per cent. of males and nine per cent. of females born in 1953 had a criminal record relating to offences on the "standard list"

Data Protection

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what level of security clearance is required for personnel with access to the Eurodac computer. [63824]

Mr. McNulty: The Eurodac Central Unit database is accessed via the Immigration and Nationality Directorate Automated Fingerprint Identification (APIS) system. This is an accredited system, ie it has been approved for use in security terms and fits with the Government secure systems, therefore personnel are required to have Basic Enhanced Checks (BC(E)) clearance to access the database.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations the Government have made to the EU about the level of access to visa information service data proposed for the UK. [63825]

Mr. McNulty: UK officials attend various EU Council Working Groups in which the Visa Information System (VIS) is discussed, the main one of which is the Visa Working Group. UK officials have also met separately with EU Commission representatives to discuss the UK's access to elements of VIS data.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what costs have been incurred to date to ensure that UK databases will be compatible with the EU Visa Information Service. [63826]

Mr. McNulty: To date, no costs have been incurred to ensure that UK databases will be compatible with the EU Visa Information System (VIS) as the form of any link between UK systems and VIS has yet to be defined.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the total cost of implementing UK access to EU Visa Information Service data. [63827]

Mr. McNulty: The VIS Regulation is still under negotiation in EU Council Working Groups and the European Parliament. The manner of access by the UK is yet to be determined; it is therefore not possible to estimate costs at this stage.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what differences will apply to the UK's level of access to information from the EU Visa Information Service (VIS) when it is operational, and the level of access accorded to countries to which the VIS regulations apply; and if he will make a statement. [63831]

Mr. McNulty: The VIS Regulation is still under negotiation in EU Council Working Groups and the European Parliament. The manner of access by the UK is yet to be determined; it is therefore not possible to estimate costs at this stage.

Date Rape

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many date rape cases have been reported in each of the last 12 months; where they were reported; and what assessment he has made of the use of progesterex in cases of date rape. [63360]

Paul Goggins: The information requested in relation to the number and location of date rape cases is not collected centrally. Progesterex does not exist. It has been the subject of a hoax e-mail which claims that progesterex, allegedly a drug used to sterilise horses, has been used in drug rape cases.

Deepcut Army Barracks

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost was of each forensic and other outside expert contracted to assist Surrey police in their re-opened investigation into deaths at Deepcut army barracks. [62128]

Hazel Blears: The Surrey police was responsible for the management of the investigation in to the deaths at Deepcut Barracks. I will ensure that the chief constable receives a copy of the question and replies to the hon. Member directly. Copies of the letter containing the response of Surrey police will be placed in the Library.

Departmental Estate

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the future of his Department's former headquarters in Queen Anne's Gate. [62883]

Ms Harman: I have been asked to reply.

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 8 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1526W to the right hon. Member for Haltemprice and Howden (David Davis).

Departmental Leave (Stress)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been on sick leave suffering from stress in his Department in each of the last three years; and what percentage of the total staff number this represents. [63550]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The figures from the centrally managed Home Office and the Agencies, Identity and Passport Service, and the Public Sector Prison Service Agency, are in the following table.

	Number of staff taking sick leave identified as stress[1]	Percentage of staff taking sick leave identified as stress as proportion of total staff
Home Office (including Immigration and Nationality Directorate)		
1 January 2005 to 31 December 05	620	[2]2.67
1 January 2006 to 31 March 06	200	[3]0.81
Identity & Passport Service (formerly UKPS)		
1 January 2003 to 31 December 03	95	4.04
1 January 2004 to 31 December 04	98	3.64
1 January 2005 to 31 January 05	117	3.42
1 January 2006 to 31 March 06	51	1.38
Public Sector Prison Service Agency[4]		
2003–04	3,977	8.4
2004–05	3,751	7.7
April 2005 to December 05	2,877	6.0

[1] Note on definitions. Stress as a unique category of sickness has only been recorded centrally by the Home Office since the move to the ADELPHI personnel system. For this reason precise data are unavailable for 2003–04.
[2] Total staff as at 31 December, Headcount.
[3] Total staff as at 31 March 2006, Headcount
[4] There is no clear medical definition of stress and therefore figures for the Public Sector Prison Service include all conditions of a psychological nature, a large proportion of which will have a stress element. The figures in the table reflect the total number of staff in the Public Sector Prison Service who were absent due to psychological conditions at any time during the period. A number of absences straddle more than one period and are therefore included in the table twice.

Departmental Staff

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the value is of *(a)* pay supplements, *(b)* bonuses and *(c)* other incentive packages that are payable in his Department on the basis of geographic location; how many people are in receipt of each payment; and what the total cost to his Department of each payment was in 2004–05. [35910]

Mr. Charles Clarke: A total of 13,423 staff received London locational allowance payments totalling £20,529,870 in 2004–05. In addition, 262 staff in the London pay area had a reserved rights entitlement to local pay additions totalling £89,001. No other supplements, bonuses or other incentive packages are payable on the basis of geographic location, but the Department does have differential basic pay rates for London, Gatwick and the rest of the country.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many jobs in his Department have been relocated to Wales since 2001. [57643]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 10 March 2006]:* So far as can be determined from central records no jobs in the central Home Office and immigration and nationality directorate, and the United Kingdom Passport Agency have been relocated to Wales since 2001. There has been no movement of Public Sector Prison Service jobs to Wales since 2001. However, over the next two years work will be moved from Public Sector Prison Service headquarters and establishments and will create 480 additional posts in Wales. These posts will replace approximately 1,200 posts from across England.

DNA Database

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of *(a)* people and *(b)* juveniles who will be registered on the national DNA database by 1 January (i) 2007, (ii) 2008, (iii) 2009 and (iv) 2010; and if he will make a statement. [41099]

Andy Burnham: The Home Office has produced an estimate of the projected growth in the number of individuals with a DNA profile on the National DNA Database for each year up to 2010.

The estimate is based on a number of different subsets of data including the following: the number of people arrested by the police, the number of people convicted of an offence and the number of people cautioned for an offence in England and Wales each year. It also takes account of repeat offenders who will not require re-sampling.

The forecast was primarily intended for internal purposes. A number of assumptions were made in producing it and it is therefore subject to a number of caveats. Home Office officials are planning to review and update it shortly.

No long term estimates have been made of the forecast growth rates of juveniles or other age groups of persons on the database or of the growth rate for other groups of persons, for example, by gender or ethnic appearance. The estimated number of persons from England and Wales who will be recorded on the National DNA Database in each year from 2007 to 2010 are shown in the table.

The estimates are based on the financial year from 1 April to end March.

Persons on NDNAD

April	*Number of individuals*
2007	3,305,564
2008	3,562,064
2009	3,894,164
2010	4,482,764

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many DNA profiles are held on the national DNA database, broken down by ethnic origin. [63096]

Andy Burnham: The information requested is not available. The national DNA database and underlying police national computer records indicate ethnic 'appearance' judged by a police officer. No information relating to self-assessed ethnicity is held on these databases. Information on ethnic appearance is available in the latest national DNA database annual report a copy of which will be put in the House Library.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what reason volunteers to the DNA database are not permitted subsequently to have their samples destroyed. [63139]

Andy Burnham: Samples from volunteers are destroyed unless they give written permission for them to be retained on the national DNA database.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what information he has collected on the percentage of the population in each *(a)* EU and *(b)* G8 country upon whom a DNA profile is held by the relevant national authority. [63142]

Andy Burnham: Information on the percentage of the population of each country that has a DNA profile held on a DNA database by the relevant national authority is available for 14 European countries and five G8 countries. It is shown in the following table. The data are the most recent figures available; they reflect the position at December 2005 for most countries listed in the table. The data for the Czech Republic, Norway, Slovenia, Spain and Canada are for differing dates earlier in 2005.

Percentage of population on DNA database

Country	*Population*	*Total persons on DNA database*	*Percentage of persons on DNA database*
Austria	8,100,000	84,379	1.04 0.04
Belgium	10,400,000	4,583	—
Croatia	4,600,000	10,744	0.23
Czech Republic	10,300,000	9,098	0.09
Denmark	5,500,000	4,084	0.07
Estonia	1,500,000	7,414	0.49
Finland	5,200,000	32,805	0.63
France	59,300,000	119,612	0.20
Germany	82,400,000	366,294	0.44
Hungary	10,200,000	28,278	0.28
Netherlands	16,100,000	14,747	0.09
Norway	4,500,000	6,745	0.15
Portugal[1]	10,300,000	—	—
Slovenia	2,000,000	5,782	0.29
Spain	40,400,000	2,656	0.01
Sweden	9,000,000	6,115	0.07

Percentage of population on DNA database

Country	*Population*	*Total persons on DNA database*	*Percentage of persons on DNA database*
Switzerland	7,360,000	69,019	0.94
United Kingdom	59,800,000	3,130,429	5.23
USA	298,400,000	2,941,206	0.99
Canada	32,270,500	75,138	0.23

[1] Portugal currently has a database for crime scene profiles only.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of DNA profiles held in England and Wales relate to individuals who have been *(a)* convicted of a recordable offence, *(b)* charged with a recordable offence and *(c)* arrested but subsequently released without being charged, broken down by ethnic origin in each case. [63144]

Andy Burnham: No information on ethnic origin, or self-identity, is available with respect to DNA records. I would refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 2 March in relation to the ethnic appearance of those arrested and subsequently released without charge. Data in respect of the charge and conviction status of people represented on the national DNA database broken down by ethnic appearance are not readily available and can only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his policy is on the length of time a DNA *(a)* sample and *(b)* profile can be kept in respect of an individual who has (i) been convicted of a serious or sexual crime, (ii) been convicted of a recordable offence other than a serious or sexual crime and (iii) not been convicted of a recordable offence. [63149]

Andy Burnham: All DNA samples and profiles are normally retained until the individual's 100th birthday or until the notification of his/her death. This applies to all recordable offences in respect of which the sample was taken.

Individuals whose DNA has been taken and have not been convicted of a recordable offence may, if they wish, apply to the chief constable of the force which took the DNA sample, to request, in exceptional circumstances only, that consideration be given to the destruction of the sample and removal of the profile from the national DNA database.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether DNA *(a)* samples and *(b)* profiles are kept after the individuals from whom they have been taken have died. [63150]

Andy Burnham: A DNA sample is normally destroyed and the DNA profile derived from it is normally deleted from the national DNA database upon notification of the death of the individual concerned.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the merits of the practice in Scotland where an individual's profile is removed from the DNA database following acquittal. [63159]

Andy Burnham: The Government have no plans to amend the law in England and Wales relating to the retention of DNA samples taken under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984. Although at present the

law in Scotland does not allow for the retention of DNA samples following a person's acquittal, this is currently under review by the Scottish Executive.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 2 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 954W, on DNA profiles, if he will break down by *(a)* police force area and *(b)* ethnic origin those who have a DNA profile on the National DNA Database and whose ethnic origin is known. [61897]

Hazel Blears *[holding answer 28 March 2006]:* The information requested will be placed in the Library.

Force	6 + 1 Ethnic Appearance Rating						Non-ethnic visual appearance code		Total
	White European	Dark European	Afro-Caribbean	Asian	Oriental	Arab	White	Non-white	
Avon and Somerset	296	10	65	27	3	14	16	8	439
Bedfordshire	52	2	14	23	—	—	108	55	254
Cambridgeshire	1,363	45	85	91	15	37	429	87	2,152
Cheshire	1,447	22	15	23	3	8	5	3	1,526
City of London	34	5	20	18	1	—	22	13	113
Cleveland	571	2	9	23	7	3	17	4	636
Cumbria	1,833	7	8	16	8	3	172	3	2,050
Devon and Cornwall	111	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	113
Derbyshire	2,526	42	115	149	10	25	40	33	2,940
Dorset	1,607	36	45	43	23	29	3	2	1,788
Durham	660	—	1	1	1	2	721	11	1,397
Dyfed Powys	1,653	21	11	31	11	11	11	—	1,749
Essex	4,320	106	346	123	45	20	551	84	5,595
Gloucestershire	1,674	19	95	41	9	4	28	9	1,879
GMP	6,385	94	560	814	68	115	124	11	8,171
Gwent	409	5	7	6	—	4	5	—	436
Hampshire	3,390	43	101	101	30	46	35	29	3,775
Hertfordshire	3,484	103	352	311	34	29	46	14	4,373
Humberside	22	—	1	—	—	3	3	4	33
Kent	5,617	172	246	217	62	74	406	100	6,894
Lancashire	3,933	44	67	461	15	26	235	20	4,801
Leicester	1,812	50	215	480	18	51	15	30	2,671
Lincolnshire	1,360	10	24	24	6	8	23	7	1,462
Merseyside	130	1	2	1	1	—	172	7	314
Met	5,366	828	4,265	1,550	493	362	4,935	6,195	23,994
Norfolk	499	16	19	3	1	3	82	3	626
North Wales	1,569	20	15	15	6	7	125	5	1,762
North Yorkshire	1,248	9	19	21	1	5	15	2	1,320
Northamptonshire	475	17	47	19	—	—	5	—	563
Northumbria	790	8	7	13	2	5	853	40	1,718
Nottinghamshire	1,217	7	77	49	4	5	215	45	1,619
South Wales	1,816	14	59	56	4	18	9	4	1,980
South Yorkshire	3,510	74	204	254	19	103	725	193	5,082
Staffordshire	3,879	39	142	299	17	24	25	2	4,387
Suffolk	92	2	4	2	—	1	2	—	103
Surrey	1,429	39	118	146	37	53	6	6	1,834
Sussex	3,067	72	212	177	40	63	75	16	3,722
Thames Valley	178	4	35	23	2	—	138	50	430
Warwickshire	257	3	14	20	1	2	39	2	338
West Mercia	6	—	—	—	—	—	5	—	11
West Midlands	5,864	148	1,355	1,778	46	175	67	35	9,468
West Yorkshire	2,132	18	165	444	8	24	8	1	2,800
Wiltshire	1,266	25	47	36	16	7	6	22	1,425
Total	79,349	2,183	9,208	7,889	1,067	1,370	10,522	7,955	118,743

Note:
5,604 Records include no ethnic appearance information. Total Records relating to people sampled on arrest but not subsequently charged or cautioned is 124,347.

Drink-driving Offences

John Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been prosecuted for drink-driving offences in the county of Durham in the last three years. [63369]

Fiona Mactaggart: Data from the Court Proceedings Database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform on the number of defendants prosecuted against in Durham for drink-driving offences from 2002 to 2004 are provided in the following table.

Data for 2005 will be available in the autumn of 2006.

Defendants prosecuted at magistrates courts in Durham police force area for offences relating to drink-driving from 2002 to 2004[1]

Number Offence description	2002	2003	2004
Causing death by careless driving when under the influence of drink or drugs[2]	2	0	1
Driving or attempting to drive a motor vehicle while unfit through drink or drugs (impairment) only to be used where it is unclear whether it is drink or drugs—see 803/09 or 803/10[3]	29	26	15
Driving or attempting to drive a motor vehicle while having a breath, blood or urine alcohol concentration in excess of the prescribed limit[4]	917	929	994
Driving or attempting to drive a motor vehicle and failing to without reasonable excuse provide a specimen for a laboratory test or two specimens for analysis of breath[5]	67	78	74

Defendants prosecuted at magistrates courts in Durham police force area for offences relating to drink-driving from 2002 to 2004[1]

Number *Offence description*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Being in charge of a mechanically propelled vehicle while unfit to drive through drink or drugs (impairment) only to be used where it is unclear whether it is drink or drugs—see 803/11 or 803/12[2]	4	8	2
In charge of a motor vehicle while having a breath, blood or urine alcohol concentration in excess of the prescribed limit[3]	43	32	29
In charge of a motor vehicle and failing without reasonable excuse to provide a specimen for a laboratory test or two specimens for analysis of breath[4]	2	10	11
Failing without reasonable excuse to provide a specimen of breath for a preliminary test[5]	5	1	3
Failing to allow specimen of blood to be subjected to laboratory test[10]	0	0	0
Driving or attempting to drive a motor vehicle while unfit through drink or drugs (impairment) Drink[11]	0	0	1
Being in charge of a mechanically propelled vehicle while unfit to drive through drink or drugs (impairment) Drink[12]	0	0	3
Being in charge of a mechanically propelled vehicle while unfit to drive through drink or drugs (impairment) Drugs[13]	0	0	2

[1] These data are provided on the principal offence basis.
[2] Road Traffic Act 1988 S.3A added by Road Traffic Act 1991 S.3 and amended by Criminal Justice Act 2003 S.285.
[3] Road Traffic Act 1988 S.4(1).
[4] Road Traffic Act 1988 Sec 5(1)*(a)*.
[5] Road Traffic Act 1988 Sec 7(6).
[6] Road Traffic Act 1988 S.4(2).
[7] Road Traffic Act 1988 Sec 5(1)*(b)*.
[8] Road Traffic Act 1988 Sec 7(6).
[9] Road Traffic Act 1988 Sec 6(6).
[10] Road Traffic Act 1988 S.7A as added by Police Reform Act 2002 S.56, S.57. Transport and Works Act 1992 S.31A as added by Police Reform Act 2002 S.58(4).
[11] Road Traffic Act 1988 S.4(2).
[12] Road Traffic Act 1988 S.4..2).
[13] Road Traffic Act 1988 S.4(2).

Drugs

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many children have been *(a)* arrested for and *(b)* convicted of (i) cocaine possession and (ii) the sale of cocaine in the last 12 months. [63399]

Hazel Blears: Arrest data for drug offences by drug type are not collected centrally. The available information relates to the number of persons aged 17 and under found guilty or cautioned under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 of unlawful possession, unlawful supply and possession with intent to supply offences involving cocaine during 2004.

Persons aged 17 and under found guilty or cautioned for cocaine offences in England and Wales, 2004

Type of offence	*Cautioned*[1]	*Found guilty*
Unlawful possession	56	85
Unlawful supply	3	17
Possession with intent to supply	4	51

[1] Includes reprimands and warnings for under 17s.

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the annual cost of *(a)* a prison place and *(b)* a residential drug rehabilitation place was in the last period for which figures are available. [50070]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 16 February 2006]*: The average cost of a prison place in 2004–05 was £40,992. This is calculated including all expenditure incurred by HMPS divided by the number of prison places.

The Home Office does not provide residential drug treatment places. The most recent data on charges for residential drug treatment provided by the National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse "Bedvacs service" is as follows:

	£
Average weekly	674.10
Median weekly	449.00

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* arrests, *(b)* convictions and *(c)* cautions there were for offences relating to (i) the possession and (ii) dealing in class (A) A, (B) B and (C) C drugs in (1) Cambridgeshire police authority area and (2) the Northern division of the Cambridgeshire constabulary in each year since 1997. [53716]

Paul Goggins: Arrest data for types of drug offences by class of drug are not collected centrally. The available information relates to the number of persons found guilty and cautioned under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. Figures for Cambridgeshire are shown in the tables.

Cannabis was reclassified as a class C drug in January 2004. For the purpose of this analysis, cannabis offenders are included within the class C figures for the entire period in question.

Table 1: Persons found guilty for drug possession and dealing[1] offences by class type[2], Cambridgeshire, by year

	Class A		Class B		Class C	
	Possession	Dealing	Possession	Dealing	Possession	Dealing
1997	88	19	78	32	326	79
1998	127	46	86	31	317	64
1999	158	45	86	31	294	76
2000	118	49	68	11	206	56
2001	160	73	48	10	237	37
2002	157	81	33	8	237	37
2003	123	178	32	11	243	33
2004	114	77	28	8	[3]205	31

[1] Offences of unlawful supply and possession with intent to supply unlawfully.
[2] Cannabis was reclassified to a class C drug in January 2004. For the purposes of this exercise, offences involving cannabis are considered within class C for the period under consideration.
[3] Police formal ('street') warnings for cannabis possession were introduced in April 2004.

Table 2: Persons cautioned for drug possession and dealing[1] offences by class type[2], Cambridgeshire, by year

	Class A		Class B		Class C	
	Possession	Dealing	Possession	Dealing	Possession	Dealing
1997	1	9	3	0	415	4
1998	27	6	20	0	563	11
1999	40	1	17	0	494	14
2000	30	0	8	2	414	6
2001	47	2	14	0	367	3
2002	71	3	14	0	330	2
2003	48	0	8	2	285	4
2004	59	0	16	1	[3]221	9

[1] Offences of unlawful supply and possession with intent to supply unlawfully.
[2] Cannabis was reclassified to a class C drug in January 2004. For the purposes of this exercise, offences involving cannabis are considered within class C for the period under consideration.
[3] Excludes police formal ('street') warnings for cannabis possession, introduced in April 2004.

Illegal Immigrants

Mr. Rob Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many illegal immigrants have been *(a)* detained and *(b)* arrested by the police in the last 12 months, broken down by police force area. [62713]

Hazel Blears: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 27 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 73W, on illegal immigration, what the reasons were for the changes between 2003 and 2005. [63136]

Mr. McNulty: The Immigration Service has deployed a range of initiatives to deter and detect illegal entry to the UK including moving controls overseas, enhancing juxtaposed controls in Paris, Lille, Brussels and Calais, deploying New Detection Technology in France and Belgium, enhanced visa regimes, the UK's network of Airline Liaison Officers and close co-operation with carriers, port authorities and our EU colleagues.

European Scrutiny Committee (Eurojust)

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will respond to requests from the European Scrutiny Committee to clarify his policy towards Eurojust guidelines as to which jurisdiction should prosecute; and if he will make a statement. [62686]

Andy Burnham: The letter dated 26 July 2005 to the Chairman of the European Scrutiny Committee responded to the Committee's request for clarification. A duplicate copy of the letter has been forwarded to the Committee.

Family Visitor Appeals

Mr. Carswell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many family visitor appeals have been received in each of the past five years. [63966]

Bridget Prentice: I have been asked to reply.

The volume of family visitor appeals received at the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal (AIT) and its predecessor, the Immigration Appellate Authority (IAA), over the last five business years are as follows:

Business year	*Family visitor appeal receipts*
2001–02	5,056
2002–03	9,856
2003–04	16,884
2004–05	30,643
2005–06[1]	49,738

[1] April to December 2005.
Note:
Information for the financial year 2005–06 is provisional.

Financial Offences (Convictions)

Sir Patrick Cormack: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average sentence passed for those convicted of offences connected with

(a) extortion, (b) intellectual property crimes, (c) money laundering, (d) smuggling and (e) oils fraud in England and Wales was over the last five years. [63798]

Fiona Mactaggart: The available information is shown in the following tables.

Table 1: persons sentenced for various indictable offences, those given custody and average custodial sentence length, England and Wales 2000–04

Offence	Statute	Year	Numbers of persons sentenced	Number sentenced to immediate custody	Average custodial sentence length (months)
(a) Extortion					
Blackmail	Theft Act 1968	2000	112	77	31.9
		2001	110	79	44.6
		2002	133	97	30.9
		2003	126	86	31.8
		2004	138	106	31.7
(b) Intellectual property crime					
Copyright infringement etc	Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988	2000	50	5	5.4
		2001	50	2	5.2
		2002	25	2	7.5
		2003	48	1	4.0
		2004	59	13	3.6
Unauthorised use of Trade Mark, falsification of register etc	Trade Marks Act 1994	2000	367	42	5.7
		2001	326	27	7.6
		2002	328	23	7.2
		2003	402	21	8.1
		2004	492	71	5.0
Supplying or possession for purposes of supply of video recording of unclassified work	Video Recordings Act 1984	2000	168	9	3.7
		2001	143	8	2.4
		2002	134	2	9.5
		2003	97	4	5.0
		2004	86	5	5.0
False trade descriptions	Trade Description Act 1968	2000	346	19	6.9
		2001	266	11	7.5
		2002	227	6	4.8
		2003	197	11	7.4
		2004	173	3	5.3
(c) Money laundering					
Offences relating to drugs (concealing proceeds of drug trafficking etc, 'tipping off' and prejudicing an investigation)	Drug Trafficking Act 1994 and Proceeds of Crime Act 2002	2000	27	18	38.7
		2001	41	31	59.7
		2002	40	31	45.3
		2003	49	39	38.9
		2004	28	21	30.1
Offences relating other than to drugs (concealing, acquiring etc, criminal property, failure to disclose 'tipping off' etc)	Proceeds of Crime Act 2002	2000	n/a	n/a	n/a
		2001	n/a	n/a	n/a
		2002	1	—	—
		2003	12	6	49.5
		2004	124	62	30.6
(d) Smuggling					
Unlawful importation or exportation of controlled drug	Customs and Excise Management Act 1979 and Misuse of Drugs Act 1971	2000	1,249	1,131	66.9
		2001	1,643	1,533	62.3
		2002	1,699	1,601	58.5
		2003	1,151	1,089	66.7
		2004	1,063	1,008	71.5
Fraudulent evasion of duty(not involving drugs)—alcohol, tobacco etc	Customs and Excise Management Act1979	2000	1,018	641	11.6
		2001	463	317	20.0
		2002	282	189	16.6
		2003	421	223	14.1
		2004	334	156	15.8

Principal offence basis.
n/a = not available.
Source:
RDS NOMS, Home Office

Table 2—persons sentenced to immediate custody for oils fraud offences and average custodial sentence length, England and Wales 2001–04

Offence	*Statute*	*Year*	*Number sentenced to immediate custody*	*Average custodial sentence length (months)*
(e) Oils fraud				
Misuse of rebated fuel and distribution of illicit fuel, importation, smuggling and laundering of fuel	Hydrocarbon Oil Duties Act 1979 and Customs and Excise Management Act 1979			
		2001	9	16.0
		2002	8	14.0
		2003	17	14.0
		2004	12	15.0

Note:
There will be some overlap between these figures and those shown in table 1 above under 'Smuggling—Fraudulent evasion of duty'.
Source:
HMRC

Fixed Penalty Notices

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many fixed penalty notices for traffic offences have been issued in each of the last eight years, broken down by police force area; [61275]

(2) how many fixed penalty notices for traffic offences have not been paid in each of the last eight years, broken down by police force area; [61276]

(3) how much income has been raised from fixed penalty notices relating to traffic offences in the last eight years, broken down by police force area. [61291]

Hazel Blears: Information on fixed penalty notices issued for motoring offences by offence groups and police force area can be found in the annual Home Office publication 'Offences relating to motor vehicles, England and Wales supplementary tables'—Tables 20*(a)* to 20*(c)* refer. Copies are available from the Library. Data are also collected centrally on the disposal, (i.e. paid, fine registration certificate issued etc) of fixed penalty notices issued by individual police force area. However because of the time taken for the procedures for payment to be enforced the data are collected approximately nine months later than the period of issue. Tables 21*(a)* and 21*(b)* of the above publication details data by number and percentage of fixed penalty notices by result. Information on revenue generated from fixed penalty notices issued as a result of traffic offences is not available centrally.

Football Fans

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what support and protection his Department offers to English football fans travelling abroad. [61185]

Dr. Howells: I have been asked to reply.

We provide consular assistance to British football supporters travelling overseas for club or international fixtures. We work closely with the relevant football bodies, including fans' groups and authorities, law enforcement in the UK and overseas, to prepare an appropriate consular service for such games. The assistance we provide to British nationals who are in difficulty overseas may be found in "Support for British Nationals Abroad: A Guide", which was launched by my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary on 21 March. The Guide can be found on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website at: http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1100183245921.

Greater Manchester Police

Mark Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent representations he has received on the financial situation of Greater Manchester police. [60247]

Hazel Blears: We received written representations from Manchester Police authority in response to the provisional police funding settlement announced on 5 December. These were fully taken into account in determining the final settlement that was agreed by the House on 6 February.

I received public correspondence from one local MP in February about Greater Manchester's budget for 2006–07. My officials replied on 16 March to correspondence of 8 March from a councillor for Oldham metropolitan borough.

Harassment Complaints

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many complaints of *(a)* bullying and *(b)* sexual harassment have been investigated in his Department in each of the last three years; and how many complaints have been upheld. [63552]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The following table provides details about the number of complaints of *(a)* bullying and *(b)* sexual harassment that have been investigated over the last three years together with their outcomes:

	Complaints
Home Office (excluding immigration and nationality directorate	
2004	Bullying: no cases. Sexual harassment: one case, not upheld.
2005	Bullying: five cases, these are still under investigation. Sexual harassment: no cases.
2006	Bullying: no cases. Sexual harassment: no cases.

	Complaints
Immigration and nationality directorate	
2004	Comprehensive information is not available in the requested format and could be obtained only at a disproportionate cost.
2005	Bullying: 26 cases of which four were upheld after investigation. Sexual harassment: two cases of which one was upheld after investigation.
2006	No cases to date.
Her Majesty's prison service	Comprehensive information is not available in the requested format and could be obtained only at a disproportionate cost.
Identity and Passport Services[1]	
April 2003 to March 2004	Two complaints were made, neither were upheld
April 2004 to March 2005	14 complaints were made, four were upheld.
April 2005 to March 2006	Seven complaints were made, three were upheld.

[1] The Identity and Passport Services do not separate complaints and the response is based on total complaints made.

Hit and Run Incidents

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many hit and run incidents have led to an individual being convicted in each of the last eight years, broken down by police force area. [61280]

Hazel Blears: Information on the number of hit and run incidents that have led to court proceedings is not collected centrally. Available information taken from the Court Proceedings Database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform and given in the table shows the number of offenders found guilty at all courts for the offence of 'failing to stop after an accident' under the Road Traffic Act 1988 s. 170 (4) from 1996 to 2003 (latest available). The data do not distinguish between those offences which resulted in injury from those which resulted in damage or both. 2004 data will be available at the end of March 2006.

Offenders found guilty at all courts for accident offences[1] *by police force area, England and Wales, 1996–2003*[2]

	Number of persons							
Forces	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Avon & Somerset	244	227	188	185	158	165	86	88
Bedfordshire	30	47	59	68	72	66	64	62
Cambridgeshire	53	78	76	79	71	50	58	69
Cheshire	160	136	158	168	181	150	175	197
Cleveland	54	62	51	48	40	35	46	45
Cumbria	96	100	66	77	84	84	83	98
Derbyshire	113	121	94	112	109	110	109	122
Devon & Cornwall	128	157	109	106	91	118	139	154
Dorset	93	112	97	71	68	80	57	87
Durham	56	43	48	60	37	62	58	56
Essex	205	232	248	222	274	276	295	302
Gloucestershire	93	62	79	64	63	78	72	84
Greater Manchester	421	444	447	469	442	470	465	423
Hampshire	188	188	176	182	177	188	195	200
Hertfordshire	120	126	108	101	127	108	136	144
Humberside	150	141	127	113	107	146	126	150
Kent	132	139	97	68	84	83	103	90
Lancashire	185	154	150	132	125	135	93	135
Leicestershire	122	124	95	104	94	108	79	105
Lincolnshire	59	64	47	59	47	67	67	73
London, City of	8	11	12	21	8	11	5	7
Merseyside	144	174	163	83	120	151	130	210
Metropolitan Police	663	613	584	558	455	418	432	383
Norfolk	147	143	157	128	109	118	127	123
Northamptonshire	91	95	84	69	53	24	12	55
Northumbria	114	117	117	110	148	139	146	141
North Yorkshire	126	137	113	117	85	111	108	101
Nottinghamshire	144	151	165	124	142	130	127	142
South Yorkshire	142	153	153	152	184	197	169	197
Staffordshire	175	148	116	69	37	71	72	103
Suffolk	72	96	79	65	53	88	64	81
Surrey	65	56	65	134	91	104	75	84
Sussex	181	187	153	147	127	96	86	103
Thames Valley	243	167	135	142	114	170	174	144
Warwickshire	78	57	57	64	61	61	48	55

Offenders found guilty at all courts for accident offences[1] by police force area, England and Wales, 1996–2003[2]

Forces	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
	Number of persons							
West Mercia	149	160	141	166	131	167	203	205
st Midlands	471	447	462	434	418	385	406	361
st Yorkshire	270	266	292	282	261	282	279	243
Wiltshire	64	67	71	53	59	81	73	66
Dyfed Powys	49	61	46	44	56	46	48	54
Gwent	37	57	72	56	63	53	46	46
North Wales	74	97	109	92	67	76	103	88
South Wales	178	157	172	154	150	136	152	161
Total	6,387	6,374	6,038	5,752	5,443	5,694	5,591	5,837

[1] Aiding, abetting, causing or permitting accident offences under the RTA88 s. 170(4).
[2] These data are on the principal offence basis.

Home Curfews

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what reasons his Department extended the home detention curfew scheme in April 2003; what assessment he has made of its effect; and what plans he has for further extension. [59307]

Fiona Mactaggart: On 10 April 2003 the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department announced two changes to the Home Detention Curfew scheme which took effect from 14 July 2003. Firstly, the maximum period a prisoner may spend on HDC was increased from 90 days to 135 days and secondly, in order to maintain public confidence in the scheme, prisoners serving sentences for certain serious offences considered to be of particular concern to the public were to be presumed unsuitable for HDC unless there were exceptional circumstances.

The maximum curfew period was increased in order to build on the scheme's previous success by providing earlier resettlement opportunities for lower risk offenders. Although not its primary purpose, this measure also helped to deal with pressures on the prison population. HDC has helped in providing prisoners with a smoother and more effective re-integration back into the community. The scheme provides suitable, low risk, prisoners with the opportunity to rejoin employment, training and their families at an earlier stage while providing protection to the public. Since its introduction in 1999, 85 per cent. of those released on HDC have completed their curfew period successfully.

4 per cent. have been reported as having re-offended during the curfew period. The scheme is kept under careful review but there are presently no plans to extend the scheme further.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what processes are in place to inform prisoners of reasons why home detention curfews are refused; and if he will make a statement. [62885]

Fiona Mactaggart: Prisoners who are statutorily eligible for release under the home detention curfew scheme but, following an assessment of suitability, are refused release, are informed in writing of the reasons for refusal, their right of appeal, their right to see the disclosable reports and other documentation upon which the decision was based, and their right to make oral or written representations to the Governor dealing with the appeal.

Prisoners who are presumed unsuitable for HDC due to the nature of their offences are informed in writing as soon as possible after sentence that, unless there are exceptional circumstances, they will not be released on HDC. If such prisoners consider that their case is exceptional they must draw this to the Governor's attention giving full details. Where the Governor considers that the case is not exceptional the prisoner may appeal against the decision.

Further details of the refusal notification procedures are set out in Prison Service Order 6700 (Home Detention Curfew) as amended. Statutorily eligible prisoners who are refused HDC have a right to appeal against the decision under the Prisoners' Request and Complaints Procedures. Further details of these procedures are contained in Prison Service Order 2510. Both PSOs are available on the HM Prison Service website.

Identity Cards

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has undertaken a privacy impact assessment of the proposed national identity scheme; and if he will make a statement. [62558]

Andy Burnham: The Government have carefully considered the privacy implications of the national identity scheme. The national identity register will hold only that information which is listed in Schedule 1 of the Identity Cards Act 2006. A significant amount of the information listed in Schedule 1 is already held on the passport database. For example, most of the information contained within paragraphs one, five and seven are held on the passport database which is administered by the Identity and Passport Service. Additionally, the information and personal reference numbers contained in paragraphs three and four are either allocated by a Government Department, or in the case of documents issued overseas, are generally recorded by a Government Department, usually the Immigration Service. The national identity register will hold much less information than databases that are administered by various private companies, for example credit card issuers and supermarket loyalty schemes. The Identity Cards Act ensures that personal reference numbers which would tend to reveal sensitive personal data cannot be held on the register. The PNC number for example, could not be added to the register as this could suggest that the individual had been of interest to the police, or that the individual had a criminal record.

In addition to the safeguards in the Data Protection Act with which the scheme will comply, the Act also provides additional safeguards. Information will be disclosed only with consent under Section 12 of the Act, or via strictly controlled statutory procedures set out in Sections 17–21 of the Act. The individual will be able to view the 'audit log' information, set out in paragraph 9 of Schedule 1, through which they can view each occasion on which information has been disclosed from their record. A function of the national identity scheme commissioner set out at Section 22, will be to keep under review the extent to which the arrangements of the scheme make appropriate provision for securing the confidentiality of the information stored in the register.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make it his policy to impose a duty on the National Identity Scheme Commissioner to investigate and resolve problems with identity cards experienced by individuals; and if he will make a statement. [62559]

Andy Burnham: The Identity and Passport Service operates a complaints system which individuals will be able to access in order to resolve any problems they may experience with identity cards. In addition, section 22 of the Identity Cards Act 2006, ensures that the commissioner must keep under review the extent to which arrangements made by the Secretary of State make appropriate provision for dealing with complaints. There is nothing in the Identity Cards Act that would either prevent individuals from making the commissioner aware of their complaints, or the commissioner from taking an interest in a complaint that had been brought to his attention.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will place in the Library a copy of his reply to the letter from Dr. Brian Gladman of 9 February on identity cards. [62612]

Andy Burnham: A reply to Dr. Brian Gladman's letter was sent on the 27 of March 2006. However, it is not normal practice to place copies of correspondence with members of the public in the Library of the House.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the cost of instituting *(a)* voluntary and *(b)* mandatory identity cards until 2011. [63194]

Andy Burnham: The latest cost estimates are set out in the Regulatory Impact Assessment which was published in May 2005. The current best estimate for the average annual operating costs of issuing passports and identity cards to British Citizens is £584 million per annum. Section 37 of the Identity Cards Act 2006 sets out that a report detailing estimated expenditure must be placed before Parliament every six months. The first report is due by 30 September 2006.

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the final date is expected to be for an individual to renew his or her passport without compulsory entry on the Identity Cards Register. [63894]

Andy Burnham: The final date for an individual to renew their passport without registration of the individual's details on the National Identity Register will depend on the date from which passports become designated documents under secondary legislation.

No final decision has been taken with regard a specific date at present as this will be influenced by information arising from the procurement process.

Identity Fraud

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received in the last 12 months on identity fraud and theft. [60644]

Andy Burnham: Between 1 March 2005 and 28 February 2006 my ministerial colleagues, hon. Members and members of the public made 108 representations on identity theft and identity fraud. The Home Office led Identity Fraud Steering Committee (IFSC), a collaboration between UK financial bodies, Government and the police implements effective measures that would help to combat the threat of identity fraud including those raised by victims of this type of crime.

The Government welcome the setting up of an all-party group on identity fraud. Last year I launched an IFSC campaign to raise awareness of identity crime to help people protect themselves against identity fraud, what to do if it happens to them and where to get further help. The website www.identitytheft.org.uk provides details of the leaflet that was distributed via police stations, Citizen Advice Bureaux, main libraries, UK Passport Service and DVLA offices in September 2005. I have also provided copies of the leaflet for hon. Members to pass on to their constituents.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have reported incidents of identity fraud and theft in each of the last 10 years. [62578]

Andy Burnham: Offences of identity fraud and theft cannot be separately identified in the recorded crime series therefore the information requested is not available centrally.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what support and advice his Department offers to victims of identity fraud and theft. [62579]

Andy Burnham: The Identity Fraud Steering Committee (IFSC) was established to lead a cross public-private sector work programme to tackle identity fraud.

The IFSC was responsible for the production of a website—www.identitytheft.org.uk—which explains how to keep personal information safe, how to get help if one is the victim of identity theft, and what is being done to tackle this growing crime. This information has now been put into a leaflet which I launched last year. The leaflet provides the public with a quick and easy guide on things to look out for that indicate that they may be at risk of becoming a victim of identity theft or fraud, or that they are already a victim. The leaflet has been distributed to main police stations, public libraries, Citizens Advice Bureaux, Identity and Passport Service regional offices and local DVLA offices. An online version can be found on the identity theft website. The leaflet has also been taken on and co-branded by a number of organisations such as banks and credit reference agencies who have made it available to their customers.

More generally, the Home Office provides the voluntary organisation, Victim Support with a substantial grant to offer help to people who find themselves in the unfortunate position of being a victim of crime.

Stephen Hesford: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people in Wirral, West constituency have reported crimes involving identity fraud in each of the last 12 months; and what sums were involved. [62350]

Andy Burnham: Offences of identity fraud cannot be separately identified in the recorded crime series therefore the information requested is not available centrally.

Immigration and Asylum Act

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 16 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1102W, on asylum/immigration, whether any individuals have been removed under section 10(8) of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999. [63577]

Mr. McNulty: Section 10(8) provides that the setting of removal directions invalidate any leave to enter or remain in the UK given to a person before the directions are made or while they are in force. Information on removals is published annually in the regular control of immigration statistics, available on the Home Office RDS website at: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Immigration and Nationality Directorate

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his assessment is of the Immigration and Nationality Directorate's website; and how many days it was inaccessible in the last year for which figures are available. [63425]

Mr. McNulty: While not inaccessible, the Immigration and Nationality Directorate website has been performing slowly. Hardware and software failures due to unseen increased demand have caused delays. A significant amount of work is currently being undertaken to improve the service of the website. The Home Office has approved the purchase of a new hardware platform and the implementation of a new site management tool. The rollout of these technical solutions will noticeably improve the performance rate of the website. This is scheduled for completion by 15 April 2006.

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action he is taking to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Immigration and Nationality Directorate; what the operating cost of the Directorate has been for the past 12 months for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [63606]

Mr. McNulty: The Government's Five Year Strategy for Immigration and Nationality (Cm 6472, February 2005) includes many initiatives which will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Immigration and Nationality Directorate. These include:

Developing plans for biometrics, including biometric visas, biometric residence permits, passports and ID cards to improve security at and within our borders. In parallel with the introduction of biometric visas overseas, biometrics will be added to travel documents issued for asylum seekers.

Project Semaphore, the working prototype for the e-borders programme, will be extended to increase the collection of passenger data up to 30 million passengers per annum. It will focus on routes of specific interest to the border control agencies in order to deliver early operational benefits in advance of e-borders during 2008.

Continuing to work on the points-based system to ensure that the migration system works to the benefit of the UK by setting out a detailed system blueprint, changing the criteria of the highly skilled migrants programme as part of the phased implementation of the new system, and implementing a system for non-attending students.

Fully implementing the new asylum model, expected to be achieved by the end of 2006. Improving the contact we have with asylum applicants throughout the process so that we are able to remove swiftly those whose applications fail. This will be delivered through use of new contact management technologies and linking reporting requirements to payment of support.

Rolling out for settlement applicants who have limited formal educational opportunities specially developed language with citizenship courses, successful completion of which will enable them to qualify for settlement and ultimately citizenship without the need for a further test.

Developing an action plan for combating human trafficking covering:

prevention and demand reduction; investigation and prosecution of traffickers; and protection and support for victims.

Implementing new accommodation contracts to improve cohesion in the communities to which asylum seekers are dispersed, and achieve further savings on asylum support costs.

The published resource accounts for 2004–05 show net total expenditure for IND of £1690 million.

Immigration Detention (Children)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent representations he has received on the detaining of children in immigration detention centres. [62667]

Mr. McNulty: Both I and my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary have recently met the Children's Commissioner. Our discussions covered a number of issues including the detention of children. In addition, I recently met representatives of Save the Children. This meeting was a follow-up to a meeting held last year to discuss the Save the Children report "No Place for a Child".

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many children are being held in detention for immigration purposes, broken down by age. [62668]

Mr. McNulty: The latest published information pertains to persons detained as at 31 December 2005. The accompanying table shows the number of persons detained solely under Immigration Act powers as at 31 December 2005 recorded as being under 18, broken down by age. Information on the number of persons detained, broken down by those who are under 18 years of age, are published in the Quarterly Asylum Bulletin,

on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

Minors recorded as being held in detention (excluding Oakington) in the United Kingdom solely under Immigration Act powers, as at 31 December 2005[1]

	of whom: Age of person as at 31 December 2005			
Total minors[2]	*Under five*	*Five to 11*	*12 to 16*[2]	*17*[2]
30	10	15	5	*

[1] Figures rounded to the nearest 5, with * = 1 or 2, may not sum due to rounding and exclude those whose parent(s) are detained under both criminal and immigration powers.
[2] People in detention recorded as being under 18 as at 31 December 2005. Figures are likely to overstate because applicants aged 18 or over may claim to be younger on arrival in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average time a child was detained for immigration purposes in a detention centre in the latest period for which figures are available. [62669]

Mr. McNulty: Period statistics covering those leaving from detention during July to September 2005 has been published. Statistics on the total number of persons under 18 years of age at the time of leaving detention during this period, broken down by length of detention are published in the Quarterly Asylum bulletin. Published editions of this bulletin and other information on immigration and asylum are available on the Home Office's Research Development and Statistics website at: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the longest time a child presently detained for immigration purposes has been held; what the longest period a child has been so held since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [62670]

Mr. McNulty: Management information shows that the longest length of time that a child, who is presently being detained solely under Immigration Act powers, has been held is between four and six months.

Information on the longest length of time since 1997, that a child, who is being detained solely under Immigration Act powers, is unavailable.

Published statistics on the detention of minors, for both those detained as at the last Saturday of the quarter and those that have left detention over a period of time, broken down by length of detention are available on the Home Office's Research Development and Statistics website: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html. Minors are detained only in two limited circumstances: first, as part of a family group whose detention is considered appropriate; second, when unaccompanied, while alternative care arrangements are made and normally just overnight. While the detention of families with children is very regrettable, it nevertheless remains necessary in appropriate cases in order to maintain an effective immigration control and to tackle abuses of the asylum system.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has for alternatives to detention for children in immigration cases; and if he will make a statement. [62725]

Mr. McNulty: People under 18 are detained under Immigration Act powers in only two circumstances: as part of a family group and, when unaccompanied, if it is exceptionally necessary to do so while alternative care arrangements are made. Unaccompanied children are normally granted temporary admission in co-operation with social services if no relatives or friends are available to accommodate them, and are rarely made subject to reporting arrangements.

Immigration Officers

Mr. Scott: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people were employed *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time as immigration officers in the last three years for which figures are available. [53619]

Mr. McNulty: The following table indicates how many immigration officers were employed within the Immigration and Nationality Directorate in the last three years.

	Full-time (headcount)	*Part-time (headcount)*	*Full-time equivalent*
2003 (31 December)	3146	304	3341.1
2004 (31 December)	3095	331	3305.2
2005 (31 December)	2994	376	3245.21
2006 (2 June)	3142	385	3403.96

Note:
The figures in the table do not include staff in other operational grades such as chief immigration officer and immigration inspector.

Indefinite Leave to Remain

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people living in the Putney constituency in March 2006 were awaiting a final decision regarding their application for indefinite leave to remain; and how many had been waiting *(a)* less than one year, *(b)* one to two years; *(c)* three to four years, *(d)* four to five years, *(e)* five to six years, *(f)* six to seven years, *(g)* seven to eight years and *(h)* over eight years; and if he will make a statement. [63817]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 19 April 2006]:* The information requested could be obtained only by examination of individual records at disproportionate cost.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications for indefinite leave to remain in the UK have been waiting for a decision for longer than *(a)* 13 weeks, *(b)* 26 weeks and *(c)* 52 weeks. [63820]

Mr. McNulty: The requested information on outstanding indefinite leave to remain applications is not available and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

International Rendition

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what information officials in United Kingdom *(a)* police and *(b)* security services collect on the transit through UK airports of aircraft used by United States officials for the purpose of an international rendition. [36412]

Mr. Charles Clarke: We have made clear to the US authorities that we expect them to seek permission to render detainees via UK territory and airspace (including overseas territories), and that we will grant permission only if we are satisfied that the rendition would accord with UK law and our international obligations. We would expect them to make available to us whatever information we judged necessary to allow us to decide whether or not to permit the use of UK airspace or territory.

Iraq/Afghanistan

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many meetings he has had with representatives of *(a)* Iraqi and *(b)* Afghan communities living in the UK in each of the last three years. [54767]

Mr. McNulty: My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary meets regularly with representatives of different communities living in the UK, including members of the Iraqi and Afghan communities.

Jury Service

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent representations he has received on increasing the upper age limit for jury service. [62232]

Fiona Mactaggart: In the last 18 months representations have been received from two people who favoured raising the present upper limit of 70 for jury service, and from two who favoured reducing it.

Licensing Act

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will estimate the change in the levels of crime on university campuses in the UK *(a)* since the coming into force of the Licensing Act 2003 and *(b)* in each of the last 10 years. [62981]

Hazel Blears: Information on crime at university campus level is not collected centrally. The Home Office are conducting an evaluation of the impact of the Licensing Act on levels of crime and disorder in England at a national and local level. However, data relating specifically to crime on university campuses are not being collected as part of the evaluation.

London Bombings

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether there is CCTV footage from King's Cross Station of the London bombers on the morning of 7 July 2005. [63938]

Hazel Blears: On 12 July 2005, Deputy Assistant Commissioner Peter Clarke said that the Metropolitan Police Service had identified CCTV footage from the morning of 7 July at King's Cross station showing the four men believed to have been responsible for the explosions on that date. Due to the ongoing police investigation, this footage has not been released to the public except for a still image of the man believed to be responsible for the explosion on the bus.

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on his Department's discussions with *(a)* the victims, *(b)* the families of victims and *(c)* groups that represent the victims and their families of the terrorist arracks on 7 July 2005. [57552]

Tessa Jowell: As Minister responsible for the aftercare of victims, I have been asked to reply to this question.

Last year I invited representatives of all 52 bereaved families to meet me. As a result of this I met with family members and partners of 25 of the 52 people who lost their lives, at three meetings arranged by my Department in the autumn, to discuss their experiences and the lessons we might learn. I also met with several other bereaved families after the service of remembrance on the 1 November 2005, which my Department arranged. Since 7 July, I have been in contact with representatives of 37 of those who died. Officials from my Department attended the most recent bereaved support group meeting at the 7 July Assistance Centre and my Department is consulting with family members on proposals for a permanent memorial. I have extended an open invitation to any family members who wish to meet me on a more personal basis to do so at any time.

I met with a number of survivors at the service of remembrance and have arranged a series of more formal meetings, involving the Metropolitan Police and 7 July Assistance Centre, over the coming months.

My Department will also be involving bereaved families and survivors in our plans for a fitting act of commemoration on 7 July this year.

Magistrates Courts

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the causes of abortive magistrate court hearings; and what steps his Department is taking to prevent them. [56121]

Ms Harman: Her Majesty's Courts Service, together with criminal justice system (CJS) partners, monitors the performance of magistrates courts with regard to ineffective trials. The CJS has introduced the Criminal Case Management Programme to reduce abortive hearings in the courts. In addition there is a monthly analysis of performance utilising quantitative and qualitative information undertaken by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform (OCJR) and HMCS. These measures have tackled the root cause of the many different problems which lead to ineffective hearings such as defendants not turning up at court, witnesses being absent, the prosecution and defence not being sufficiently ready and there being insufficient court time to hear a case. Ineffective trials have reduced from 24 per cent. to 12.7 per cent. in the Crown Court and from 31 per cent. to 21.1 per cent. in the magistrates courts since 2002. The data confirm that the causes of ineffective trials have reduced significantly. In the magistrates courts ineffective trials where the defendant

was absent has improved by 58 per cent. In the Crown Court ineffective trials where the defence, and the Crown Prosecution Service were not ready have improved by 73 per cent. and 63 per cent. respectively. Additionally, HMCS and other CJSs are testing new approaches to case management to further reduce the number of abortive hearings at court.

Manslaughter/Murder Convictions

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many defendants *(a)* were found guilty of and *(b)* pleaded guilty to (i) manslaughter which involved their killing another person as a result of gross negligence and (ii) murder which involved their having killed another person (A) with the intention of doing that other person serious harm and (B) with reckless indifference to whether the victim would be killed in each of the last five years for which figures are available; [63219]

(2) how many defendants *(a)* were found guilty of and *(b)* pleaded guilty to (i) murder which involved their having killed another person with the intention of killing that other person, (ii) complicity in or assisting a suicide, (iii) infanticide and (iv) manslaughter which involved killing another person by means of a criminal act which the defendant intended to cause some injury or realised might cause some injury in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [63221]

Fiona Mactaggart: Data from the Court Proceedings Database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform on the number of defendants found guilty, and who pleaded guilty at all courts in England and Wales for offences relating to murder, suicide, infanticide, and manslaughter for the years 2000 to 2004, are provided in the following table.

It is not possible to identify those *(a)* found guilty, and those *(b)* who pleaded guilty, for (i) murder which involved their having killed another person with the intention of killing that other person, (ii) murder which involved their having killed another person (A) with the intention of doing that other person serious harm, and (B) with reckless indifference to whether the victim would be killed or not, as the data is not collected at this level of detail.

Data for 2005 will be available in the autumn of 2006.

Number of defendants found guilty at all courts, and those of whom pleaded guilty, for offences relating to murder, suicide, infanticide, and manslaughter, in England and Wales, 2000 to 2004[1]

Court	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Found guilty					
Murder of persons aged 1 year or over.[2]	256	285	320	273	357
Murder of infants under 1 year of age.[3]	5	0	4	4	4
Manslaughter.[4]	238	262	299	244	265
Infanticide.[5]	2	5	2	0	0
Child destruction.[6]	0	0	0	0	0
Causing death by dangerous driving.[7]	193	227	228	233	241
Manslaughter on the ground of diminished responsibility.[8]	19	20	24	24	22
Causing death by careless driving when under the influence of drink or drugs.[9]	53	51	66	60	62
Suicide (Aiding, Abetting etc.)[10]	2	2	4	1	2
Pleaded guilty					
Murder of persons aged 1 year or over.[2]	39	55	55	59	89
Murder of infants under 1 year of age.[3]	1	0	0	1	1
Manslaughter.[4]	163	188	194	157	187
Infanticide.[5]	2	5	2	0	0
Child destruction.[6]	0	0	0	0	0
Causing death by dangerous driving.[7]	129	141	176	177	160
Manslaughter on the ground of diminished responsibility.[8]	17	19	19	19	19
Causing death by careless driving when under the influence of drink or drugs.[9]	50	43	60	55	54
Suicide (Aiding, Abetting etc.)[10]	2	2	3	1	2

[1] These data are provided on the principal offence basis
[2] Common Law. Offences against the Person Act 1861 Sec 1, 9,10.
[3] Common Law. Offences against the Person Act 1861 Sec 1, 9,10.
[4] Common Law. Offences against the Person Act 1861 Sec 10, Sec 5, Sec 9.
[5] Infanticide Act 1938 S1(1).
[6] Infant Life Preservation Act 1929 Sec 1.
[7] Road Traffic Act 1988 Sec 1 as amended by the Road Traffic Act 1991 Sec 1 and CJA 1993 Sec 67.
[8] Homicide Act, 1957 Sec 2.
[9] Road Traffic Act 1988 Sec 3A as added by the Road Traffic Act 1991 Sec 3 and amended by CJA 1993, Sec 67.
[10] Suicide Act 1961 Sec 2(1).

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many defendants were found to have killed another person but were found not guilty of murder by reason of diminished responsibility in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [63220]

Hazel Blears: Available information for England and Wales is held on the Homicide Index. The number of persons indicted for murder and consequently found guilty of section two manslaughter is provided.

Persons indicted for murder and consequently convicted of section 2 manslaughter in England and Wales, 2000–01 to 2004–05

	Murder indictment	*Section 2 manslaughter conviction*
2000–01	632	17
2001–02	660	14
2002–03	652	11
2003–04	623	21
2004–05	293	11

Notes:
1. As at 28 November 2005; figures are subject to revision as cases are dealt with by the police and courts, or as further information becomes available.
2. Excludes persons convicted of section 2 manslaughter who had been indicted for manslaughter

Offences are shown according to the year in which the police initially recorded the crime as homicide, which is not necessarily the year in which the incident took place or the year in which any court decision was made. The data refer to the position as at 28 November 2005, when recording closed down for the purpose of analysis, and will change as court hearings take place or other information is received.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many individuals have been convicted of murder while on probation in each year since 1997. [63025]

Fiona Mactaggart: Data on the number of individuals that have been convicted of murder while under supervision by the Probation Service have only been collected since 1998[1].

The data were collected under the serious incident reporting (SIR) process and is given in the table.

From 1 April 2004, the SIR was replaced by the serious further offence report. Between 1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005, out of a total of 224 convictions, 26 were for murder.

As these figures were collected under a different reporting system, they are not comparable.

	Murder	*Total convictions*
1998	40	183
1999	29	157
2000	24	173
2001	26	162
2002	37	156
2003	29	135

[1] *Source:*
RDS NOMS in Offender Management Caseload Statistics 2004 and in Probation Statistics England and Wales 2002.

MI5 Files

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many files on individuals MI5 holds; how many of these are active; and how many have been destroyed in each year since 1997. [63596]

Mr. Charles Clarke: In accordance with the long-established practice of successive Governments we do not comment on security matters.

Michael McCartney

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the issue of anonymity for the accused prior to conviction in the context of the trial of Michael McCartney. [62171]

Paul Goggins: Independently of the case of Michael McCartney an assessment was recently carried out by the Interdepartmental Ministerial Group on Sex Offending of the current arrangements for anonymity for suspected sex offenders prior to charge. The review found that there had been no complaints about the operation of the guidance issued by the Association of Chief Police Officers and the Press Complaints Commission. The issue will be kept under review.

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will re-examine the provisions in the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 1976 which banned media identification of sex offence defendants repealed by the Criminal Justice Act 1988 in the context of the trial of Michael McCartney. [62174]

Paul Goggins: The Government remain of the view that all defendants should be treated equally in accordance with the principle of open justice. We have no plans to amend the law to ban media identification of sex offence defendants.

Mini-motorcycles

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will introduce controls on the sale of mini-motorcycles for use by young people. [63165]

Hazel Blears: We have no plans to introduce such controls. There are already powers available to the police and local authorities to deal with the problem caused by misuse of the vehicles. Where mini-motorcycle nuisance has been identified as a problem locally, we would expect a local strategy to address it. This could involve the local police working with retailers to ensure that customers are aware of the law on the use of mini-motorcycles.

Ministerial Residence

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the estimated market rental value of the former official residence of the right hon. Member for Sheffield, Brightside (Mr. Blunkett) was in each year since 2001. [59182]

Mr. Charles Clarke: There is no market rental value held for this property.

Mr. Harry Hammond

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will consider a posthumous pardon for Mr. Harry Hammond. [63591]

Fiona Mactaggart: Generally, I consider the Royal Prerogative of Mercy only where it is impractical for the case to be referred to the appellate court. Where that is the case, the exercise of the Prerogative is considered where there is new evidence which has not been before the courts demonstrates beyond any doubt that either no offence was committed or that the person convicted in a court of law did not commit the offence. I am not aware that such evidence has been presented in the case of Mr. Harry Hammond.

It is open to those representing Mr. Hammond to seek a review of his case by the Criminal Cases Review Commission. Where the Commission consider that there is a real possibility that a conviction would be quashed they can refer the case back to the appropriate appellate court.

Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangement Panels

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will place in the Library a copy of the Guidelines for Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangement panels. [63502]

Fiona Mactaggart: We have arranged for copies of the current Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) Guidance Manual to be placed in the Library. The guidance is available online at: http://www.probation.homeoffice.gov.uk/output/page30.asp.

National Offender Management Service

Dr. Evan Harris: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what is the estimated annual cost of commissioning arrangements under the National Offender Management Service. [50055]

Fiona Mactaggart: The planned expenditure on commissioning arrangements by the National Offender Management Service in 2005–06 is £7.4 million.

Mrs. Cryer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much has been allocated to the end-to-end supervision of offenders under National Offender Management Service arrangements for long-term prisoners. [53442]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 27 February 2006]:* We expect Offender Management to be cost neutral over the long-term, with any costs balanced by the benefits of the system. There will, however, be some start-up costs. These are estimated to be £10 million in 2006–07. We do not have separate figures related to long-term prisoners.

Newspaper Displays (Adult Material)

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his Department will monitor implementation levels by retail newsagents of the new code of practice published by the National Federation of Retail Newsagents relating to the display of magazines and tabloid newspapers which contain adult material. [63105]

Paul Goggins: I refer to the answer given by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, my hon. Friend the Member for Tottenham (Mr. Lammy), to my hon. Friend the Member for Swansea, East (Mrs. James) on 27 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 651 w. The National Federation of Retail Newsagents (NFRN) have agreed to issue fresh advice to newsagents which includes guidance about the sale and display of 'top shelf' adult material as well as advice about the appropriate placement and display of other publications containing some sexual material.

This voluntary code of practice will be implemented with the agreement of its members. The NFRN will send a copy of the code to each of its members and will continue to highlight the code on an ongoing basis in its trade magazine. They have also shared the code with the Association of News Retailing and the British Retail Consortium.

My officials, along with those from DTI and DCMS, will continue to meet with the NFRN and other retail trade associations to discuss the implementation of the guidance.

Nightclubs

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many nightclubs in *(a)* London, *(b)* Havering and *(c)* England and Wales have been raided by police for drugs in each of the last seven years. [63018]

Paul Goggins: The information requested is not collected by the Home Office.

Non-emergency Situations

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what criteria he used in deciding that *(a)* drug dealing, *(b)* drunken behaviour, *(c)* harassment and *(d)* intimidation should be treated as non-emergency situations; and if he will make a statement. [61124]

Hazel Blears: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State will not be making a statement as the criteria for what constitutes an emergency or non-emergency situation is an operational matter for which the Association of Chief Police Officers have existing standards for call handling in police contact centres that include definitions of emergency and non-emergency contacts. 101, the new single non-emergency number, complies with these standards and will work alongside 999 and other non-emergency numbers to provide a service for less urgent community safety and antisocial behaviour problems.

101 operators will direct callers to the emergency service if the call requires a 999 response. A non-emergency situation will also require an immediate priority response if the situation relates to serious criminal conduct or concern for somebody's safety even if the situation is not considered an emergency.

The initial scope of the 101 service has been developed through research with the general public, and in consultation with a wide group of stakeholders and local authority and police force partnerships.

The core service will cover:

Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property;

Noisy neighbours;

Intimidation and harassment;

Abandoned vehicles;

Rubbish and litter, including fly tipping;

People being drunk or rowdy in public places;

Drug related antisocial behaviour; and

Street lighting.

The new service will improve the delivery of these services by providing a more informed and better coordinated response by local agencies. 101 will be provided by local authorities and police forces working in partnership to both handle calls and deliver services.

Offenders (Employability Contracts)

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on his proposals for a new 'employability contract' for sentenced offenders. [62735]

Fiona Mactaggart: Evidence suggests that employment is a key factor in reducing re-offending. The 'Reducing Re-offending Through Skills and Employment' Green Paper made clear our intention to test the scope for introducing a new employability contract to motivate offenders. This new 'rights and responsibilities' package would offer offenders a menu of options for training and skills support leading to a specific employment goal. In return, offenders would be expected to engage positively with the offer and meet clear performance criteria. Offender managers would select individuals who appeared likely to benefit from an intensive programme focused on employability, making an initial assessment of the range of an individual's needs, priorities, and barriers to learning. Wherever possible, this would be conducted before sentencing, so that the outline sentence plan could be put before the court, discussed with the offender, and then reflected, where appropriate, in conditions attached to the sentence.

Parliament Square (Demonstrations)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications have been made for demonstrations in Parliament Square since 1 August 2005; and how many such applications were successful. [63890]

Paul Goggins: The Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police tells me that 141 applications have been made for demonstrations in Parliament Square and Whitehall between 1 August 2005 and 28 February 2006. Authorisation was given for all applications. Under Section 134 of the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005, the Commissioner must give authorisation for a demonstration for which written notice has been given.

Parliamentary Questions

Jessica Morden: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will provide a substantive answer to question 17761, tabled by the hon. Member for Newport, East on 11 October 2005. [57537]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 10 March 2006]:* I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave on 23 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 619W.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to Question reference 54867 from the hon. Member for the Isle of Wight on charities. [59551]

Paul Goggins: I replied to the hon. Member on 23 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 595W.

Police

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether financial advantages will be made available to a police force whose police authority agrees to an amalgamation proposal by 23 December. [36295]

Hazel Blears: In order to support all police forces and authorities across England and Wales involved in amalgamation, the Government will pay 100 per cent. of net set up costs i.e. the reasonable resources/revenue and capital costs of restructuring, net of reasonable savings. The exact level of these costs is a matter for negotiation and these discussions are currently taking place.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the cost of restructuring the police force in North Yorkshire. [41875]

Hazel Blears: The estimated cost of the proposed reorganisation of North Yorkshire, South Yorkshire, West Yorkshire and Humberside is £39 million. Long term savings made possible by the merger are currently estimated at around £18 million a year.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the costs of redundancies in each of the four police authorities in Wales as a consequence of the creation of a Welsh police force. [50941]

Hazel Blears *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* It is our current assessment that any reductions in staff numbers can be achieved mainly through a combination of redeployment and natural wastage. Estimates of the cost of amalgamating Dyfed-Powys, Gwent, North Wales and South Wales include a small provision for redundancy (£0.7 million).

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on what basis he ruled out a merger between the North Wales police and Cheshire police forces. [50943]

Hazel Blears: After careful consideration of this option, the Home Secretary decided that a merger between North Wales and Cheshire police forces could not progress. This was on the basis that the proposed merged force would not provide sufficient critical mass in all seven protective services to its populations; would cut across Government office boundaries, reducing co-terminosity; and there were more operationally viable options, including a single strategic force for Wales.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the retirement age is for employees of the police service. [51374]

Hazel Blears: There is no fixed retirement age for police officers under the current police pension scheme under which officers can build up a maximum pension after 30 years service. Officers with at least 25 years service may retire with an immediate pension from age 50.

The age threshold does not apply, however, to officers with 30 years service. This means that an officer who joined at age 18½—the earliest age at which it is possible to start as a police officer—is entitled to retire at age 48½ with a full pension.

Otherwise officers become eligible to retire with an immediate pension between the ages of 55 and 60 depending on the compulsory retirement age for their rank and force. Officers with less than 25 years service who leave the police with deferred benefits will receive their pension at age 60. The Government are

introducing a new pension scheme for new entrant police officers from 6 April 2006. The scheme provides a maximum pension after 35 years and a minimum pension age of 55 which is common to all ranks. Officers who leave the police before age 55 with deferred benefits will receive their pensions at age 65. Those employees of the police service who have access to the local government pension scheme, are members of a scheme which has a retirement age of 65, but allows individuals to voluntarily retire from age 60, and facility to retire with employer consent from age 50.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much funding was provided to Staffordshire police in relation to the introduction of the Licensing Act 2003; and what period this covered. [57854]

Hazel Blears: No money has been provided to police authorities specifically in relation to the introduction of the Licensing Act 2003. The third national Alcohol Misuse Enforcement Campaign (AMEC 3) took place between 14 November 2005 and the beginning of 2006. The Police Standards Unit provided forces with extra funding to implement a range of tactics with the aim of tackling irresponsible drinkers and retailers of alcohol. Staffordshire Police was allocated £33,000 for the campaign. Staffordshire will receive its fair share of resources next year, including £116 million in general grants and £16 million in specific grants and capital support. The allocation and use of resources are matters for the Staffordshire police authority and the chief constable of Staffordshire police.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects to meet local representatives from North Yorkshire county council and district councils in North Yorkshire to discuss his proposals on police restructuring. [58636]

Hazel Blears: On 21 March 2006, the Home Secretary made a statement setting out that the most effective viable option for the Yorkshire and Humber area was a single strategic force. Senior Home Office officials are currently meeting with representatives from all forces and authorities including those for North Yorkshire to take forward work on restructuring.

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the cost of merging the five East Midlands police forces. [58960]

Hazel Blears: The currently estimated cost of the proposed restructuring of the five East Midlands police forces is £77 million. Long term savings made possible by the merger are currently estimated at around £16 million per annum after 5 years.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received on the restructuring of the police force in North Yorkshire. [59547]

Hazel Blears: The Home Office in December received business cases for change from all police forces and police authorities including North Yorkshire. These included a number of options for merging North Yorkshire with other forces in the area. Since then the Home Office has received a variety of correspondence concerning North Yorkshire.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the latest estimate is of the cost of the proposed restructuring of the police forces in Wales. [60361]

Hazel Blears *[holding answer 23 March 2006]:* The estimated set up cost of a strategic police force for Wales is £35 million. Long term savings made possible by the merger are currently estimated at around £16 million a year.

Ann Keen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers were deployed in Brentford and Isleworth constituency in *(a)* 1997, *(b)* 2001, *(c)* 2004 and *(d)* 2005. [62211]

Hazel Blears: This information is not collected centrally.

Brentford and Isleworth is part of the Borough of Hounslow Operational Command Unit (OCU), part of the Metropolitan Police Service. Figures for Operational Command Units have only been centrally collected since March 2002.

In March 2002, Hounslow had 435 police officers, in March 2004 there were 472 (full-time equivalent) police officers and 510 in March 2005.

The deployment of police officers to OCUs and other specialist units in the Metropolitan Police is an operational matter for the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis.

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the estimated *(a)* initial and *(b)* annual costs are of merging the Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire police forces. [63401]

Hazel Blears: Current projections of set-up costs and annual ongoing savings from restructuring is set out in the table. No ongoing costs from amalgamation are expected. Negotiations continue with the police authorities on refining the costs and savings.

£ million

Year	*Set-up costs for amalgamation*	*Annual savings from reorganisation, net of ongoing costs*
0	3.2	—
1	18.8	(0.5)
2	12.2	(5.9)
3	11.2	(10.7)
4	1.5	(10.7)
5	7.9	(15.9)
6	14.7	(15.9)
7	5.5	(15.9)
8	2.0	(15.9)
9	—	(15.9)
10	—	(15.9)

Source:

Home Office—Amalgamation of Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire police forces: Adjusted Financial Projections (20 March 2006).

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what new structures will be put in place through the merging of the Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire police forces. [63403]

Hazel Blears: It would be premature to state the precise structure of the merged strategic force in the East Midlands, as this will be an operational decision for the new Chief Officer. It is clear that the strategic force will provide a more comprehensive level of protective services cover to the people of the region than before.

Mrs. Maria Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it is his intention to review the decision not to merge Hampshire police force with other forces at a future date. [63430]

Hazel Blears: The case for Hampshire to stand alone as a strategic force has been rigorously assessed as capable of providing the required standard of protective services to tackle crime in the 21st century. It is therefore unlikely that this decision will be reviewed in the near future. However, legislation provides for the Home Secretary to alter force areas on the grounds of efficiency and effectiveness at any time.

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many representations he has received from the people in Yorkshire regarding the proposed reorganisation of the four Yorkshire police forces; how many of these were *(a)* in support of and *(b)* opposed to the reorganisation; and if he will make a statement. [63508]

Hazel Blears: The Home Office received various representations on the merger of forces in Yorkshire and the Humber, including from all police forces and authorities in Yorkshire and the Humber and local authorities, which were taken into account in developing the case for amalgamation in Yorkshire and the Humber. The case for amalgamation involving forces and authorities in Yorkshire and the Humber has already been placed in the House of Commons Library and is available on the Home Office website at www.policereform.gov.uk.

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the estimated cost is of merging the police forces in the West Midlands into a new combined force. [57990]

Hazel Blears: The estimated cost of merging the police forces in the West Midlands is £57 million. The current projection of long-term savings from restructuring is £26 million a year. These potential savings will ultimately dwarf the initial set up cost.

Mr. Goodwill: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many former police officers *(a)* above and *(b)* below the age of 65 have had their injury on duty pension reviewed since the implementation of Annex C of Home Office Circular 46/2004; and how many in each category have subsequently had their entitlement withdrawn. [62731]

Hazel Blears: The information requested is not held centrally since it is for each police authority to decide when to review an injury pension. An injury pension which is reviewed may be increased or decreased in the light of changing circumstances. However, it can be withdrawn only where the former officer's disability has ceased and he or she is not also in receipt of an ordinary, ill-health or short service pension.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will take steps to merge the City of London police with the Metropolitan Police Service; and if he will make a statement. [53508]

Hazel Blears: There are currently two ongoing reviews which will affect the future of the Metropolitan Police Service and the City of London police. The first is a national review of fraud by the Attorney-General and the second of the role of the British Transport police, commissioned by the Department for Transport. As both reviews potentially have some impact on London, it is widely accepted that decisions affecting the London area will be made once the outcome of these two reviews is known later in the year.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers there were in each London borough on 31 March *(a)* 2003 and *(b)* 2004; and if he will make a statement. [63063]

Hazel Blears: The data for the number of police officers by London Borough Operational Command Unit (OCU) within the Metropolitan Police area as at 31 March 2003 and 2004 are provided in the table.

The deployment of police officers to OCUs and other specialist units in the Metropolitan Police is an operational matter for the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis.

Police officer strength[1] in the Metropolitan Police by Operational Command Unit, 31 March 2003 and 31 March 2004

Basic Command Unit	*31 March 2003*	*31 March 2004*
Barking and Dagenham	360	384
Barnet	522	541
Bexley	315	338
Brent	619	683
Bromley	417	459
Camden	719	794
City of Westminster	1,565	1,637
Croydon	624	659
Ealing	652	697
Enfield	490	538
Greenwich	604	583
Hackney	673	766
Hammersmith and Fulham	513	516
Haringey	633	682
Harrow	302	333
Havering	340	343
Hillingdon	458	484
Hounslow	467	472
Islington	623	680
Kensington and Chelsea	528	575
Kingston upon Thames	272	275
Lambeth	968	941
Lewisham	571	625
Merton	304	339
Newham	692	781
Redbridge	393	440
Richmond upon Thames	284	285
Southwark	838	869
Sutton	266	280
Tower Hamlets	686	760
Waltham Forest	486	533
Wandsworth	557	612

[1] Figures are based on full-time equivalent and include those officers on career breaks or maternity/paternity leave. These figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number, because of rounding there may be some discrepancy between the totals and sums of the constituent items.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the set-up costs will be of a strategic police force for Wales; and how these will be funded. [60354]

Hazel Blears: The estimated set up costs of a strategic force for Wales is £35 million. Long term savings made possible by the merger estimated at around £16 million a year.

We will pay 100 per cent. of reasonable set up revenue and capital cots, net of reasonable savings. The precise level of these costs is a matter for negotiation, currently taking place.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many basic command units the Government plans to maintain after expected mergers and amalgamations. [56217]

Hazel Blears: The proposals for police force amalgamation are designed to make the police force structures in England and Wales "fit for purpose" to meet the policing challenges of the 21st century. The BCU structure within strategic forces will be a matter for the new Chief Officers.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the cost of the proposed reorganisation of the four Yorkshire police forces. [62127]

Hazel Blears: The estimated cost of the proposed reorganisation of the four Yorkshire police forces is £39 million. Long-term savings made possible by the merger are currently estimated at around £18 million a year.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how the cost of restructuring the police forces in Wales will be met. [51023]

Hazel Blears: We will pay 100 per cent. of reasonable net set up revenue and capital costs of restructuring, net of reasonable savings. The precise projected level of these costs and savings is a matter for negotiation, which is currently taking place.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimates he has made of *(a)* the set up costs, *(b)* the recurring annual costs and *(c)* the recurring savings of setting up a single police force in Wales. [51024]

Hazel Blears: The information is set out in the table.

We will pay 100 per cent. of the reasonable set up costs of restructuring net of savings. The precise projected level of these costs and savings is a matter for negotiation.

£ million

Year	*Set-up costs for amalgamation*	*Annual savings from reorganisation, net of ongoing costs*
0	0.4	—
1	16.1	—
2	9.4	(1.8)
3	5.6	(4.4)
4	2.1	(10.0)
5	1.7	(15.7)
6	—	(15.7)
7	—	(15.7)
8	—	(15.7)
9	—	(15.7)
10	—	(15.7)

Note:
Additional costs of Protective Services, estimated at around £10 million in a full year, are expected to be met from annual savings.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what costs of police force reorganisation have been identified by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* consultants employed by his Department. [62491]

Hazel Blears: Assessments of costs for change undertaken by consultants has fed into and informed the Home Office's indicative projected costs of establishing strategic forces. This information has been published in the following cases for amalgamation:

Sussex/Surrey amalgamation.

Essex/Hertfordshire/Bedfordshire amalgamation.

Norfolk/Suffolk/Cambridgeshire amalgamation.

Leicestershire/Nottinghamshire/Northamptonshire/Lincolnshire/Derbyshire amalgamation.

West Midlands/West Mercia/Staffordshire/Warwicks amalgamation.

North Wales/South Wales/Gwent/Dyfed Powys amalgamation.

North Yorkshire/South Yorkshire/West Yorkshire/Humberside amalgamation.

Durham/Northumbria/Cleveland amalgamation.

Lancashire/Cumbria amalgamation.

Merseyside/Cheshire amalgamation.

They can be found on the Home Office website: http://police.homeoffice.gov.uk/police-reform/Force-restructuring

Nick Herbert: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the estimates of the cost of police force amalgamations he has received from each police authority in England and Wales in the business cases which he requested by 23 December 2005. [47309]

Hazel Blears: Business cases received on 23 December 2005 included estimates of costs and savings.

These were worked on subsequently by finance professionals and revised estimates were produced. For those forces where the Home Secretary has made statements, those estimates could be found on the police reform website in the cases for amalgamation (http://police.homeoffice.gov.uk/police-reform/Force-restructuring).

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on what date his Department started evaluating the costs of the police restructuring proposals. [48619]

Hazel Blears: The evaluation of these costs began in January 2006.

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what meetings Ministers and officials plan to have in Yorkshire to discuss the proposed merger of police authorities in the county. [54111]

Hazel Blears: The Home Secretary met with chief constables and chairs of police authorities on 21 March to discuss the way forward for the Yorkshire and Humber region. Home Office officials are currently meeting with representatives from the region to discuss further the way forward, in light of the Home Secretary's decision that a single strategic force in Yorkshire and the Humber was the most viable option.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the expected effects on community policing of combining police constabularies. [63012]

Hazel Blears: The Home Secretary has made it clear that neighbourhood policing will be supported and strengthened by police force restructuring. The development of strategic forces will ensure there is a lesser need to abstract resources from a local level in order to deal with major incidents or investigations elsewhere.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the expected effect of combining police forces. [63013]

Hazel Blears: The Home Secretary has stated that the development of strategic forces with the required capacity, capability and resilience to deal with protective services will strengthen local policing and create a police service that is able to deal with the challenges of crime in the 21st century.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the estimated cost will be of combining constabularies in England and Wales. [63014]

Hazel Blears: The currently projected cost of proposed amalgamations of English and Welsh forces announced so far is around £391 million. Long term, savings made possible by mergers are currently estimated at around £145 million a year.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the net change in numbers of jobs consequent on combining police forces in England and Wales. [63015]

Hazel Blears: Restructuring aims to make more resources available for the front line and in particular protective services. Other than in the most senior ranks, there is no expectation that police officer numbers will fall as a result of restructuring. It will be for the new strategic forces to consider their requirements for administrative staff following mergers.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of the cost of the proposed police restructuring in Wales will be met by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* existing police authorities. [60363]

Hazel Blears *[holding answer 21 March 2006]:* The estimated set up cost of a strategic police force for Wales is £35 million. Long-term savings made possible by the merger are currently estimated at £16 million a year.

We will pay 100 per cent. of the reasonable net set up revenue and capital costs, net of reasonable savings. The precise level of these costs is a matter for negotiation, currently taking place.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what training is given to police officers to ensure that suspects are charged appropriately. [56122]

Hazel Blears: Under the statutory charging programme, the charging of suspects is now predominantly undertaken by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). Although most summary cases continue to be charged by police without referral to the CPS, the decision to charge in indictable and 'either-way' cases passes to a crown prosecutor. Both police and CPS use the evidential and public interests test set out in the code for Crown Prosecutors to arrive at a charging decision.

In cases where a police officer is responsible for charging, this will fall to a police custody officer. All such officers in England and Wales receive a considerable amount of training in relation to the charging of suspects. The Central Police Training and Development Authority (Centrex) have developed a custody officer training package that is updated annually and made available to all forces. Building upon this information, individual courses are then designed and delivered locally by each force.

Guidance has been issued by the Director of Public Prosecutions to enable custody officers to decide how a suspect should be dealt with and crown prosecutors are deployed as duty prosecutors to provide guidance and make charging decisions. There is also a centrally managed out of hours duty prosecutor arrangement to ensure provision of a 24-hour service.

It is also important that the arresting officer has sufficient knowledge of the law and this is reflected in the content of the initial police learning and development programme (IPLDP), the training for newly recruited police officers, which contains a number of core modules that are designed to provide trainee officers with a sound understanding of legislation.

Policing Bureaucracy Taskforce

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many standard police forms have been *(a)* abolished and *(b)* introduced since the publication of the report of the Policing Bureaucracy Taskforce. [62382]

Hazel Blears: Nearly 9,000 forms have been abolished across all forces. We do not hold information centrally on the number of police forms that have been introduced since the publication of the report of the Policing Bureaucracy Taskforce.

Port Security

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what factors he took into account when allocating funding for security at the ports of *(a)* Holyhead and *(b)* Mostyn, in North Wales for 2006–07. [60355]

Hazel Blears: All decisions relating to the allocation of funding of security at ports, including Holyhead and Mostyn, are taken in conjunction with the appropriate security authorities, ensuring that all relevant factors are taken into account.

Following consultation and widespread support we have consolidated from 2006–07 a range of financial provisions previously made for counter terrorism (CT) policing. This includes provision for dedicated security posts (DSP) previously included in the general grant formula. North Wales will receive £3.7 million in DSP funding next year and will be able to bid for further CT funding from a £64 million pot that will be allocated on advice from the Terrorism and Allied Matters Committee of the Association of Chief Police Officers.

Prisons

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prison deputy governors' roles have been *(a)* downgraded and *(b)* upgraded in each of the last three years; and if he will list the prisons in each case. [63345]

Fiona Mactaggart: The following table details the changes that have been authorised to the grades and pay bands of deputy governors since 1 April 2004, the earliest date for which such information has been centrally recorded.

2004	
1 April 2004	Temporary upgrading of deputy governor post at Styal from operational manager (pay band E) to senior operational manager (pay band D) for 2 years.
22 July 2004	Temporary upgrading of deputy governor post at Aylesbury from operational manager (pay band E) to senior operational manager (pay band D).
13 Dec 2004	Temporary upgrading of deputy governor post at Liverpool from senior operational manager (pay band D) to senior operational manager (pay band C).
2005	
14 Feb 2005	Temporary upgrading of deputy governor post at Haverigg from operational manager (pay band E) to senior operational manager (pay band D).
31 Oct 2005	Upgrading of deputy governor post at Gartree from operational manager (pay band E) to senior operational manager (pay band D).
28 Nov 2005	Review of temporary upgrading of deputy governor post at Liverpool from senior operational manager (pay band C) to senior operational manager (pay band D).
2006	
3 Apr 2006	Upgrading of deputy governor post at Whatton from operational manager (pay band E) to senior operational manager (pay band D).

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many inmates at each prison establishment have left prison without accommodation in each of the last 10 years. [62736]

Fiona Mactaggart: Data on the accommodation status of offenders at discharge from prison have only been recorded since April 2003. Information prior to 2003 would be at a disproportionate cost to collate.

In April 2003 the prison service introduced a shadow key performance indicator (KPI) on accommodation to improve on the number of offenders leaving prison without accommodation to go to, and to have access to appropriate housing advice whilst in custody. Since the introduction of the shadow KPI which became a full KPI in April 2005, the percentage of released prisoners without accommodation to go to has fallen from 46 per cent. in 2003–04 to 13 per cent. for 2005–06 year-to-date.

A copy of the table will be placed in the House Library.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the impact on the application of disciplinary processes of staff working within the Prison Service having personal relationships with other members of staff. [63258]

Fiona Mactaggart: There has been no specific assessment. However, where an allegation of misconduct requires an investigation, the investigating officer/ investigation team are required to act impartially and independent of undue influence of others at all times. The choice of investigating officer is at the discretion of the commissioning authority and will depend on the nature of the incident and the staff involved.

Where the allegation is about a member of staff who is involved in a relationship with another member of staff the commissioning authority would take care to ensure that the matters were investigated by a member of staff who had no personal interest in the outcome of the investigation. The same consideration would apply to the person conducting any subsequent hearing.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications the Prison Service has made under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 in each of the last five years *(a)* nationally and *(b)* in each establishment for surveillance operations of staff outside the establishment in which they are employed; what results were obtained from these operations; what (i) investigations, (ii) reports and (iii) disciplinary processes resulted; and if he will place a list of the applications and investigations in the House Library. [63346]

Hazel Blears: There have been two applications under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 for surveillance operations on staff, both were authorised by the relevant area manager. One operation was in 2003 and the other was in 2005 and related to staff working while on long term sick absence. However, it would be inappropriate to provide further information about these operations not least to protect the covert methodology used and so as not to hinder future operations.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the work of the Professional Standards Unit in the Prison Service. [63347]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Prison Service's Professional Standards Unit (PSU) was established in February 2003 to implement its anti-corruption strategy. Its role is to receive, develop and analyse intelligence on corruption. It maintains a database to monitor the scale of corruption and to identify trends so that preventive and remedial action can be taken. PSU monitors the progress of investigations, maintains a register of trained investigators and provides advice and statistical reports to the Service. PSU currently employs 12 members of staff. A review of the Service's professional standards strategy was completed in December 2005 and is under consideration.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many complaints were investigated by the Professional Standards Unit in the Prison Service in each of the last five years; how many investigations resulted in disciplinary action; what quality assessment mechanisms are in place to judge the work of the Professional Standards Unit; and if he will make a statement. [63348]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Prison Service's Professional Standards Unit has no investigatory function and is not resourced to do so. An investigation's commissioning authority assigns investigators, who either work at the same establishment, a neighbouring establishment or within the respective area. The police are also involved if the investigation has a criminal aspect.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of *(a)* complaints, *(b)* investigations and *(c)* disciplinary action progressed by the Prison Service's Professional Standards Unit related to (i) prison support staff, (ii) prison officer grades, (iii) prison governor grades and (iv) Prison Service headquarters staff in the last year for which figures are available. [63349]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Prison Service Professional Standards Unit does not progress complaints, investigations or disciplinary advice on any Prison Service staff. This work is carried out by the individual governor of an establishment or the head of headquarters units or groups.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the compulsory transfer of staff in the Prison Service. [63350]

Fiona Mactaggart: When staff transfer to a new employer, the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations, are applicable to the Prison Service. In addition, the public sector Prison Service complies fully with the policies that currently apply to central Government and agencies, including the Cabinet Office statement of Practice," Staff transfers in the Public Sector" and its annex "A Fair deal for Staff Pensions".

Compulsory transfers within the public sector Prison Service are managed in accordance with standard Prison Service conditions of employment.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* prison support staff, *(b)* Prison Service headquarters staff and *(c)* staff in (i) prison officer grades and (ii) prison governor grades have left the service for mental health reasons in each of the last five years. [63351]

Fiona Mactaggart: Information on the number of staff leaving the public sector Prison Service for mental health reasons is not recorded centrally and could be collected only at disproportionate cost.

Information on staffing matters is not collected centrally for contracted establishments as the personnel function is entirely the responsibility of individual contractors. This information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many individuals have been released early from prison under the home detention curfew since the introduction of the scheme, broken down by offence for which originally imprisoned. [31825]

Fiona Mactaggart: The requested information is in the table, as recorded on the Prison Service IT system.

HOC discharges[1] by offence group[2] (28 January 1999–31 January 2006) England and Wales

	Number
Total	123,542
Violence against the person	22,250
Sexual offences	83
Burglary	11,029
Robbery	6,002
Theft and handling	16,312
Fraud and forgery	8,740
Drugs offences	17,682
Motoring offences	20,123
Other	21,321

[1] These statistics are based on information recorded on the central Prison Service IT system at the beginning of March 2006. Further updates and amendments may be made to records on this system in future resulting in revised figures.

[2] Offence recorded on Prison Service IT system.

Investigations suggest that around 5 per cent. of offence types recorded on this system do not relate to the offence for which they were released on HOC but relate to offences committed after release from prison and before the licence expiry date for their sentence. Of the 83 discharges for sex offences shown in the table, only 64 were serving a sentence for a sex offence at their time of release. The last offender to be released on HOC while serving a sentence for a sex offence was released in January 2004.

[3] Includes the offence of bigamy.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what procedures are in place to consider the status of those who are in prison but do not have leave to remain in the UK. [63331]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Prison Service is required to refer the cases of all foreign nationals, dual nationals and those whose nationality is initially unclear or where the prisoner refuses to give nationality to the Immigration and Nationality Department, so that the their immigration status can be established and their liability for deportation can be considered.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what average time was spent by prisoners on remand at each prison in each year since 1997. [63357]

Fiona Mactaggart: Information on the estimated average time spent on remand in each year since 1997 is given in the table 1. Providing average time spent on remand for each prison is not possible without disproportionate cost. Information on the numbers of prisoners held within prison establishments since 1997 is in table 2.

Table 1: Average time in days spent on remand for each year since 1997[1]

	Days
1997	59
1998	56
1999	54
2000	51
2001	50
2002	51
2003	52
2004	53

[1] Average time spent on remand is calculated by dividing the average annual remand population by number of receptions *365.25. 2005 data are awaited

Table 2: Average number of prisoners by prison establishment, held on remand each year since 1997. (Calculated as an average of the 12 month January-December totals)

Prison Establishment	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Altcourse	15	358	358	301	255	302	262	250	272
Ashfield	0	0	14	114	112	65	68	46	55
Bedford	159	177	182	181	171	179	211	212	180
Belmarsh	358	339	325	356	436	454	462	475	446
Birmingham	295	291	319	342	393	505	526	513	516
Blakenhurst	318	340	345	305	298	358	357	332	387
Brinsford	263	269	287	240	207	218	214	215	232
Bristol	289	307	288	218	247	291	275	268	248
Brixton	307	323	344	352	382	416	441	493	418
Brockhill	41	65	86	79	72	91	83	76	71
Bronzefield	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	84	230
Bullingdon	141	120	137	145	149	187	184	177	219
Camp Hill	10	13	11	3	0	0	0	0	0
Canterbury	171	166	155	154	140	120	16	0	0
Cardiff	276	210	207	184	182	215	209	212	217
Castington	—	—	80	71	72	92	79	100	111
Chelmsford	270	291	221	169	189	236	246	250	245
Doncaster	602	571	568	506	380	444	427	357	330
Dorchester	140	129	119	107	92	87	80	78	106
Downview	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	6
Durham	339	346	336	311	286	273	285	291	291
Eastwood Park	60	83	100	88	124	157	139	126	96
Edmunds Hill	0	0	0	0	0	0	81	78	0
Elmley	170	168	161	135	133	199	297	281	336
Exeter	263	256	240	174	184	240	225	221	222
Feltham	415	439	412	412	393	412	398	449	430
Forest Bank	0	0	0	218	237	275	254	338	346
Foston Hall	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	23
Frankland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Full Sutton	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Glen Parva	359	337	331	270	239	229	210	198	211
Gloucester	168	168	173	125	115	126	119	133	122
Highdown	206	248	215	198	240	319	296	273	308
Highpoint	0	0	0	12	29	49	33	0	0
Hindley	256	211	199	42	13	41	36	38	35
Holloway	279	306	271	263	283	310	326	263	215
Holme House	183	187	220	193	188	234	245	190	178
Hull	187	174	187	146	137	230	311	281	277
Lancaster Farms	149	100	111	96	104	147	156	132	112
Leeds	530	522	528	384	326	361	391	353	337
Leicester	225	241	237	227	156	182	171	194	187
Lewes	207	216	210	205	209	184	210	181	194
Lincoln	218	130	134	140	124	157	153	148	149
Liverpool	429	257	245	224	190	239	262	258	261
Low Newton	176	173	50	55	56	61	55	46	52
Manchester	606	617	609	396	354	361	376	338	341
New Hall	81	102	110	93	105	136	138	124	89
Northallerton	121	119	166	125	108	37	0	0	0
Norwich	193	187	194	154	153	171	174	172	206
Nottingham	58	175	205	158	221	271	299	237	260

Table 2: Average number of prisoners by prison establishment, held on remand each year since 1997. (Calculated as an average of the 12 month January-December totals)

Prison Establishment	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Onley	0	0	0	29	52	46	45	4	0
Parc	16	155	189	135	139	154	129	115	88
Parkhurst	4	1	1	6	6	10	10	15	17
Pentonville	369	391	435	430	479	619	638	561	655
Peterborough	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	143
Preston	332	354	330	264	262	260	253	252	249
Reading	161	150	138	125	102	109	102	89	107
Risley	102	118	41	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rochester	70	64	69	51	26	0	0	0	0
Shrewsbury	127	134	128	102	112	134	143	112	107
Stoke Heath	—	—	—	42	37	36	30	54	48
Styal	2	1	95	108	102	137	140	118	117
Swansea	198	147	145	117	107	141	131	117	119
The Wolds	93	108	113	88	96	65	0	0	0
Wandsworth	195	274	347	308	339	414	512	481	524
Warren Hill	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	24	34
Wetherby	0	0	0	1	53	56	60	58	51
Winchester	228	246	223	217	188	193	227	222	232
Woodhill	288	295	308	282	293	308	320	349	350
Wormwood Scrubs	384	372	240	273	377	363	373	397	457
Police cells	0	0	0	0	0	58	0	0	0
Total[1]	2,130	2,567	2,520	1,1275	1,237	12,792	12,923	12,485	12,896

[1] Components may not add to totals because they have been rounded independently

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to reduce the time prisoners spend on remand. [63358]

Fiona Mactaggart: Decisions on remand are a matter for the court based on the provisions of the Bail Act 1976.

With colleagues in the three Criminal Justice Departments, we are working to ensure that the courts have available to them the information they need on alternatives to remand. For example we are encouraging the greater use of electronic monitoring on bail as an alternative to remand in custody, and we are seeking to improve bail information schemes in prisons.

Cases where the individual is held on remand are currently prioritised through the court process and we are working to see what further steps can be taken to reduce the time taken to bring these cases to trial.

Julie Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many hours a week of vocational training was provided on average to prisoners and juvenile offenders in *(a)* the North West of England, *(b)* the North East of England and *(c)* the South West of England between (i) 1 March 2005 and 31 July 2005 and (ii) 1 August 2005 and 28 February 2006. [63187]

Fiona Mactaggart: The average weekly hours of vocational training undertaken by prisoners and juvenile offenders in the North West, North East and South West prison regions in England and Wales between 1 March 2005 and 31 July 2005 and 1 August 2005 and 28 February 2006 is shown in the following table.

Average weekly hours of vocational training undertaken by prisoners and juvenile offenders in the North West, North East and South West prison regions in England and Wales between 1 March 2005 and 31 July 2005, and 1 August 2005 and 28 February 2006

Prison region	*1 March to 31 July 2005*	*1 August 2005 to 28 February 2006*
North West	5.5	5.5
North East	3.0	2.9
South West	4.0	4.0

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what discussions he has had with stakeholders regarding the future funding of the work of Business in Prisons; and if he will publish the notes of the meetings; [62732]

(2) what assessment he has made of the contribution made to offender resettlement by the Business in Prisons organisation. [62733]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Secretary has had no meetings with stakeholders to discuss the future funding of the work of Business in Prisons.

The Small Business Service in the Department for Trade and Industry is in the process of evaluating the work delivered by Business in Prisons. The Home Office is represented on the group steering the evaluation.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on changes in access for inmates to the gardens at HMP Belmarsh; what impact those changes have had on the availability of horticulture qualifications for inmates at the prison; what alternative arrangements will be made available to enable inmates to acquire such qualifications; and on what timetable. [62770]

Fiona Mactaggart: Prisoners at Belmarsh no longer have access to certain areas of the grounds at the establishment. As a consequence it was necessary to curtail a scheme of training and assessment for prisoners in several practical skills of horticultural work under the National Proficiency Tests Council. Alternative arrangements for prisoners to gain key work skills are now in place.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the impact on prison management resources of the creation of the National Offender Management Service; and if he will make a statement. [58645]

Fiona Mactaggart: The creation of the National Offender Management Service is not expected to have an impact on prison management resources.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what *(a)* assessment he has made of and *(b)* research he has conducted on the role of building design in delivering resettlement programmes in prisons; and if he will make a statement. [61503]

Fiona Mactaggart: There has been no published Home Office research to measure the contribution of building design to the resettlement of prisoners. However, improving prison design and conditions plays a significant role in managing offenders and in encouraging greater engagement in offending behaviour programmes while in custody.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action he *(a)* has taken and *(b)* is taking to ease prison overcrowding. [61505]

Fiona Mactaggart: NOMS keeps under review the demand on prison places and the capacity of prisons to accommodate those prisoners sent to them by the courts. It is ensuring maximum use is made of all spare capacity within the prison estate, and increasing useable operational capacity in prisons by building additional places as part of an ongoing funded building programme.

The Government believe that prison should be used to protect the public from the most serious offenders—those who are violent, dangerous or seriously persistent. Less serious offenders can normally be dealt with more effectively in the community with tough community sentences. These can include a wide range of requirements, including unpaid work, drug treatment, and curfews. We have also alerted courts to the availability of electronic monitoring to support a curfew imposed as a condition of bail. Courts are being encouraged to use this option instead of a remand in custody in appropriate cases.

Mr. Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received on education facilities at HMP Belmarsh. [62448]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 30 March 2006]:* No representations have been received. Education and training facilities at Belmarsh are regularly reviewed and inspected by external agencies.

Mr. Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent assessment he has made of the education *(a)* provision and *(b)* facilities at HMP Belmarsh. [62449]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 30 March 2006]:* The most recent external assessment is a re-inspection report conducted by the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) in February 2005 and published on 24 March 2005.

The Provider Development Unit of the ALI, which is independent of the Prison Service, continues to work with Belmarsh concentrating upon developments in the provision and facilities for education, training and skills.

The Independent Monitoring Board produces an annual report which includes comment on the education facilities and provision at Belmarsh.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the Prison Service Plus two programme. [62734]

Fiona Mactaggart: Prison Service Plus two is a £60 million project being delivered in 39 prisons. The project is jointly funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) and the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) and is the largest ESF funded project of its type in Europe. PS Plus two works with remand or sentenced prisoner who are eligible to work in the UK.

It aims to remove the barriers to employment and, by individually managing and motivating offenders in a range of areas, to increase their employability. In total 48,000 offenders in 39 prison establishments across England will benefit from the PS Plus two programme, which started in September 2004 and will run until December 2006.

The project focuses on providing appropriate support to individuals, and for those offenders who are unclear about their best route into employment, the provision of Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) by appropriately qualified providers. Each of the 39 prisons has a dedicated team of workers to provide support that leads to appropriate education, training and employment (ETE) brokerage. As well as employment brokerage and careers advice, beneficiaries also receive advice and support on accommodation.

The level of support is determined by the Community Integration Plan (CIP) which is produced by each individual's case manager. PS Plus has recently secured additional funding from ESF to continue work until June 2008. The project (PS Plus 3) will work in 16 prisons and 16 probation areas, building on the "Through The Gate" pilot.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the recent change in the level of provision of outdoor activities for inmates at HMP Belmarsh. [62756]

Fiona Mactaggart: Following a security risk assessment in 2005, it was decided to withdraw outdoor

sports facilities at all high security prisons, including Belmarsh . As a result, the prison provides increased indoor physical education. Facilities for prisoners to spend time in the open air remain unchanged at the prison.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average weekly number of *(a)* receptions and *(b)* discharges at each prison was in each year since 1992; what assessment he has made of the impact of prison overcrowding on this number; and if he will make a statement. [62759]

Fiona Mactaggart: The average weekly number of receptions at each prison (both for sentenced and for remand prisoners) in each year between 2000 and 2004 is provided in the tables below. Comprehensive information for receptions by establishment prior to 2000, and generally for discharges by establishment is not centrally available.

The National Offender Management Service keeps the impact of population pressures—including "overcrowding"[1] on prisoners in all prisons—under careful review. The current target for overcrowding is 24 per cent. for public sector prisons and 34.5 per cent. for contracted prisons. At the end of February the year to date rate of overcrowding was 23.7 per cent. for public sector establishments and 25.1 per cent. for contracted establishments.

In doing so, it seeks to make maximum use of all available space within the prison estate through the movement of prisoners to other prisons as soon as they are considered suitable following sentencing and categorization and which provide the degree of security they require, are suitable to their gender, age and legal status, provide facilities appropriate to their needs and are near to their homes.

[1] Defined as prisoners held in accommodation intended for fewer persons.

Average weekly remand receptions [1] by establishment [2]

	2000	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
All	1,563	1,590	1,760	1,754	1,644
Unknown prison	14	15	17	18	19
Altcourse	43	38	45	40	38
Ashfield	19	21	11	9	7
Belmarsh	28	33	37	36	37
Bedford	23	23	21	29	27
Brockhill	14	14	17	20	16
Bristol	33	34	38	34	31
Birmingham	49	54	58	61	62
Bullingdon	18	20	26	27	22
Brinsford	40	38	34	33	32
Blakenhurst	38	43	44	43	42
Brixton	47	48	50	38	34
Bronzefield	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	13
Chelmsford	25	26	31	28	28
Cardiff	28	29	32	31	33
Camp Hill	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—
Castington	14	14	18	15	18
Canterbury	18	17	16	3	0
Durham	39	40	37	37	33
Doncaster	69	52	60	59	51
Dorchester	17	15	15	16	14
Eastwood Park	17	23	27	24	18
Exeter	26	27	34	30	29
Elmley	16	17	25	39	33
Forest Bank	28	31	36	34	48
Foston Hall	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	1
Frankland	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—
Feltham	64	58	59	55	55
Full Sutton	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—
Gloucester	15	16	20	23	22
Glen Parva	37	32	33	30	28
Hollesley Bay	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—
Huntercombe	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—
Holme House	24	25	37	40	30
Hindley	7	3	7	8	8
Hull	23	22	33	41	39
Highdown	24	28	36	38	38
Highpoint South	3	5	7	3	[3]—
Holloway	40	41	51	57	42
Leicester	29	22	26	30	28
Leeds	50	48	50	50	46
Lancaster Farms	16	16	25	25	19
Lincoln	18	19	25	24	24
Long Lartin	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—
Low Newton	11	12	13	12	9
Liverpool	32	31	40	41	37
Lewes	25	25	22	21	22
Moorland	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—

Average weekly remand receptions [1] by establishment [2]

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Manchester	50	43	43	46	39
New Hall	18	20	25	6	9
Nottingham	18	28	33	26	23
Northallerton	21	20	7	33	29
Norwich	23	21	23	[3]—	[3]—
Onley	4	12	10	24	23
Portland	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	10	2
Parkhurst	1	1	1	1	2
Preston	35	34	33	33	28
Parc	12	15	19	20	19
Pentonville	68	69	83	84	75
Rochester	8	5	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—
Reading	18	16	16	14	13
Risley	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—
Stoke Heath	7	9	9	7	12
Styal	22	22	27	24	22
Swansea	19	16	19	19	18
Shrewsbury	17	18	22	26	18
Winchester	24	22	23	23	25
Wakefield	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—
Woodhill	33	35	37	35	37
Warren Hill	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	1	5
Wolds	16	16	9	[3]—	[3]—
Wormwood Scrubs	35	42	45	47	51
Wandsworth	37	40	49	58	51
Wetherby	[3]—	12	13	13	13

[1] Only first remand and first sentenced receptions are shown. Receptions as a result of movement between prisons are excluded.

[2] Only prisons that receive prisoners on remand are shown in this list.

[3] Fewer than 26 receptions in the year.

Average weekly sentenced receptions [1] by establishment

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
All	1,801	1,769	1,823	1,798	1,830
Unknown prison	1	1	1	1	1
Altcourse	43	38	39	38	38
Askham Grange	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—
Acklington	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—
Albany	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—
Ashfield	13	15	15	14	13
Ashwell	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—
Aylesbury	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—
Belmarsh	35	36	39	36	37
Buckley Hall	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—
Blundeston	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—
Bedford	29	28	26	31	31
Brockhill	16	15	16	18	16
Bristol	31	33	32	34	33
Birmingham	48	52	60	61	67
Bullingdon	19	20	25	23	25
Brinsford	30	29	28	25	27
Blakenhurst	46	49	48	57	59
Bullwood Hall	1	1	1	1	2
Brixton	51	47	48	42	40
Bronzefield	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	13
Chelmsford	37	39	44	41	44
Cardiff	38	36	35	31	37
Camp Hill	1	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—
Cookham Wood	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—
Castington	12	16	18	18	17
Channings Wood	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—
Canterbury	17	17	16	3	[2]—
Dartmoor	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—
Dovegate	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—
Drake Hall	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—
Durham	43	44	39	37	36
Doncaster	70	64	68	66	60
Dorchester	24	19	18	18	17
Deerbolt	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—
Dover	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—
Downview	[2]—	[2]—	1	[2]—	[2]—
Eriestoke	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—
Standford Hill	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—

Average weekly sentenced receptions [1] by establishment

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
East Sutton Park	2	2	2	2	2
Everthorpe	2	2	2	2	2
Eastwood Park	20	21	22	20	20
Exeter	35	35	36	37	38
Elmley	20	19	26	41	38
Forest Bank	39	41	48	44	39
Ford	2	2	2	2	2
Foston Hall	2	2	2	1	1
Frankland	2	2	2	2	2
Feltham	46	33	34	32	31
Full Sutton	2	2	2	2	2
Featherstone	2	2	2	2	2
Garth	2	2	2	2	2
Gloucester	29	23	17	19	21
Guys Marsh	2	2	2	2	2
Grendon/Spring Hill	2	2	2	2	2
Glen Parva	36	35	34	30	31
Hollesley Bay	3	9	7	3	0
Huntercombe	9	15	14	13	14
Moorland Open	2	2	2	2	2
Hewell Grange	2	2	2	2	2
Holme House	26	27	31	30	29
Hindley	4	3	7	9	8
Hull	24	24	33	45	44
Highdown	26	28	35	34	38
Highpoint South	4	7	9	4	2
Haslar	2	2	2	2	2
Haverigg	2	2	2	2	2
Holloway	36	38	39	43	36
Kirkham	1	1	1	2	2
Lancaster	2	2	2	2	2
Leicester	35	26	26	26	28
Leeds	74	72	71	66	70
Lancaster Farms	24	24	29	28	41
Lowdham Grange	2	2	2	2	2
Lindholme	2	2	2	2	2
Lincoln	21	22	22	21	23
Long Lartin	2	2	2	2	2
Latchmere House	2	2	2	2	2
Low Newton	10	10	10	9	8
Liverpool	44	41	47	43	48
Littlehey	2	2	2	2	2
Lewes	27	29	24	20	22
Leyhill	2	2	2	2	2
Moorland	2	2	2	2	2
Morton Hall	2	2	2	2	2
Manchester	63	57	54	55	46
Maidstone	2	2	2	2	2
Edmunds Hill	2	2	2	7	12
Mount	2	2	2	2	2
New Hall	22	24	25	26	25
Nottingham	32	39	38	43	38
Northallerton	19	19	6	2	2
North Sea Camp	2	2	2	2	2
Norwich	34	30	31	33	37
Onley	8	8	10	8	1
Portland	6	6	2	2	2
Parkhurst	2	1	2	2	2
Preston	42	39	41	40	35
Parc	17	23	23	21	25
Pentonville	51	49	58	60	61
Rochester	6	5	1	2	1
Reading	18	18	17	15	15
Ranby	2	2	2	2	2
Risley	2	2	2	2	2
Send	2	2	2	2	2
Stafford	2	2	2	2	2
Stoke Heath	25	25	20	15	18
Shepton Mallet	2	2	2	2	2
Stocken	2	2	2	2	2
Swaleside	2	2	2	2	2
Swinfen Hall	2	2	2	2	27
Styal	27	25	26	24	18
Sudbury	2	2	2	2	2

Average weekly sentenced receptions [1] by establishment

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Swansea	18	15	17	17	[2]
Shrewbury	22	21	25	30	23
Thorncross	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]
Usk	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]
Verne	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]
Weare	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]
Wellingborough	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]
Winchester	34	33	32	32	37
Wakefield	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]
Wealstun	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]
Woodhill	45	44	46	40	45
Warren Hill	[2]	[2]	[2]	5	8
Wayland	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]
Wymott	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]
Werrington	5	7	6	5	6
Wolds	20	18	9	[2]	[2]
Whitemoor	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]
Wormwood Scrubs	31	33	41	42	45
Whatton	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]
Wandsworth	39	36	43	47	50
Wetherby	14	13	13	14	13

[1] Only first remand and first sentenced receptions are shown. Receptions as a result of movement between prisons are excluded.
[2] Fewer than 26 receptions in the year.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of access to pharmaceutical services at HMP Belmarsh. [62760]

Fiona Mactaggart: Comprehensive pharmacy services are in place, supported by specialist agency staff and the recruitment of a new pharmacy technician is in hand. Support and advice continue to be provided through the Greenwich primary care trust pharmacy advisor.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the provision of library services on the prison estate. [62762]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Government have developed an enhanced offender library, Learning and Information Service to realise our intention to provide offenders in custody with a range of services equivalent to those found in public libraries in the outside community. A new library specification will be available throughout England and Wales from April 2006 supported by increased funding from £3,580,194 in 2004–05 to over £6,000,000 in 2006–07.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many warnings for bullying were issued to *(a)* governors, *(b)* officers, *(c)* other staff, *(d)* convicted inmates, *(e)* immigration detainees and *(f)* those held on remand at each prison in each of the last 36 months. [62763]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information required is not collated centrally in the requested format and could only be obtained at a disproportionate cost. Decisions in respect of the staff disciplinary process are devolved to a local level in the Prison Service. Issuing formal warnings it not a recommended process for responding to prisoners who bully. Prisons are required to be more proactive in challenging the bullying and in providing constructive interventions to change behaviour. The incidents of bullying by prisoners are monitored locally and acted upon as part of a local strategy to reduce violence and bullying.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the reliability of the statistics for the incidence of bullying in each prison. [62764]

Fiona Mactaggart: Each establishment's work in respect of bullying and violence reduction is subject to audit. Establishments analyse a range of local data to help identify problem areas and action needed to improve personal safety.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of *(a)* inmate access to listeners and *(b)* demand for listeners at each prison within the prison estate. [62765]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information required is not collated centrally in the requested format and could only be obtained at a disproportionate cost. 'Listeners' are Samaritan-trained prisoner peer supporters who provide emotional confidential support to prisoners. 2,650 Listeners were recruited across the estate between October 2001 and March 2004.

There are currently 118 listener schemes operating in prisons in England and Wales. Where listener schemes exist listeners are made available to all prisoners, and prisons are required to ensure that prisoners have timely access to listeners. The number of contacts recorded (by Samaritans) between listeners and prisoners between July to December 2005 was 28,570. Provision for listeners was assessed as part of Safer Custody Group's peer support project, which ran from April 2001 to March 2004, and through a three year project undertaken by the Samaritans, funded jointly by Safer Custody Group and Active Community Unit, to review the work of listeners and Samaritans being carried out in 47 'high-risk' prisons including prisoner access to listeners.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the cell facilities within segregation units at each prison; what assessment he has made of the use of each of these cell facilities at each establishment; and if he will make a statement. [62768]

Fiona Mactaggart: Details on the facilities provided in individual prison's segregation unit in England and Wales can be obtained only at a disproportionate cost. I refer the hon. Member to my reply of 22 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 471W on the subject.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to extend the local procurement options open to prison governors. [62772]

Fiona Mactaggart: As part of the public sector Prison Service procurement strategy, six procurement units are being established across England and Wales to support the operational needs of clusters of prisons. By 2007, all local procurement will be routed through these units to ensure the effective application of national and local contracts as part of the service's procurement strategy.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action he is taking to encourage more people aged under 30 years of age to become members of independent monitoring boards at prisons; what mechanisms exist to monitor progress; and how many members under 30 years of age have left independent monitoring boards in each of the last five years. [62777]

Fiona Mactaggart: The National Council of Independent Monitoring Boards is keen to encourage a diverse Board membership. A diversity working group and a communications working group have been formed to identify and implement strategies for raising the overall profile of IMBs amongst under-represented groups.

In addition to a diversity action plan and a communications action plan, against which progress on implementing the respective strategies can be monitored, the independent monitoring board secretariat has, since 20 March 2006, collected data on the date of birth, ethnic origin, and gender of all applicants to independent monitoring boards and whether they are registered disabled. There are also plans in place to encourage employers to release staff to take on this important voluntary role. Information on the number of members under 30 years of age who have left independent monitoring boards in the last five years is shown in the following table. whether they are registered disabled.

	Number of leavers aged under 30
30 March 2005 to 29 March 2006	9
30 March 2004 to 29 March 2005	5
30 March 2003 to 29 March 2004	10
30 March 2002 to 29 March 2004	13
30 March 2001 to 29 March 2002	7

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many governor grade staff in HM Prison Service are in their current appointment as a consequence of *(a)* open competition and *(b)* managed moves; and if he will list those in post through managed moves. [62779]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information requested is not held centrally for all operational manager and senior operational manager appointments (formerly known as governor grades) and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the availability of drugs in the voluntary drug testing unit at each prison. [62781]

Fiona Mactaggart: Prisoners on the voluntary drug testing programme are required to be drug tested 18 times per year. Data on the results of testing regime are not held centrally.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on access to *(a)* social visits and *(b)* legal visits in the High Security Unit at HMP Belmarsh. [62785]

Fiona Mactaggart: Visits take place each morning and afternoon in the unit. Four visits are available in each session. There is no division between social and legal visits.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of foreign nationals' access to language line in the segregation unit at HMP Belmarsh. [62786]

Fiona Mactaggart: Access to the language line was first made available in the segregation unit in February 2003. Since then the line has been used on a total of 10 occasions. Despite its limited use, the availability of the line to foreign national prisoners who need such assistance is important.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many individuals were imprisoned in England and Wales in each of the last 10 years. [63023]

Fiona Mactaggart: Information on the prison population for each year since 1994 can be found in Table 8.1 of Offender Management Caseload Statistics 2004, a copy of which is available in the House of Commons Library.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the learn2earn project at HMP Wandsworth; and what plans he has to extend the scheme. [63118]

Fiona Mactaggart: The learn2earn project at Wandsworth prison is delivering much closer links for offenders with the Jobcentre Plus new deal for self employment. Ultimately, the offender produces a self employment action plan in conjunction with local business, who mentor and assess those graduating from business courses at HMP Wandsworth .The Green Paper 'Reducing Re-Offending Through Skills and Employment' (December 2005) gave a commitment to explore ways in which the learn2earn project's objectives can be promoted elsewhere, and how self-employment can be better integrated into the curriculum and programmes on offer across the estate.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what scope has been identified for the extension of electronic learning in prisons. [63292]

Fiona Mactaggart: The scope for the extension of electronic learning in prisons is set out in the 'Offender's Learning Journey'. This document describes the new learning and skills service on offer to offenders and is being trialled in three development regions—north east, north west and south west—before being rolled out in

the other six English regions. The vision for the future is under consultation through our recently published Green Paper 'Reducing Re-offending through Skills and Employment', which you will have seen.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the prisons that have a service level agreement. [63293]

Fiona Mactaggart: As from 1 April 2005 all prisons have a service level agreement.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what period a designated failing prison with a service level agreement is given to address its failings before alternative methods of provision are considered. [63295]

Fiona Mactaggart: There is no set time period for failing prisons with a service level agreement to address those failings. The time period allowed will depend on the nature and severity of the failings.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what additional resources above those specified in the service level agreement are made available to prisons that are designated as failing. [63296]

Fiona Mactaggart: No additional resources above those in the SLA are made available to prisons designated as failing.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what changes have been made in the *(a)* management and *(b)* regime at HM Prison Woodhill since the last report from the chief inspector of prisons. [63298]

Fiona Mactaggart: Since the chief inspector's last report, there has been a change of governing governor. A number of regime changes have taken place, including a more focused reception procedure; the introduction of listeners into the induction unit; and an increase in purposeful activity. Further changes to the regime will be introduced as Woodhill responds to the various recommendations of the chief inspector.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what processes are used to determine a prison's internal performance rating; what criteria are used in making the assessment; and what mechanisms are in place to ensure the objectivity and fairness of assessment. [63354]

Fiona Mactaggart: The criteria used to determine prison performance ratings include:

cost performance and output data;

compliance with Prison Service Standards;

findings from reports by HMCIP and Independent Monitoring Boards;

and

the views of Prison Service Area Managers and Management Board, allowing for an assessment of subjective factors, such as decency and commitment to change.

This oversight ensures the objectivity and fairness of assessment.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what research was *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* progressed as a result of the performance testing exercise at HM prison Wandsworth; what conclusions were drawn; and if he will place the reports in the Library. [63355]

Fiona Mactaggart: No research was commissioned or progressed as a result of the performance testing exercise at Wandsworth prison.

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what funding his Department has made available since March 2005 to *(a)* Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire strategic health authority, *(b)* Greater Peterborough primary care partnership and *(c)* Peterborough and Stamford NHS hospitals foundation trust to take account of the operation of HM prison Peterborough. [52522]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I have been asked to reply.

Funding responsibility for prison healthcare in the publicly run prisons in England and Wales transferred from the Home Office to the Department in April 2003. £118 million was transferred for 2002–03, the figure for 2005–06 was £176 million. Since April, all publicly run prisons will have had their health services commissioned by primary care trusts.

In addition, we have made additional funding available for mental health provision in prisons, which was nearly £20 million in 2005–06. Of this, North Peterborough primary care trust received £166,000 in 2005–06 for the mental health in-reach service in HM prison Peterborough.

Probation Service

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much funding the Probation Service received in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [62719]

Fiona Mactaggart: Funding provided to the probation service is as follows:

£ million

	Resource	*Capital*
2001–02	595	34
2002–03	645	40
2003–04	[1]819	33
2004–05	[2]872	29
2005–06	[3]794	[4]6

[1] Includes £77 million electronic monitoring.

[2] Includes £79 million electronic monitoring.

[3] After transfer of certain functions to NOMS HQ (including electronic monitoring).

[4] After transfer of estates function to NOMS HQ.

After adjusting for organisational changes affecting the scope of the probation service, accounting changes and inflation, the real terms increase in resource budget from 2001–02 to 2005–06 was 29 per cent.

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many additional probation staff will be recruited *(a)* during the financial year 2006–07 and *(b)* in each of the following five financial years to deal with the impact of Custody Plus on caseloads. [63078]

Fiona Mactaggart: The number of probation staff expressed as full time equivalents increased from 13,968 in 1997 to 20,138 at the end of September 2005. This is a very significant increase.

To meet the resource needs of the new sentencing framework in the Criminal Justice Act 2003, most of the provisions of which were implemented in April 2005, Probation Officer numbers rose from 6,376 in September 2004 to 6,529 in September 2005 and are projected to rise again to 7,244 by September 2007. By that time Custody Plus will be in operation, completing implementation of the sentences in the 2003 Act. Current Probation Officer projections go as far as September 2009 when the figure is planned to be 7,344.

Numbers of the more junior practitioner grade of Probation Service Officer (PSO) are also increasing significantly, currently running at some 2 per cent. per quarter. They increased by 672 between 31 March 2004 and 30 September 2005 and funding for a further 700 has been provided to probation boards for 2006–07. Funding, recruitment and training arrangements for PSOs are different from those for Probation Officers and, as such, PSO projections do not extend as far ahead as those for Probation Officers.

The staffing needs of Custody Plus are not identified separately from those of the 2003 Act as a whole.

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many trained probation officers were in post in each year since 2002. [63079]

Fiona Mactaggart: Information is not available for the full period requested. Data collected prior to 1 April 2003 are unreliable, and are not directly comparable with the more accurate figures collected since that time. The figures presented in the following table show full-time equivalent (FTE) figures at the close of "each" quarter from 1 April 2003 to 31 December 2005.

Probation officers in post

	Quarter	*Probation officers*[1]
2003–04	1	5831.10
	2	5937.84
	3	6271.45
	4	6285.43
2004–05	1	6257.32
	2	6376.48
	3	6584.94
	4	6566.63
2005–06	1	6469.84
	2	6529.41
	[2]3	6890.66

[1] The 'probation officers' category includes the senior probation officer, senior practitioner, and probation officer job groups. Trainee probation officers have been excluded from these figures.
[2] The latest figures are as yet unpublished and are currently being validated. As a result of this they may be subject to change.

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many support staff in the probation service were in post in each year since 2002. [63080]

Fiona Mactaggart: Information is not available for the full period requested. Data collected prior to 1 April 2003 are unreliable, and are not directly comparable with the more accurate figures collected since that time. The figures presented in the following table, show the number of staff, in terms of full time equivalent value, employed in a support capacity at the close of each from 1 April 2003 to 31 December 2005.

The majority of support staff in the National Probation Service provide dedicated services as part of multi-disciplinary operational teams. As such, these staff are generally considered to be part of the operational resource. However, in order to give a more accurate representation of the total number of staff engaged in support work, this group of staff have been included in the table below alongside those staff who provide non-operational support services.

		Support staff	*Support staff (Ops services)*	*Total support staff*
2003–04	Quarter 1	1491.00	3391.50	4882.50
2003–04	Quarter 2	1534.20	3312.22	4846.42
2003–04	Quarter 3	1522.70	3432.64	4955.34
2003–04	Quarter 4	1517.04	3428.66	4945.70
2004–05	Quarter 1	1531.84	3421.75	4953.59
2004–05	Quarter 2	1554.86	3423.60	4978.46
2004–05	Quarter 3	1670.73	3292.28	4963.01
2004–05	Quarter 4	1672.45	3317.90	4990.35
2005–06	Quarter 1	1705.30	3442.44	5147.74
2005–06	Quarter 2	1765.00	3549.77	5314.77
2005–06	Quarter 3[1]	1822.80	3631.12	5453.92

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many trained probation service officers were in post in each year since 2002. [63603]

Fiona Mactaggart: Information is not available for the full period requested. Data collected prior to 1 April 2003 are unreliable, and are not directly comparable with the more accurate figures collected since that time. The figures presented as follows show the number of staff, in terms of full-time equivalent value, employed as probation service officers at the close of each quarter from 1 April 2003 to 31 December 2005.

Probation service officers

	Number
2003–04	
Quarter 1	4752.40
Quarter 2	5205.20
Quarter 3	5386.00
Quarter 4	5416.80
2004–05	
Quarter 1	5467.77
Quarter 2	5511.66
Quarter 3	5623.86
Quarter 4	5849.99
2005–06	
Quarter 1	5965.05
Quarter 2	6089.00
Quarter 3[1]	6231.37

[1] These latest figures are as yet unpublished and are currently being validated. As a result of this they may be subject to change.

Project Olass

Julie Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions took place between

his Department and the Public and Commercial Services Union in advance of the proposed tendering timescale for the second phase of Project Olass. [63188]

Fiona Mactaggart: The tendering process for the Offender Learning and Skills Strategy is led by the Learning and Skills Council as the commissioning organisation. However, HM Prison Service discusses operational issues associated with the transfer on a quarterly basis with the Public and Commercial Services Union. The tendering process and timetable for the second phase of the project was discussed at the last meeting on 26 January 2006.

Proscribed Organisations

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the reasons for including the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam on the list of Proscribed Organisations in Schedule 2 of the Terrorism Act 2000 in March 2001. [63114]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam was proscribed in March 2001 because the then Home Secretary decided that it met the criteria for proscription laid down in section three of the Terrorism Act 2000 (TACT) This decision was endorsed by Parliament.

The list of proscribed organisations is kept under constant review. It is established policy not to comment further on any information or intelligence we hold in relation to a specific group on the list of proscribed organisations.

Prostitution

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to conduct a formal review of the effectiveness of antisocial behaviour orders in tackling street prostitution. [62748]

Hazel Blears: Antisocial behaviour has a wide definition and prostitution is just one type of behaviour that can be tackled by an ASBO. It is for the courts to decide whether an ASBO is appropriate in each case and what, if any, other interventions are necessary or appropriate. The antisocial impact of prostitution was a key issue in the recent consultation paper on prostitution, Paying the Price. There are no plans to have a formal review of antisocial behaviour orders in tackling street prostitution.

Reoffending

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people released from prison reoffended within two years in *(a)* England and *(b)* Beverley and Holderness in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [63510]

Fiona Mactaggart: Information on where re-offending occurs is not routinely collated.

Information on reconviction levels from 1997 to 2001 for England and Wales were published in 'Prison Statistics England and Wales 2002' (Chapter 9) and 'Offender Management Caseload Statistics 2003' (Chapter 11). Copies of these publications are available in the House of Commons Library and on the Home Office website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/omcsa.html.

The 2002 re-offending rate can be found in 'Adult re-offending: results from the 2002 cohort' Home Office Statistical Bulletin 25/05', available online at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs05/hosb2505.pdf. The section "Measuring Re-offending", which begins on page one of the report, explains the difference between reconviction and re-offending measures, as well as the changes to the data source used for these computations. A breakdown of re-offending for those released from prison is available in statistical table A5.

Road Rage

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many incidents of road rage have been recorded in each year since 1997. [63973]

Paul Goggins: The information requested is not available. 'Road rage" is not an offence covered by specific legislation and motorists involved in consequential criminal behaviour are likely to be charged with an offence appropriate to the circumstances (such as criminal damage, common assault or dangerous driving). The details of the circumstances of offences are not collected centrally.

Road Traffic Offences

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many drivers have been prosecuted for offences contrary to sections *(a)* 3 and *(b)* 34 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 in each of the last eight years, broken down by police force area. [61293]

Hazel Blears: Available information taken from the Court Proceedings Database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform from 1997 to 2003 (latest available) are given in the table. 2004 data will be available end of March 2006.

Proceedings at magistrates courts for the offence of driving without due care and attention[1] England and Wales, 1997–2003

	Number of offences						
Forces	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Avon & Somerset	1,554	1,636	1,569	1,403	1,557	1,555	1,034
Bedfordshire	415	409	285	374	410	417	337
Cambridgeshire	974	889	751	757	623	459	432
Cheshire	1,835	1,743	1,426	1,309	1,075	997	977
Cleveland	332	280	233	240	229	188	250
Cumbria	951	950	988	922	729	571	605
Derbyshire	1,057	1,091	1,011	941	629	583	558
Devon & Cornwall	834	826	854	864	1,031	1,139	1,038
Dorset	494	487	424	344	397	419	330
Durham	393	399	432	556	436	484	585

Proceedings at magistrates courts for the offence of driving without due care and attention[1] England and Wales, 1997–2003

Forces	Number of offences						
	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Essex	2,417	2,712	2,455	2,280	1,906	1,518	1,478
Gloucestershire	746	562	437	425	644	578	569
Greater Manchester	4,198	4,321	4,233	3,299	3,227	3,067	2,707
Hampshire	2,808	2,218	1,816	1,580	1,506	1,553	1,354
Hertfordshire	605	660	597	696	695	653	752
Humberside	529	638	623	500	564	654	767
Kent	835	741	555	585	557	582	674
Lancashire	1,504	1,144	1,041	1,118	1,095	1,144	1,074
Leicestershire	1,689	1,384	1,489	1,470	1,335	1,029	914
Lincolnshire	543	364	332	290	311	310	338
London, City of	156	156	157	110	99	91	77
Merseyside	2,435	1,804	1,491	1,500	1,247	892	1,099
Metropolitan Police	12,139	10,893	9,766	7,687	6,839	5,991	5,797
Norfolk	927	924	957	966	1,288	1,070	866
Northamptonshire	481	252	285	226	83	40	226
Northumbria	1,027	1,151	1,143	1,220	1,072	902	950
North Yorkshire	1,305	1,230	1,358	1,239	814	757	778
Nottinghamshire	820	885	816	652	506	416	415
South Yorkshire	1,116	874	966	632	759	646	603
Staffordshire	2,056	1,826	1,503	1,845	1,308	1,328	1,258
Suffolk	668	589	519	537	523	600	540
Surrey	728	708	865	1,015	875	500	510
Sussex	1,547	1,400	1,152	903	781	603	469
Thames Valley	2,354	2,067	1,839	1,421	1,577	1,582	1,391
Warwickshire	706	617	525	597	514	468	531
West Mercia	1,257	1,174	978	938	1,080	1,122	1,026
West Midlands	3,210	3,552	3,254	3,387	2,985	3,034	2,727
West Yorkshire	2,716	2,489	1,891	1,710	1,459	1,130	987
Wiltshire	665	735	393	426	589	600	597
Dyfed Powys	683	519	452	395	361	442	396
Gwent	387	480	371	372	308	288	267
North Wales	564	491	628	532	536	509	672
South Wales	2,159	2,235	1,929	1,708	1,617	1,740	1,837
Total	64,819	60,505	54,789	49,971	46,176	42,651	40,792

[1] Offence under the Road Traffic Act 1988 s. 3.

Note:

Offences contrary to s. 34 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 cannot be identified separately from other summary motoring offences.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the operation of section 35 of the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1998. [62874]

Paul Goggins: Section 35 of the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988 provides for the automatic disqualification of repeat motoring offenders who have acquired 12 penalty points on their licence. We are satisfied that the risk of disqualification is a useful deterrent to continued bad driving behaviour and that the penalty is appropriate for those who persist.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females were convicted of driving a vehicle with defective (i) brakes, (ii) brake lights, (iii) head lights, (iv) tail lights and (v) side lights in (A) Southend, (B) Essex and (C) England and Wales in each year since 1996. [62879]

Paul Goggins: The available information taken from the Court Proceedings Database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform from 1996 to 2004 is given in the tables.

Table A: Convictions at South East Essex PSA[1], by sex, 1996–2004

	Number of offences	
	Offence	
	Brakes defective[2]	Lighting offences[3]
1996		
Male	14	2
Female	156	11
1997		
Male	8	1
Female	133	17
1998		
Male	9	—
Female	146	18
1999		
Male	3	—
Female	78	17
2000		
Male	2	—
Female	112	27
2001		
Male	—	—
Female	94	11
2002		
Male	2	—
Female	61	6
2003		
Male	2	—
Female	32	2
2004		
Male	4	—
Female	28	3

[1] Data for Southend are not available but data are given for the S.E. Essex P.S.A. which covers Southend.
[2] The lighting defect data are not available broken down to the level of detail requested. Offence under the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regs. 1986 Regs. 16 and 18 and Sch 3; Road Traffic Act 1988 s. 41A as added by the Road Traffic Act 1991 s. 8.
[3] Offence under the Road Vehicle Lighting Regulations 1989; the Road Vehicle (Registration and Licensing) Regulations 1971 Reg. 19.

Table B: Convictions at magistrates courts, by sex, Essex police force area, 1996–2004

Number of offences

	Offence	
	Brakes defective[1]	*Lighting offences*[2]
1996		
Male	55	3
Female	463	45
1997		
Male	42	2
Female	390	32
1998		
Male	56	5
Female	453	53
1999		
Male	29	4
Female	323	50
2000		
Male	21	2
Female	331	51
2001		
Male	24	2
Female	252	38
2002		
Male	19	2
Female	231	28
2003		
Male	18	—
Female	131	16
2004		
Male	10	—
Female	121	8

[1] Offence under the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regs. 1986 Regs. 16 and 18 and Sch 3; Road Traffic Act 1988 s. 41A as added by the Road Traffic Act 1991 s. 8.
[2] Offence under the Road Vehicle Lighting Regulations 1989; the Road Vehicle (Registration and Licensing) Regulations 1971 Reg. 19.

Table C: Convictions at magistrates courts, by sex, England and Wales, 1996–2004

Number of offences

	Offence	
	Brakes defective[1]	*Lighting offences*[2]
1996		
Male	3,823	191
Female	18,404	1,548
1997		
Male	3,424	201
Female	17,425	1,621

Table C: Convictions at magistrates courts, by sex, England and Wales, 1996–2004

Number of offences

	Offence	
	Brakes defective[1]	*Lighting offences*[2]
1998		
Male	3,157	201
Female	16,977	1,676
1999		
Male	2,364	155
Female	15,638	1,610
2000		
Male	2,020	134
Female	13,019	1,423
2001		
Male	1,610	99
Female	10,314	1,162
2002		
Male	1,376	89
Female	10,076	1,165
2003		
Male	1,239	75
Female	9,444	1,121
2004		
Male	1,070	62
Female	8,722	953

[1] Offence under the Road Vehicles(Construction and Use) Regs. 1986 Regs. 16 and 18 and Sch 3; Road Traffic Act 1988 s. 41A as added by the Road Traffic Act 1991 s. 8
[2] Offence under the Road Vehicle Lighting Regulations 1989; the Road Vehicle (Registration and Licensing) Regulations 1971 Reg. 19.

Mrs. Maria Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many speeding offences occurred in the borough of Basingstoke and Deane in each year since 1990. [63286]

Paul Goggins: Data on speeding offences are not collected centrally by local authority area.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many vehicles registered overseas have been caught on speed cameras on roads in the UK in the last five years; how many have been issued with fines; and how many have paid. [61011]

Paul Goggins: The information is not collected centrally.

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the average fine paid by individuals who received *(a)* a fixed penalty and *(b)* a notice of intended prosecution for speeding offences and requested their case appear before a court was higher than that of those who did not make such a request in the last year for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [62854]

Paul Goggins: Data are not collected centrally to the details required.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which police forces in England and Wales offer drivers the option of attendance at a speed awareness workshop or refresher driving course as an alternative to prosecution. [62875]

Paul Goggins: Decisions as to the offer of driving courses as an alternative to prosecution are matters for individual forces. All English and Welsh forces, when they consider it appropriate, offer drivers the opportunity to attend a driver improvement course at their own expense rather than face prosecution. 16 offer speed awareness courses. These are Avon and Somerset, Devon and Cornwall, Dorset, Hertfordshire, Humberside, Lancashire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, North Wales, Northamptonshire, Northumbria, Staffordshire, Suffolk, Thames Valley, Warwickshire and Wiltshire.

Security Industry Authority

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will place in the Library a copy of the Harrington Report on the Security Industry Authority. [59418]

Paul Goggins: The Harrington Report will be published and copies placed in the House Library in due course.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications have been received for licences in the security industry; what the average time taken to process the applications has been; and what the target time is. [54772]

Hazel Blears: As of 22 March, 126,199 applications had been received by the Security Industry Authority, and approximately 13,172 were waiting to be input onto the system. By virtue of the backlog (caused by some parts of the industry failing to meet their part of the agreement to submit licences over a 14 month period) the average time taken to process a licence has risen from the target of six weeks for over 80 per cent. of applications to approximately 10 weeks.

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications have been received for new Security Industry Authority identity cards; how many applications he expects to be processed prior to 20 March 2006; how long on average it takes to process an application; and if he will make a statement. [54930]

Hazel Blears: From 20 March 2006, contracted manned guards have been required to be licensed to carry out licensable activities. As at 22 March, 85,172 applications had been received from the manned guarding sector, 13,172 were waiting to be entered onto the system and 42,323 had received a licence. By virtue of the backlog (caused by some parts of the industry failing to meet their part of the agreement to submit licences over a 14 month period) the average time taken to process a licence has risen from six weeks for over 80 per cent. of applications to approximately 10 weeks.

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many staff working in the Securitas Cash-in-Transit Division are *(a)* in receipt of Security Industry Authority licenses and *(b)* awaiting the issue of such a licence. [58985]

Paul Goggins: Licensing of the private security industry, including those who deal with cash and valuables in transit, is a matter for the Security Industry Authority (SIA). An SIA licence permitting an individual to work within the private security industry is the property of the individual, and individual applications do not include details of the employer. Information on whether or not a particular individual is licensed, or whether or not a particular company has been awarded Approved Contractor status is available through the SIA's website at www.the-sia.org.uk.

To be approved under ACS, a company needs to have met the current criterion by having at least 50 per cent. of its licensable staff actually licensed, and a further 35 per cent. pending.

Sentencing

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many criminals sentenced to a fixed term in prison of more than six months have served the whole sentence in each year since 1990. [62385]

Fiona Mactaggart: A prison sentence normally comprises two parts. The first is served in prison and the second in the community. All prisoners are normally released before the end of their sentence in order to facilitate their reintegration into the community.

Sex Offenders

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many sex offenders released on parole in the last five years were *(a)* subsequently recalled to prison prior to their sentence expiry date (SED) and *(b)* reconvicted after their SED. [45647]

Fiona Mactaggart: The table gives details of sex offenders released on parole and subsequently recalled. Figures for reconvictions after the SED are not kept centrally and could be only obtained at disproportionate cost.

Number of prisoners released on parole who were subsequently recalled—by year of release on parole

	All sexual offences
2000–01	18
2001–02	22
2002–03	23
2003–04	27
2004–05	19

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many individuals who appear on the sex offenders register have worked in *(a)* primary schools, *(b)* secondary schools and *(c)* universities in each of the last 10 years. [62982]

Ruth Kelly: I have been asked to reply.

My Department does not hold this information.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many individuals already listed on the Sex Offender Register were subsequently arrested for another sexual offence in each of the last 10 years. [63016]

Paul Goggins: The data requested are not collected centrally and to do so would incur a disproportionate cost.

Sexual Assault Referral Centres

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans the Government have to increase the number of sexual assault referral centres.[63009]

Paul Goggins: There are currently 14 SARCs with a further six under development with the support of Home Office funding from 2005–06. The Home Office has allocated around £0.5 million to support the development of sexual assault referral centres in 2006–07 and has produced guidance on developing SARCs for local police and health services. In addition Home Office funding of £2 million has been allocated to introduce independent sexual violence advisors (ISVAs) and increase the number of independent domestic violence advisors (IDVAs). The ISVAs, to be based in SARCs and voluntary sector organisations will provide advice and support through the criminal justice system for victims of sexual violence.

Sexual Harassment (Anonymity)

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent discussions he has had with ministerial colleagues on anonymity for the accused in sexual harassment cases. [61533]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 27 March 2006]:* The Interdepartmental Ministerial Group on Sexual Offending, which I chair, has recently scrutinised the operation of the Sexual Offences Act 2003. This included a review of the impact of the current guidance issued by the Association of Chief Police Officers and by the Press Complaints Commission (PCC) on the disclosure of information about the identity of suspects in sex offences before charge. The review noted that neither the police nor the PCC had received any complaints about breaches of those pieces of guidance. This issue will be included in the next stage of monitoring of the Sexual Offences Act 2003, which is due to begin this summer.

Sham Marriages

Mr. Laxton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of sham marriages which have taken place since February 2005. [63620]

Mr. McNulty: The Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 places a statutory duty on registrars to report to the Home Office those marriages where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that the marriage will be a sham.

Since 1 February 2005, there have been 234 reports of suspicious marriages from registrars.

Mr. Laxton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many successful convictions related to the practice of sham marriages there have been since February 2005. [63621]

Mr. McNulty: Since February 2005 IND has recorded 23 successful convictions related to the practice of sham marriages.

Mr. Laxton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to abolish the two year probationary period for immigrant spouses or partners. [63622]

Mr. McNulty: We have no plans to abolish the probationary period for those persons who have been granted leave on the basis of a marriage, civil partnership or a long-standing relationship with a British citizen or person with indefinite leave to remain.

SMARTT Programme Trials

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment his Office has made of the Smile, Manners, Attitude, Respect, Tolerance, Talk (SMARTT) programme trials being run by police in Ealing, Greenwich and Camden; what estimate he has made of the cost of the programme; and what plans there are to roll the programme out across the country. [56587]

Hazel Blears: The Home Office will await the evaluation of the programme by the metropolitan police service before considering the potential for wider application of the SMARTT programme for stop and search.

Sports Events (Security)

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the effect of the Private Security Industry Act 2001 on the insurance of sports events; and what penalties may be imposed on sports bodies for non-compliance. [46160]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 25 January 2006]:* I understand the Association of British Insurers has circulated advice to underwriters about issuing and renewing policies and how to respond to claims where unlicensed security operatives are being used inappropriately.

The Private Security Industry Act 2001 imposes licensing requirements and sanctions on those undertaking defined security activities and those who supply security operatives undertaking those activities. However, those organisations, including sports bodies, that employ unlicensed contracted staff are not breaking any law. A consultation document was published on 29 March 2006 to look at the effect of the Private Security Industry Act 2001 on security staff at sports and other events.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the implications for sports national governing bodies of the Private Security Industry Act 2001. [46163]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 30 January 2006]:* The Private Security Industry Act 2001 covers designated activities rather than specified bodies. All those undertaking such activities are required to be licensed, as relevant provisions of the Act take effect, unless removed from the Act's ambit by one of the mechanisms provided by the legislation. As the law currently stands, some sports stewards undertaking security duties are within its remit.

The Home Office, working with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, issued a consultation paper on 30 March 2006 to help establish greater clarity as to the impact of the Private Security Industry Act 2001 on sports and events.

Terrorism

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had with police authorities in *(a)* Manchester, *(b)* Birmingham, *(c)* Leeds, *(d)* Liverpool, *(e)* Edinburgh, *(f)* Glasgow, *(g)* Cardiff and *(h)* other major cities and towns in the UK concerning initiatives to deal with terrorist attacks. [59537]

Hazel Blears: Since September 2005, my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary and I have had discussions with all police authorities in England and Wales, including those in Greater Manchester, West Midlands, West Yorkshire, Merseyside and South Wales, about reconfiguring policing in their areas to ensure that there is the capacity and resilience to provide protective services, including counter terrorism, to national standards.

The Government's counter terrorism strategy is a nationwide effort to reduce the threat and our vulnerability to terrorism across the UK and involves a variety of Government Departments and agencies, particularly the police service, working in partnership with local and regional government and the private sector. Key elements of the strategy focus on the development of effective and proportionate protective security arrangements and ensuring that we are prepared to respond effectively to, and recover from, a terrorist attack. We do not comment on the specifics of the operational activity across the UK as this could assist those who may wish to perpetrate acts of terrorism.

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when details of the operation of the charitable fund to help British victims of terrorism abroad will be announced. [61784]

Tessa Jowell: I am replying as Minister responsible for humanitarian assistance of those affected by major emergencies.

There is more work to be done on how the fund will operate, and I will be working in consultation with the voluntary sector, partners in Government and those families affected to finalise the details. We hope to be able to make a further announcement in the summer.

Terrorist Suspects (Renditions)

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1652W, to the right hon. and learned Member for North-East Fife (Sir Menzies Campbell) on terrorist suspects (renditions), whether requests are still made to the Home Secretary for the extraordinary rendition of individuals by the United States through UK airspace or territory as in 1998. [43630]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Government's position on the allegations concerning extraordinary rendition was set out in the Foreign Secretary's Written Ministerial Statement of 20 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 37WS.

UK Citizenship Test

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people *(a)* passed and *(b)* failed the Life in the UK citizenship test between November 2005 and 28 February 2006. [63834]

Mr. McNulty: 24,613 people took the Life in the UK test between its implementation and 28 February 2006.

Of these, 17,240 passed and 7,373 failed, giving a pass rate of 70.04 percent.

Zahid Mubarek

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on changes that have occurred at *(a)* prison governor, *(b)* area manager and *(c)* Prison Service Board level arising from the inquiry into the death at Feltham Young Offenders Institution of Zahid Mubarek. [63297]

Fiona Mactaggart: I have not yet received the report from Mr. Justice Keith. I am therefore unable to comment on the report and it would be inappropriate for me to speculate on its contents.

Zimbabwe

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* Zimbabwean nationals and *(b)* former members of the Zimbabwe Republic Police are employed by police forces in England and Wales; and if he will make a statement. [63891]

Mr. McNulty: The data requested are not collected centrally.

UK Immigration Procedures

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether a person caught attempting to enter the UK by UK immigration officers in Northern France is fingerprinted before being handed to the French authorities. [63242]

Mr. McNulty: It is not current practice to fingerprint immigration offenders encountered on the juxtaposed controls before handing them to the French authorities.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many persons attempting to enter the UK have been detected by UK immigration officers in Northern France in each month since the establishment of juxtaposed controls. [63243]

Mr. McNulty: The following table provides the figures on the number of persons detected by UK Immigration Service staff.

	IDAs[1]	CLDs[2]
2004		
October	329	130
November	372	165
December	404	156
2005		
January	292	105
February	218	141
March	250	181
April	261	175
May	228	176
June	197	136
July	151	234
August	124	245
September	165	165
October	154	245
November	159	258
December	175	258
2006		
January	152	327
February	139	391
March	124	289

[1] IDAs—Inadequately Documented Arrivals

[2] CLDs—Clandestines

Note:

These figures are obtained from locally collated management information and are subject to change.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how those caught attempting to enter the UK by UK immigration officers in Northern France are included in immigration statistics. [63244]

Mr. McNulty: Published statistics on persons refused entry to the UK by immigration officers in Northern France are included in the Control of Immigration Statistics Command Paper, table 6.1 'Persons removed from the United Kingdom and those subject to enforcement action'. This publication and further information is available on the Home Office's Research Development and Statistics website at: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

UK Residents (Overseas Questioning)

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether there are circumstances under which residents of the UK may be transferred to another country for questioning in relation to terrorist offences committed in the UK. [48620]

Mr. Charles Clarke: There are no circumstances under which the UK Government would transfer residents of the UK to another country for the purpose of questioning in relation to terrorist offences committed in the UK without their consent. Section 47 of the Crime (International Co-operation) Act 2003 provides for the transfer of prisoners to another country for the purpose of assisting there in the investigation of an offence with their consent or with the consent of a person appearing to the Secretary of State to be an appropriate person to act on the prisoner's behalf.

Under-age Drinking

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prosecutions there were for under-age drinking in *(a)* Lancaster and Wyre and *(b)* Lancashire in the last year for which figures are available. [61323]

Hazel Blears: Under-age drinking is covered by a number of offences on the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform. Information on these offences is provided in the following table, which gives the number of defendants aged 10–17 years who were proceeded against in magistrates Courts in Lancashire police force area, for selected offences related to alcohol in 2004 broken down by individual court. It is not possible to separate prosecutions in Lancaster and Wyre as the data are not broken down to that level of detail. Statistics for 2005 will be available in the autumn.

Number of defendants aged 10–17 years proceeded against at magistrates courts in Lancashire police force area for offences relating to under-aged drinking in 2004[1]

Court	Being found drunk in a highway or other public place[2]	Being guilty while drunk of disorderly behaviour[3]	Drunk in, or when entering a designated sports event[4]	Person under 18 buying or attempting to buy or consuming intoxicating liquor in licensed premisis[5]
Fylde Coast	—	6	—	—
Blackpool and Fylde	—	4	—	—
Chorley	—	4	—	—
Lancaster	—	7	—	—
Ormskirk	—	1	—	—
Preston	1	28	—	—
South Ribble	—	11	—	1
Fleetwood	—	6	—	—
Hyndburn	—	7	—	—
Blackburn, Darwen and Ribble Valley	—	29	—	—
Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale	1	19	—	—
Lancashire police force area	2	122	—	1

[1] These data are provided on the principal offence basis

[2] S. 12 Licensing Act 1872

[3] S.91 Criminal Justice Act 1967

[4] S.2(2) Sporting Events (Control of Alcohol etc) Act 1985

[5] S.169C(1)&E(1) Licensing Act 1964; Licensing (Occasional Permissions) Act 1983 S.3 Sch para 4(2)

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prosecutions there were for under-age drinking in *(a)* Ribble Valley and *(b)* Lancashire in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [63657]

Paul Goggins: The specific offence of "an individual aged under 18 knowingly consumes alcohol on relevant premises" was introduced in the Licensing Act 2003 which came into force on 24 November 2005. Statistics for 2005 will be available in autumn 2006. Before 2005 there was no specific offence for under-age drinking.

The court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform hold information on other offences relating to drunkenness. The table gives figures for defendants aged 10–17 prosecuted for these offences in Lancashire police force area, and Blackburn, Darwen, and Ribble Valley PSA (petty sessional area). It is not possible to identify which prosecutions were for Ribble Valley as the data is not broken down to this level of detail.

These offences may also be dealt with under the penalty notice for disorder (PND) scheme. The scheme was introduced in England and Wales in 2004 to provide the police with a swift and efficient means of dealing with minor offences. The table gives data on the number of PNDs issued to juveniles aged 16–17 years old for alcohol related offences in Lancashire police force area for 2004 and provisional data for 2005. It is not possible to identify which PNDs were issued in Ribble Valley as the data is not broken down to this level of detail.

Number of penalty notices for disorder issued to under 18s for drinking offences in Lancashire police force area, 2004 and 2005 provisional data

	Drunk and disorderly	*Drunk in highway*	*Consumption of alcohol by under 18 in licensed premises*[1]
2004	207	5	—
2005 (provisional data)	344	5	4

[1] *offence added to* PND scheme from 1 November 2004

Number of defendants aged 10 to 17 years old, prosecuted at magistrates courts for offences relating to underaged drinking, in Lancashire police force area and Blackburn, Darwen, and Ribble Valley petty sessional area (psa) 1997 to 2004[1]

	Lancashire police force area			*Blackburn, Darwen and Ribble Valley petty sessional area*		
	Being found drunk in a highway or other Public place whether a building or not, or a licensed premises[2]	*Any person who in any public place is guilty, while drunk, of disorderly behaviour*[3]	*Person under 18 buying or attempting to buy or consuming intoxicating liquor. Person under 18 buying or consuming intoxicating liquor in Licensed premises*[4]	*Being found drunk in a highway or other Public place whether a building or not, or a licensed premises*[2]	*Any person who in any public place is guilty, while drunk, of disorderly behaviour*[3]	*Person under 18 buying or attempting to buy or consuming intoxicating liquor. Person under 18 buying or consuming intoxicating liquor in Licensed premises*[4]
1997	nil	79	nil	nil	15	nil
1998	3	107	nil	nil	19	nil
1999	4	160	nil	nil	31	nil
2000	4	182	nil	nil	38	nil
2001	6	204	nil	2	37	nil
2002	7	194	1	nil	33	nil
2003	nil	209	nil	nil	50	nil
2004	2	122	1	nil	29	nil

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.
[2] Licensing Act 1872 Sec 12.
[3] Criminal Justice Act 1967 Sec.91.
[4] Licensing (Occasional Permissions) Act 1983 Schedule (Sec 3) para 4(2). Licensing Act 1964 Sec 169(2).

Vehicle Registration

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many road traffic offences were committed by vehicles that were registered at false or incorrect addresses in Ribble Valley constituency in each of the last five years; what offences were involved; what the estimated cost is of unpaid fines following such offences; and how many multiple offences were committed by the same vehicles in that period. [61640]

Hazel Blears: The information is not collected centrally.

Witness Attendance

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of *(a)* summary trials and *(b)* trials on indictment in England and Wales in the latest year for which figures are available was not effective because of non-attendance of Crown witnesses; and what percentage of those trials was ineffective due to (i) witnesses not having been warned and (ii) witnesses having been warned but not attending. [62524]

Fiona Mactaggart: In 2004–05, 3.7 per cent. of all Crown court trials and 6.4 per cent. of all magistrates courts trials in England and Wales were ineffective due to the non-attendance of prosecution witnesses. Those data are collected from all courts but are not currently broken down by summary and indictable trials, nor are data collected for the reasons for witness non-attendance.

The Government have introduced Witness Care Units as part of the No Witness, No Justice programme to support all prosecution witnesses from the point at which a defendant has been charged and to ensure that more witnesses attend court. An independent evaluation of the pilot project found that witness attendance at court improved by nearly 20 per cent. and that there was an overall increase of 6 per cent. in victim and witness satisfaction.

There are now 165 Witness Care Units in place, with full coverage in every criminal justice area, and they have already demonstrated their effectiveness. In those cases handled by the units, the witness attendance rate has increased from 78.5 per cent. in the three months before units went live to 84 per cent. in August 2005.

Witness Care Units, jointly staffed by the Crown Prosecution Service and the police, ensure that witnesses receive a more thoughtful and tailor-made service, with their individual needs considered from the time a statement is first taken by the police. If the case proceeds to court, witnesses will have a single point of contact to keep them up to date on how the case is proceeding, if and when they are required to give evidence and what the final outcome is.

World Cup

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the likelihood of known British football hooligans travelling to the World Cup using fraudulently obtained documents; and if he will make a statement. [63684]

Paul Goggins: The Passport Agency has details of all persons subject to a football banning order and checks their records for duplicate applications. There is no evidence that any banned person has fraudulently obtained a passport. The World Cup Control period commences on 30 May. All individuals subject to a football banning order will be required to report to a designated police station and surrender their passport on this date. Thereafter, they will be required to report on the day of each England game to ensure they have not attempted to travel.

To ensure compliance, the police will monitor all fans travelling to Germany or a transit country. It is rare for individuals to breach the conditions of their banning orders and no banning order subject attempted to travel to Euro 2004. The maximum penalty for breach of banning order conditions is a six month custodial sentence, a £5,000 fine and a further banning order.

Yarl's Wood Detention Centre

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on 28th February 2006 how many women at Yarl's Wood Detention Centre had been held for more than *(a)* one week, *(b)* one month and *(c)* one year. [63821]

Mr. McNulty: The Home Office publishes a quarterly "snapshot" of people detained solely under Immigration Act powers on the last Saturday of each quarter. The latest published information pertains to people detained as at 31 December 2005.

The accompanying table shows the number of females detained solely under Immigration Act powers in Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre as at 31 December 2005. Separate data are provided on the length of detention but are not broken down to show the length of detention at specific removal centres.

Information on the number of women who had been held in detention on the day in question together with the time spent in detention is not available.

Published statistics on immigration and asylum are available on the Home Office's Research Development and Statistics website at: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Women recorded as being in detention at Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre in the United Kingdom solely under Immigration Act powers as at 31 December 2005, by length of detention[1]

Length of detention[2]	*Number of women*
7 days or less	15
7 to 29 days	70
1 month to less than 1 year	135
1 year or more	*
Total	220

[1] Figures rounded to the nearest 5, with * = 1 or 2, may not sum due to rounding and exclude persons recorded as detained under both criminal and immigration powers.

[2] Relates to current period of sole detention only.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on 28 February 2006 how many children at Yarl's Wood Detention Centre had been held for more than *(a)* one week and *(b)* one month. [63822]

Mr. McNulty: The Home Office publishes a quarterly "snapshot" of people detained solely under Immigration Act powers on the last Saturday of each quarter. The latest published information pertains to people detained as at 31 December 2005.

The accompanying table shows the number of minors detained solely under Immigration Act powers in Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre as at 31 December 2005 broken down by length of detention.

The number of children detained with their families solely under Immigration Act powers will change from day to day. However, internal management information shows that, as at 28 February 2006, 31 children were detained for longer than one week, and 14 children were detained for longer than one month at Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre.

Minors are detained only in two limited circumstances: first, as part of a family group whose detention is considered appropriate; second, when unaccompanied, while alternative care arrangements are made and normally just overnight. While the detention of families with children is very regrettable, it nevertheless remains necessary in appropriate cases in order to maintain an effective immigration control and to tackle abuses of the asylum system.

Published statistics on immigration and asylum are available on the Home Office's Research Development and Statistics website at: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

Table: Minors recorded as being in detention at Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre in the United Kingdom solely under Immigration Act powers as at 31 December 2005, by length of detention[1]

Length of detention[2]	*Number of minors*[3]
Seven days or less	5
Seven to 29 days	20
One month or more	10
Total	30

[1] Figures rounded to the nearest 5, may not sum due to rounding and exclude persons recorded as detained under both criminal and immigration powers.
[2] Relates to current period of sole detention only.
[3] People recorded as being under 18 on 31 December 2005.

Young Offenders

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what national target he has set for reducing the number of young people who re-offend in each year to 2009. [45530]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office has a PSA to reduce crime by 15 per cent. and further in high crime areas, by 2007–08. The Home Office's Strategic Plan 2004–08 Confident Communities in a Secure Britain set a target to reduce re-offending by 5 per cent. by 2008 compared to 2002–03, working towards 10 per cent. by the end of the decade.

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what national target he has set for reducing the number of young people who offend for the first time in each year to 2009. [45531]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office has a public service agreement (PSA) to reduce crime by 15 per cent. and further in high crime areas, by 2007–08. In support of this PSA the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales has a target to reduce the numbers of first-time entrants to the youth justice system by 5 per cent. by March 2008 compared to the March 2005 baseline.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what *(a)* support services and *(b)* training are available to help children of school age who have been convicted of a crime in (i) the Southend, West constituency, (ii) Essex county council, (iii) the Metropolitan police area of London and (iv) England and Wales. [62884]

Hazel Blears: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for Ruislip-Northwood (Mr. Hurd) on 16 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1152W.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many individuals who had spent time in a youth detention centre subsequently offended as an adult in each of the last 10 years. [63020]

Fiona Mactaggart: The data are not routinely collected.

The most recent information on the re-offending of juveniles was published in February 2005 as 'Juvenile reconviction: results from the 2003 cohort'. Home Office On-Line Report 08/05'. The report is available on line at: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/onlinepubs1.html

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many individuals from *(a)* Romford and *(b)* Havering were in (i) secure training centres, (ii) local authority secure children's homes and (iii) young offender institutions in each of the last 10 years. [63021]

Fiona Mactaggart: This information is not collected centrally.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many individuals were sentenced to terms in *(a)* secure training centres, *(b)* local authority secure children's homes and *(c)* young offender institutions in each of the last 10 years. [63022]

Fiona Mactaggart: Information on the numbers of individuals held in secure training centres and local authority secure children's homes, and the numbers of young persons held within prison service establishments for each year since 1994, as recorded on the prison service IT system, is provided in the following table.

Sentenced prisoners held in (a) secure training centres (b) local authority secure children's homes and (c) young people in prison establishments (as at end of June except where stated).

	1994	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*[1]	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
LASCHs	85	80	80	110	150	145	225	—	—	—	—	—
	—	—	—	—	—	—	267	292	314	327	267	237
STCs	—	—	—	—	—	—	125	116	135	183	181	248
	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
All sentenced young offenders within Prison Establishments[2]	5,323	5,880	6,653	7,981	8,535	8,358	8,554	8,729	8,919	8,649	8,388	8,400

[1] Figures for 2000–2004 from Youth Justice Board, as at 30 June each year; figures before 2000 from DfES returns as at 31 March each year.
[2] Not including those held on remand.
Notes:
1. Young persons are held in local prisons as well as in young offender and juvenile institutions.
2. Young persons are aged under 21 but include 21 year old prisoners who were aged 20 or under at conviction who have not been reclassified as part of the adult population.

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday 18 April 2006

HEALTH

Payment By Results

8. **Rosie Cooper:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will take steps to ensure that hospitals with new estate and high capital charges are not disadvantaged by the average cost of procedure funding system of the new payment by results tariff. [63694]

Jane Kennedy: Payment by results is a transparent and fair method of paying hospitals for their services.

The tariff takes account of the cost of capital, and the annual tariff increase includes an assessment of the increase in capital charges.

None the less, the affordability of new buildings still requires effective financial management by trusts.

Bowel Cancer Screening

16. **Ms Diana R. Johnson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the national roll-out of the Bowel Cancer Screening Programme. [63702]

25. **Dr. Cable:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the Bowel Cancer Screening Programme. [63711]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The national bowel cancer screening programme will be rolled out nationally over the next three years. Funding for the first year of the screening programme is being transferred to the National Cancer Screening Team in Sheffield, and Wolverhampton will be the first local screening centre.

Pulmonary Hypertension

17. **Chris Bryant:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients were *(a)* diagnosed with and *(b)* treated for pulmonary hypertension in each of the last two years. [63703]

Ms Rosie Winterton: At the nationally-designated Pulmonary Hypertension centres in England, which treat the majority of United Kingdom patients except Scottish patients, there were 591 patients being treated at 31 March 2004, 841 at 31 March 2005 and 1,114 at 31 March 2006.

Vaccination (Influenza)

18. **Andrew Miller:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have been vaccinated against the influenza virus in winter 2005–06. [63704]

Caroline Flint: Data based on returns received from general practitioner practices show that 8,520,146 people in England registered in an at risk group received their flu vaccination in 2005–06. This represents the highest ever flu vaccination uptake for the 65s and over and for those under 65 in at risk groups.

A and E (Unnecessary Admissions)

19. **Kerry McCarthy:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the effects on *(a)* patients and *(b)* public funds of reducing unnecessary admissions into accident and emergency departments for people with common conditions. [63705]

Jane Kennedy: In 2004–05, the national health service spent £1.3 billion on admissions for people with 19 common conditions. Research by the NHS Institute has indicated that, based on the best performers in the NHS, a 30 per cent. reduction in this total would achieve savings of £437 million for the NHS.

Reducing unnecessary admissions will be:

better for patients—especially those with long-term conditions, who would often benefit more from community treatment;

better for the NHS—who will be able to reinvest the savings in front line services;

and better value for money for the tax payer.

Dentistry

20. **Barbara Keeley:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health what she estimates the average income of an NHS dentist will be under the new contract for dentists. [63706]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We estimate that a committed national health service dentist earns an average net income of around £80,000 in 2005–06. The Government have accepted the independent Pay Review Body's recommendation of a 3 per cent. increase in dentists' pay, which means that we would expect the same dentist to earn an average of over £82,000 in 2006–07.

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much her Department has spent per capita on NHS dentistry in *(a)* the Beverley and Holderness constituency, *(b)* East Yorkshire and *(c)* England in each year since 1997. [41365]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Figures on expenditure per capita in the Beverley and Holderness constituency cannot be calculated, as population data are not available for parliamentary constituency areas.

The table shows the readily available data on expenditure on the general dental services (GDS), or personal dental services (PDS) in the Beverley and Holderness constituency. The difference between gross and net expenditure is the contribution to costs from dental charges collected directly from patients.

Core GDS and PDS dental payments within Beverley and Holderness constituency

	Gross GDS and PDS payments[1,2,3]	*(£ million) Net GDS and PDS payments*[4]
1997–98	1.598	1.033
1998–99	1.740	1.121
1999–2000	1.882	1.197
2000–01	2.109	1.354

Core GDS and PDS dental payments within Beverley and Holderness constituency

	Gross GDS and PDS payments[1, 2, 3]	*(£ million) Net GDS and PDS payments*[4]
2001–02	2.322	1.502
2002–03	2.434	1.561
2003–04	2.302	1.502
2004–05	2.106	1.506

Equivalent expenditure within East Yorkshire primary care trust (PCT), together with gross and net expenditure on a per capita basis, is shown in the tables.

Core GDS and PDS dental payments within East Yorkshire PCT

	Gross GDS and PDS payments[1, 2, 3]	*(£ million) Net GDS and PDS payments*[4]
1997–98	3.325	2.136
1998–99	3.479	2.232
1999–2000	3.440	2.188
2000–01	3.542	2.307
2001–02	3.919	2.515
2002–03	4.021	2.560
2003–04	3.926	2.539
2004–05	3.882	2.590

Core GDS and PDS dental payments per Capita[5] *within East Yorkshire PCT*

	Gross GDS and PDS payments[1, 2, 3]	*(£) Net GDS and PDS payments*[4]
1997–98	19.46	12.50
1998–99	20.36	13.06
1999–2000	20.13	12.81
2000–01	20.73	13.50
2001–02	22.80	14.64
2002–03	23.26	14.81
2003–04	22.47	14.53
2004–05	22.22	14.83

Equivalent expenditure for England is set out in the tables. As the notes to the table's record, the data are not a complete record of all elements of GDS and PDS expenditure. The tables are based on the core elements of expenditure for which data are readily available by PCT and constituency areas to provide a more appropriate comparison with the analysis of local expenditure.

Core GDS and PDS dental payments in England

	Gross GDS and PDS payments[1, 2, 3]	*(£ million) Net GDS and PDS payments*[4]
1997–98	1,291.9	903.1
1998–99	1,380.0	960.0
1999–2000	1,418.9	986.8
2000–01	1,490.5	1,037.0
2001–02	1,555.6	1,085.6
2002–03	1,604.2	1,122.6
2003–04	1,673.8	1,188.6
2004–05	1,779.4	1,311.8

Core GDS and PDS dental payments per Capita[5] *England*

	Gross GDS and PDS payments[1, 2, 3]	*(£) Net GDS and PDS payments*[4]
1997–98	26.55	18.56
1998–99	28.27	19.66
1999–2000	28.94	20.12
2000–01	30.27	21.06
2001–02	31.46	21.95
2002–03	32.31	22.61
2003–04	33.57	23.84
2004–05	35.52	26.19

[1] Gross GDS payments include adult fees (including item of service and continuing care payments), child fees (including item of service and capitation payments), commitment payments and point of treatment check payment training (in 2001 only), seniority payments, maternity/paternity/adoptive leave payments, long term sick leave payments, continuing professional development allowances including travel hours, reimbursement of business rates, vocational training grants and clinical audit payments. The following costs are excluded from this data; employer's superannuation costs, vocational trainee salaries and national insurance contribution costs, clinical audit convenors, clinical audit secretarial support costs and travel expenses, and costs associated with any salaried general dental practitioners and emergency dental services.

[2] National PDS payment data are included for 2004–05 only and relate to baseline payments or the agreed regular monthly payments made to PDS practices. Reliable PDS data at practice level are not available prior to 2004–05. The data cannot identify the cost of any PDS services that are directly managed by local NHS trusts, such as certain dental access centres.

[3] Payments are assigned to areas on the basis of practice postcode data.

[4] Net payments represent the balance of payments due after taking account of NHS dental charge income collected from patients by dental practices.

[5] 1997–2000 data have been calculated using 2001 population data, as this is the earliest available. 2005 data have been calculated using 2004 population data, as this is the latest available.

Source: The Information Centre/Dental Practice Board

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many claims were received by the Dental Practice Board in each year since 1997; of these how many *(a)* attracted the maximum patient charge, *(b)* involved one filling only and *(c)* involved one crown only. [54501]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The table shows the number of claims for treatment by general dental services and personal dental services dentists in England that attracted the maximum patient charge, the number that involved one filling only (and no other treatment) and the number that involved one crown only (and no other treatment) in the year ending December for each of the specified years.

	Total claims	*Maximum patient charge*	*One filling only*	*One crown only*
1998	31,257,215	31,139	1,511,539	44,519
1999	31,202,076	35,237	1,507,133	59,999
2000	31,623,167	38,034	1,526,568	61,366
2001	31,699,014	42,303	1,436,951	49,662
2002	32,025,186	45,610	1,437,230	48,484
2003	32,290,603	32,416	1,425,959	48,289
2004	31,863,227	42,152	1,351,793	46,725
2005	30,678,768	39,276	1,287,688	44,008

Source: Dental Practice Board

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of eligible dentists had accepted the NHS dental contract as at 31 March 2006; how many eligible dentists had declined to accept the new NHS dental contract, as at that date; and how many eligible dentists had not responded positively or negatively. [61644]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of new dental contracts signed account for around 96 per cent. of current national health service dental services. The contracts that have been rejected equate to around four per cent. of current NHS dental services. Many of the dentists who chose not to take up the contracts have a relatively small NHS commitment. Some of these services have already been re-commissioned by primary care trusts.

As of 7 April 2006, only 20 contract offers had not been responded to.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people were registered with a dentist in the area of each primary care trust or its equivalent on 31 March *(a)* of 2006 and *(b)* of each year since 1997; and what proportion each figure represents of the resident population of each area. [61647]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Data on the numbers of people registered with a general dental services and personal dental services dentist as at 31 December 2005 and each year since 1997 have been placed in the Library.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was spent on NHS dentistry in Gloucestershire in *(a)* cash and *(b)* real terms in each of the last five years. [63340]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The main element of national health service dental services are the primary dental care services provided by dentists working within the general dental service (GDS), or personal dental service (PDS) pilots.

The tables show the available data on expenditure on these services for the Cheltenham and Tewkesbury primary care trust (PCT), Cotswold and Vale PCT and West Gloucestershire PCT. The difference between gross and net expenditure is the contribution to costs from dental charges collected directly from patients.

Note that data on PDS expenditure are only available for the financial year 2004–05.

Core GDS and PDS dental payments[1,2,3,4] (£ million, cash terms[5])

	2000–01	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Cheltenham and Tewkesbury					
Gross GDS	4.142	4.255	4.396	4.495	4.598
Net GDS	2.938	2.993	3.059	3.210	3.301
Gross PDS[6]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.000
Net PDS[6]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.000
Gross GDS and PDS	4.142	4.255	4.396	4.495	4.598
Net GDS and PDS	2.938	2.993	3.059	3.210	3.301
Cotswold and Vale					
Gross GDS	3.897	3.893	3.888	3.831	3.360
Net GDS	2.645	2.672	2.734	2.756	2.503
Gross PDS[6]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.599
Net PDS[6]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.415
Gross GDS and PDS	3.897	3.893	3.888	3.831	3.959
Net GDS and PDS	2.645	2.672	2.734	2.756	2.918
West Gloucestershire					
Gross GDS	4.125	3.999	3.880	3.871	3.723
Net GDS	3.339	3.212	3.094	3.131	3.068
Gross PDS[6]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.231
Net PDS[6]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.200
Gross GDS and PDS	4.125	3.999	3.880	3.871	3.954
Net GDS and PDS	3.339	3.212	3.094	3.131	3.269

Core GDS and PDS dental payments[1,2,3,4] (£ million, real terms[5])

	2000–01	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Cheltenham and Tewkesbury					
Gross GDS	4.688	4.701	4.706	4.690	4.694
Net GDS	3.325	3.306	3.275	3.349	3.370
Gross PDS[6]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.000
Net PDS[6]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.000
Gross GDS and PDS	4.688	4.701	4.706	4.690	4.694
Net GDS and PDS	3.325	3.306	3.275	3.349	3.370
Cotswold and Vale					
Gross GDS	4.411	4.301	4.162	3.997	3.431
Net GDS	2.993	2.952	2.927	2.876	2.556
Gross PDS[6]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.611
Net PDS[6]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.424

Core GDS and PDS dental payments[1,2,3,4] (£ million, real terms[5])

	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Gross GDS and PDS	4.411	4301	4.162	3.997	4.042
Net GDS and PDS	2.993	2.952	2.927	2.876	2.980
West Gloucestershire					
Gross GDS	4.668	4.417	4.154	4.038	3.801
Net GDS	3.779	3.548	3.313	3.266	3.132
Gross PDS[6]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.236
Net PDS[6]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.205
Gross GDS and PDS	4.668	4.417	4.154	4.038	4.037
Net GDS and PDS	3.779	3.548	3.313	3.266	3.337

[1] Gross GDS payments include adult fees (including item of service and continuing care payments), child fees (including item of service and capitation payments), commitment payments and point of treatment check payment training (in 2001 only), seniority payments, maternity/paternity/adoptive leave payments, long term sick leave payments, continuing professional development allowances including travel hours, reimbursement of business rates, vocational training grants and clinical audit payments. The following costs are excluded from this data: employer's superannuation costs, vocational trainee salaries and national insurance contribution costs, clinical audit convenors, clinical audit secretarial support costs and travel expenses, and costs associated with any salaried general dental practitioners and emergency dental services.

[2] PDS payment data are included for 2004–05 only and relates to baseline payments or the agreed regular monthly payments made to PDS practices. Reliable PDS data at practice level are not available prior to 2004–05. The data cannot identify the cost of any PDS services that are directly managed by local NHS trusts, such as certain dental access centres.

[3] Payments are assigned to areas on the basis of practice postcode data.

[4] Net payments represent the balance of payments due after taking account of NHS dental charge income collected from patients by dental practices.

[5] Figures have been converted into 2005–06 prices using the most recent GDP deflator figures available.

[6] Note that data on PDS expenditure are only available for the financial year 2004–05 (n/a = not available).

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the number of dental practices no longer accepting NHS patients. [64035]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information is not available by practice. The number of new dental contracts that have been rejected is 1,026, which equates to around 4 per cent. of current national health service dental services. Many of the dentists who chose not to take up the contracts had a relatively small NHS commitment and some of these services have already been re-commissioned by primary care trusts.

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research her Department has carried out on the impact of the introduction of *(a)* tuition fees and *(b)* variable fees on the numbers of students applying for dentistry courses in England. [64261]

Ms Rosie Winterton: No specific research has been commissioned by the Department. However, the table shows that the numbers of applications to study pre-clinical dentistry has been steadily increasing each year.

	Number of applications
2001	1,109
2002	1,243
2003	1,372
2004	1,545
2005	1,847

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many dentists have withdrawn from the new NHS dental contract since 31 March 2006; [64388]

(2) how many dentists had signed the new NHS dental contract on 31 March 2006. [64389]

Ms Rosie Winterton: In England, as of 31 March 2006, the number of new dental contracts that have been rejected is 1,026, which equates to around four per cent. of current national health service dental services. Many of the dentists who chose not to take up the contracts had a relatively small NHS commitment and some of these services have already been re-commissioned by primary care trusts.

The number of new dental contracts that have been signed is 8,322.

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate her Department has made of the average level of personal debt for dentists graduating in each year from 1997 to 2005. [64428]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not held centrally.

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists have been recruited overseas to work in NHS dentistry in England since April 2004; what methods her Department is using to promote the recruitment of dentists from overseas; and what the annual cost of this promotion is. [51908]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We do not hold information centrally on the total number of dentists working in the national health service who have been recruited from overseas.

Since April 2004, the Department has recruited 237 dentists from Poland and has supported the NHS in recruiting a further 297 dentists from other countries. In conjunction with the General Dental Council the Department has supported the recruitment of a further 230 dentists through the expansion of the number of sittings of the international qualifying examination and reducing the typical time taken to pass the examination from two years to one.

The Department liaised with the relevant embassies to help countries identify potential sources of recruitment and information regarding how to apply for vacancies in England was placed on British embassy websites and the

NHS Careers and NHS Jobs websites. In addition, a £3.8 million contract was agreed with Methods Consulting for the recruitment of dentists from Poland.

The Department is not currently running a central international recruitment programme.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what software her Department used to calculate required units of dental activity (UDAs) for dental practitioners under the new regulations; what assumptions were made about current dental activity; and whether the estimate of UDAs has been calculated manually against dentists' activity in the last 12 months. [57524]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of units of dental activity (UDAs) to be provided was determined in accordance with the General Dental Services and Personal Dental Services Transitional Provisions Order 2005 (SI. No. 2005/3435). The data held in respect of the care and treatment previously provided under general dental services was categorised in accordance with the National Health Service (Dental Charges) Regulations 2005 and the National Health Service (General Dental Services Contracts) Regulations 2005 (SI. No. 2005/3361) then reduced by five per cent.

The information on treatments is held by the Business Services Authority, formally the Dental Practice Board, on an Oracle database and the UDAs were allocated using the Oracle Product Suite including PL/SQL.

NHS Deficit

21. **Mr. Gerald Howarth:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the year-end gross NHS deficit for the 2005–06 financial year. [63707]

Jane Kennedy: For 2005–06 month six, the NHS is forecasting a gross deficit of around £948 million. Some NHS organisations have generated surpluses of around £325 million. Therefore, the NHS at 2005–06 month six, is forecasting a net deficit of around £620 million.

22. **Mr. Bellingham:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she next expects to meet representatives of primary care trusts and acute trusts to discuss NHS deficits. [63708]

Jane Kennedy: The Secretary of State and her ministerial team have regular meetings with strategic health authorities, primary care trusts and acute trusts. This includes meetings with NHS organisations that are overspending and underspending. These meetings will continue to take place in the future.

23. **Tom Brake:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on NHS trust deficits. [63709]

Jane Kennedy: For 2005–06 month six, the NHS is forecasting a net deficit of around £620 million. This forecast deficit amounts to less than 1 per cent. of the funding available. The latest unaudited data for the mid-year point shows that two-thirds of the forecast deficit is in around 7 per cent. of organisations.

Pathway Project

24. **Keith Vaz:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she will announce the commencement of funding for the pathway project. [63710]

Jane Kennedy: The cost and configuration of the scheme is currently being reviewed by the University Hospitals of Leicester NHS trust, as it recognises that all investments in the NHS have to be affordable to the local health economy and sustainable in the long term.

Aluminium Salts

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what steps the Government is taking in the light of the report in the Journal of Applied Toxicology of 1 March 2006 on a possible link between aluminium used in deodorants and the incidence of breast cancer; [62848]

(2) what research the Government is conducting into the effect of aluminium salts in anti-perspirants upon human health. [62849]

Caroline Flint: The EU Cosmetics Directive, implemented in the United Kingdom by the Department of Trade and Industry's Cosmetics Products Safety Regulations, covers the safety of cosmetics. Currently aluminium zirconium chloride hydroxide complexes are specifically allowed as antiperspirants (up to 20 per cent.) but with the labelling requirement: "Do not apply to irritated or damaged skin".

The European Commission's expert advisory committee, established to advise on the safety of consumer products including cosmetics, the scientific committee on consumer products (SCCP) has recently considered the hypothesis that chemicals in underarm deodorants are a risk factor in breast cancer due to their potential oestrogenicity. They concluded that there was no evidence of any demonstrable risk of the development of breast cancer caused by the use of underarm cosmetics. The recent paper in the Journal of Applied Toxicology claiming oestrogenic activity for a large range of metals, including aluminium, which is used as an anti-perspirant in underarm deodorants, provides very limited data from in vitro studies. No conclusions can be drawn regarding the biological significance of these data. We are advised by the Health Protection Agency that the paper does not provide any information that would suggest that the recent SCCP opinion on this hypothesis should be reconsidered. There is no justification for government supporting research in this area.

BCG Vaccinations

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make it her policy to reinstate the provision of BCG vaccinations for state school pupils. [62851]

Caroline Flint: Since the introduction of the Bacillus Calmette-Guerin (BCG) schools programme in 1953 the epidemiology of tuberculosis has changed from a disease of the general population to one predominantly affecting high risk groups. The new recommendations are based on the advice of the joint committee on vaccination and immunisation and are aimed at delivering an improved targeted risk based programme. The widespread introduction of targeted BCG vaccination means that the majority of children at high risk of tuberculosis will now be vaccinated in early life.

Avian Influenza

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent steps her Department has taken to protect the public from an outbreak of the H5N1 virus. [63842]

Ms Rosie Winterton: It is important to be clear about the differences between seasonal influenza, avian influenza and pandemic influenza. Avian (bird) influenza is a disease which mainly affects birds. Seasonal flu refers to the viruses that circulate in the human population and cause widespread illness each winter. Pandemic flu will only occur after an avian virus has mutated into a different strain which can spread easily between humans, and to which they do not have immunity.

The "UK Influenza Pandemic Contingency Plan" outlines what the Department is doing to protect the public from pandemic influenza. The plan is available on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/pandemicflu.

Experts are concerned that the H5N1 strain may emerge to form a pandemic. On 20 July 2005, the Department invited manufacturers to tender for a limited supply of H5N1 vaccine. The move is part of the work to prepare for and reduce the impact of a possible flu pandemic. We have awarded contracts to Baxter and Chiron for supplies of 3.7 million doses of H5N1 vaccine and expect to receive stocks by October 2006.

Birth Statistics

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* live births and *(b)* abortions there were in (i) 2004 and (ii) 2005. [64367]

Caroline Flint: In 2004, in England and Wales, there were 639,721 live births and 185,415 abortions (abortions performed on residents of England and Wales). Publication of the live births data for 2005 is scheduled for May 2006 and July 2006 for the 2005 abortion data.

Cancer Networks

James Duddridge: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the population catchment size of each cancer network in England. [63672]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department does not hold the population catchment size for each cancer network. However, a typical cancer network services a population of around one to two million people.

Chronic Hepatitis B

Joan Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will introduce a universal vaccine for babies against chronic hepatitis B. [63869]

Caroline Flint: Hepatitis B vaccine is not currently recommended for universal childhood immunisation in the United Kingdom. This is because the UK is a low incidence country for hepatitis B and has one of the lowest level of chronic hepatitis B infection in the world. The UK hepatitis B vaccination programme is under ongoing review by the joint committee on vaccination and immunisation.

Clinical Guidelines

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what mechanisms are in place to enable clinical experts not included on a National Institute of Health and Clinical Excellence clinical guideline development group to contribute to the development of a guideline; [63886]

(2) whether National Institute of Health and Clinical Excellence clinical guideline development groups can contact other relevant clinical experts to assess evidence as part of the development of a clinical guideline; [63887]

(3) what steps she is taking to ensure that there is appropriate clinical expertise on each of the National Institute of Health and Clinical Excellence's clinical guideline development groups to assess evidence provided for the development of a clinical guideline; [63889]

(4) how many members of National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence guidelines development groups are selected. [63893]

Jane Kennedy: The mechanisms for ensuring that there is appropriate expert input into the development of National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) clinical guidelines are a matter for the Institute. Information on NICE's guideline development processes and methods is available on the NICE website at www.nice.org.uk. I understand that;

individual experts with the relevant expertise may be co-opted onto NICE guideline development groups for specific discussions,

the national collaborating centres through which NICE develops its guidelines invite stakeholders to submit evidence to support their work. This may include evidence from relevant clinical experts,

All members of NICE guideline development groups are selected by the relevant national collaborating centre based on their particular expertise, either through formal stakeholder nominations or through informal networks. A NICE guideline development group will typically have around 12 to 15 members.

Clinical Negligence

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of the legally-aided clinical negligence cases that were closed in the last year with payment of compensation were settled for reasons of the health service defendant seeking to *(a)* avoid and *(b)* limit irrecoverable legal costs. [63814]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Clinical Trials

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent discussions her Department has had with *(a)* hon. Members, *(b)* members of the House of Lords, *(c)* the British Medical Association, *(d)* members of the public and *(e)* the Royal College of Surgeons on clinical trials in hospitals; and if she will make a statement. [60928]

Jane Kennedy: Together with ministerial colleagues and departmental officials, the Secretary of State is in constant dialogue with hon. Members, Members of the

House of Lords, professional bodies, and members of the public on all aspects of the Department's responsibilities.

The consultation document "Best Research for Best Health: a new national health research strategy" that the Department published last year included proposals for the creation of world-class support to the national health service organisations, staff and patients involved in the health research that forms an integral part of high-quality patient care in England. Some 500 organisations and individuals, including the Royal College of Surgeons and the British Medical Association, responded to an invitation to comment. Their response is available on the Department's web site at www.dh.gov.uk/consultations/. The final Government NHS research strategy "Best Research for Best Health" has been strengthened by this input.

The Department funds INVOLVE, an organisation that supports and promotes public involvement in NHS, public health and social care research and development. INVOLVE deals regularly with inquiries about public involvement in such research from patients and members of the public.

The UK Clinical Research Collaboration and the UK Clinical Research Network have brought together a number of organisations that are active in patient and public involvement in research, to discuss issues concerned with that involvement and to develop a shared agenda that maximises the impact of individual organisations' activities and minimises unnecessary duplication. One of the first products of this collaborative working will be the production of a guide to understanding clinical trials for patients and the public.

Contractors

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what criteria she uses to decide whether potential contractors are a bad financial risk. [60580]

Jane Kennedy: It is Departmental procurement policy to consider the assessment of a potential contractor's financial status at the supplier selection or tender evaluation stage and that the assessment is proportional to the financial risks associated with each individual contract.

Financial capability assessments are routinely sought using information obtained through pre-qualification questionnaires or through a Dun and Bradstreet financial report.

A judgment on the financial capability of a company will be made on a case by case basis taking into account factors such as the maturity of the company, changes in turnover and length of time trading.

The Department uses ICC Juniper to provide various levels of financial evaluation. We have also used OGC to carry out financial appraisals. Where more detailed financial analysis is felt to be required, then use of an internal or external financial advisor would be considered.

Coronary Heart Disease/Stroke

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the rates of mortality from *(a)* coronary heart disease and *(b)* stroke were in each year since 1997. [62410]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 18 April 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking what the rates of mortality from *(a)* coronary heart disease and *(b)* stroke were ii) each year since 1997. (62410)

The most recent year for which figures are available is 2004. The table below shows the age-standardised death rate in persons of all ages by underlying cause of death in England and Wales for the years 1997 to 2004.

Age-standardised death rate[1] in persons of all ages, by underlying cause of death. England and Wales, 1997 to 2004[2]

	(a) Coronary heart disease[3]	*(b) Stroke[4]*
1997	196.2	68.6
1998	195.5	67.7
1999	190.9	65.4
2000	187.0	60.3
2001[5]	188.0	65.5
2002[5]	187.1	65.3
2003[5]	183.6	63.5
2004[5]	180.3	57.5

[1] Rate per 100,000 population standardised to the European standard population.

[2] Data are for deaths occurring in each calendar year.

[3] Selected using the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9) codes 410–414 for the years 1997 to 2000, and the Tenth Revision (JCD-10) codes 120–125 for 2001 onwards.

[4] Selected using the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9) codes 430–438 for the years 1997 to 2000, and the Tenth Revision (1CD-10) codes 160–169 for 2001 onwards.

[5] The introduction of ICD-10 for coding cause of death in 2001 means that figures are not completely comparable with data for years before this date. The data should therefore be interpreted with caution. The effect of the change in classification in 2001 on mortality is described in an article published in Health Statistics Quarterly Summer 2002 on 23 May 2002. More information about these changes can be found on the NS website at www.statistics.gov.uk/icdl0mortality

Diabetes

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many specialist centres for diabetes have had their responsibilities for podiatry and retinal screening devolved to GPs by the primary care trust. [63644]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This information is not held centrally.

It is for primary care trusts, in partnership with strategic health authorities and other stakeholders, to determine how best to use their funds to meet national and local priorities for improving health, tackling health inequalities and modernising services. This process provides the means for addressing local needs within the health community, including the provision of podiatry and retinal screening.

Domiciliary Oxygen Supply Service

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many complaints her Department received about the domiciliary oxygen supply service in Kingston-upon-Hull in *(a)* 2004, *(b)* 2005 and *(c)* 2006 to date. [64090]

Jane Kennedy: During the period in question, the Department received one complaint in March 2006 about the domiciliary oxygen service in the Kingston-upon-Hull area.

European Health Insurance Card

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what her Department has done to publicise the new European health insurance card; and if she will make a statement. [63087]

Ms Rosie Winterton: A major publicity campaign ran from October 2004 to March 2006 to publicise both the withdrawal of Elll's and the introduction of the European health insurance card. Activities included the Department's press releases, information leaflets distributed through the travel trade pharmacies and general practitioner surgeries and to 17.5 million households through inserts in local free newspapers, national and local press advertising, a public information film, radio interviews and advertising on photo booths and at Heathrow airport.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of European Health Insurance Card forms have been processed within the 21 day target; and if she will make a statement. [63088]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The vast majority of applications are processed and delivery commenced within two to three days of receipt. Processing may take longer in a small number of cases where further information is required from the applicant.

Genetically Modified Organisms

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what labelling requirements are in place for products containing genetically modified organisms. [63623]

Caroline Flint: EC Regulation 1829/2003 requires that foods which contain or consist of genetically modified organisms, or are produced from or contain ingredients produced from genetically modified organisms should be labelled.

Labelling does not apply to foods which contain genetically modified material up to 0.9 per cent., provided that this presence is adventitious or technically unavoidable.

Heart Operations

Peter Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what has been the cause of recent delays in heart operations in South Hampshire; and what the average period of delay has been in cases categorised as urgent in the last 12 months. [63638]

Caroline Flint: The recent and unexpected closure of the King Edward VII hospital (within Surrey and Sussex Strategic Health Authority) has had a large impact on the provision of cardiac surgery for the resident populations of Fareham and Gosport Primary Care Trust (PCT), East Hampshire PCT and Portsmouth City PCT.

King Edward VII was, along with Southampton University Hospitals national health service trust, a main local centre for cardiac surgery. The hospital fulfilled a need for a private provider under patient choice guidelines, and had strong clinical links with both Southampton and Portsmouth hospitals.

Information about the average period of delay in cases categorised as urgent is not collected centrally.

London Hospitals

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many hospital beds were available in each London hospital in each of the last five years. [62506]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is collected at trust level only. The table shows data for the past five years. The data are also available on the Department's website at:www.performance.doh.gov.uk/hospitalactivity/data_requests/beds_open_overnight.htm.

Beds in:

Org Code	*Organisation*	*2004–05*	*2003–04*	*2002–03*	*2001–02*	*2000–01*
RV3	Central and North West London Mental Health NHS Trust	720	747	847	640	732
RQM	Chelsea and Westminster Healthcare NHS Trust	449	503	509	509	481
RC3	Ealing Hospital NHS Trust	427	436	415	395	379
RQN	Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust	1,071	1,037	1,021	1,021	1,056
5K6	Harrow PCT	125	127	125	—	—
5AT	Hillingdon PCT	152	155	34	—	—
5LA	Kensington and Chelsea PCT	203	29	149	—	—
RV8	North West London Hospitals NHS Trust	946	874	895	830	852
RT3	Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Trust	387	388	392	378	421
RJ5	St Mary's NHS Trust	588	635	636	636	579
RAS	The Hillingdon Hospital NHS Trust	512	539	668	661	654
RKL	West London Mental Health NHS Trust	663	673	654	569	—
RFW	West Middlesex University NHS Trust	394	388	431	432	410
5LC	Westminster PCT	81	50	—	—	—
RVL	Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust	981	1,001	1,030	1,037	913
5A9	Barnet PCT	139	140	140	138	—
RRP	Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health NHS Trust	787	751	701	743	—
TAF	Camden and Islington Mental Health and Social Care Trust	454	424	451	—	—
5K7	Camden PCT	105	105	105	—	—

Org Code	Organisation	Beds in: 2004–05	2003–04	2002–03	2001–02	2000–01
5C1	Enfield PCT	60	62	60	58	—
RP4	Great Ormond Street Hospital For Children NHS Trust	263	293	282	279	272
5C9	Haringey PCT	60	60	68	72	—
5K8	Islington PCT	4	6	7	-	—
RP6	Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Trust	44	49	51	61	61
RAP	North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust	485	478	477	487	397
RAL	Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust	821	889	906	923	974
RAN	Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Trust	173	194	179	163	194
RKF	The Whittington Hospital NHS Trust	439	443	429	405	461
RR8	University College London Hospitals NHS Trust	952	926	834	832	848
RF4	Barking, Havering and Redbridge Hospitals NHS Trust	1,512	1,491	1,473	1,426	—
RNJ	Barts. and the London NHS Trust	998	1,090	1,093	1,115	1,056
RWK	East London and the City Mental Health NHS Trust	635	628	637	493	514
5A4	Havering PCT	181	180	180	181	—
RQX	Homerton University Hospitals NHS Trust	523	508	473	461	491
RNH	Newham Healthcare NHS Trust	424	449	452	463	470
5C5	Newham PCT	114	117	120	106	—
RAT	North East London Mental Health NHS Trust	624	726	757	840	—
5NA	Redbridge PCT	48	—	—	—	—
5C4	Tower Hamlets PCT	136	122	190	136	—
RGC	Whipps Cross University Hospital NHS Trust	765	739	751	846	—
RG3	Bromley Hospitals NHS Trust	551	546	606	655	655
RJ1	Guy's and St. Thomas' NHS Trust	1,216	1,278	1,267	1,248	1,243
RJZ	King's College Hospital NHS Trust	915	966	925	913	978
RPG	Oxleas NHS Trust	439	442	483	452	391
RG2	Queen Elizabeth Hospital NHS Trust	561	484	493	483	477
RGZ	Queen Mary Sidcup NHS Trust	444	453	447	435	448
RV5	South London and Maudsley NHS Trust	1,062	1,054	925	967	960
5LE	Southwalk PCT	11	—	—	—	—
RJ2	The Lewisham Hospital NHS Trust	609	583	583	560	561
RVR	Epsom and St. Helier NHS Trust	930	873	872	960	935
RAX	Kingston Hospitals NHS Trust	599	585	576	590	575
5A5	Kingston PCT	110	117	116	154	—
RJ6	Mayday Healthcare NHS Trust	727	729	711	727	767
5M6	Richmond and Twickenham PCT	50	35	39	—	—
RQY	South West London and St. George's Mental Health NHS Trust	830	854	846	838	595
RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	957	1,000	983	990	984
5M7	Sutton and Merton PCT	230	278	—	—	—
RPY	The Royal Marsden NHS Trust	241	231	232	241	240
5LG	Wandsworth PCT	85	88	92	—	—
5K5	Brent PCT	—	—	92	—	—
RHB	Camden & Islington Community Health Service NHS Trust	—	—	—	117	499
RRQ	Camden & Islington Mental Health NHS Trust	—	—	—	349	—
5C7	Chingford Wanstead & Woodford PCT	—	—	13	45	—
RV4	Community Health South London NHS Trust	—	—	—	40	40
RHZ	East Berkshire Community NHS Trust	—	—	—	20	—
RQK	Harrow and Hillingdon Healthcare NHS Trust	—	—	—	242	236
RFX	Hounslow & Spelthorne Community & Mental Health NHS Trust	—	—	—	257	247
RVM	South East London Community NHS Trust	—	—	—	369	367
5A6	Teddington Twickenham & Hamptons PCT	—	—	—	40	—
5GV	Watford & Three Rivers PCT	—	—	—	6	—
RCZ	Barnet Community Health Care NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	390
RG6	Bhb Community Health NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	566
RA0	Croydon Community NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	5
RV2	Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham Mental Health NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	567
RHC	Enfield Community Care NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	475
RDF	Forest Healthcare NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	1,038
RP2	Haringey Health Care NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	427
RG7	Havering Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	799
RPN	Kingston and District Community NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	444
RRH	Newham Community Health Services NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	180
RDA	Parkside Health NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	293
RG4	Redbridge Health Care NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	884
RRR	Teddington Memorial NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	34
RRG	Tower Hamlets Healthcare NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	160
	London total	29,013	29,047	28,921	29,034	29,673

ME/Chronic Fatigue

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the expenditure by *(a)* her Department's Research and Development budget and *(b)* the Medical Research Council on research into myalgic encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue syndrome has been since 1997. [57655]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is shown in the table.

Expenditure[1] on myalgic encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue syndrome research	*£ million*
Medical Research Council	3.1
Department of Health[2]	1.7

[1] Actual and committed from 1997 to date

[2] National health service support costs, and national research programme and former Departmental Regional Office funded projects

Milton Keynes Primary Care Trust

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many health visitors have been employed by Milton Keynes Primary Care Trust in each year since 1997. [63802]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of qualified health visiting staff employed by Milton Keynes Primary Care Trust (PCT) as at 30 September in each specified year is shown in the table. Information about the years before 2001 and after 2004 is not held centrally.

	Head count at Milton Keynes PCT
2001	49
2002	71
2003	67
2004	54

Source:
NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre Non-Medical Workforce Census.

MRSA

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the average cost of a MRSA episode, including additional in-patient time. [63955]

Jane Kennedy: The costs of treating meticillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* cannot be identified from the information collected centrally.

NHS Beds

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the number of beds and mattresses that are replaced each year as part of routine replacement programmes; if she will make it her policy to donate NHS hospital beds and mattresses that are routinely replaced to the health services of developing countries; and if she will make a statement. [64184]

Jane Kennedy: The Department does not hold a central record of the number of beds and mattresses that are replaced each year.

Many beds replaced within the national health service are done so on a planned rental, lease or managed service basis. Therefore the products being replaced are often the property of the supplier or finance provider, not necessarily the NHS.

Where the equipment is the property of the trust a decision to donate must be taken locally. They must take into consideration indemnity implications and ensure that there is no residual liability on the trust for product failure. Trusts would also need to consider who pays for the freight of such beds and mattresses, and whether they are appropriate resources in the developing country to utilise such equipment.

NHS Expenditure

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health further to the answer of 20 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 168W, on NHS spending, what NHS expenditure per head in the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire strategic health authority area was as a proportion of average NHS expenditure per capita in England in each of the last five years. [63637]

Ms Rosie Winterton: National health service expenditure per head in the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire strategic health authority as a proportion of average NHS expenditure per capita in England in each of the last five years is shown in the table.

	Expenditure (percentage)
2000–01	88.3
2001–02	103.4
2002–03	86.3
2003–04	85.2
2004–05	88.1

Notes:
1. NHS expenditure is the expenditure by health authorities, strategic health authorities and primary care trusts in England.
2. Expenditure on general dental services and pharmaceutical services accounted for by the Dental Practice Board and Prescription Pricing Authority, respectively, are excluded. This expenditure cannot be included within the figures for the individual health bodies as they are not included in commissioner accounts.

Sources:
Audited health authority summarisation forms 2000–01 and 2001–02.
Audited primary care trust summarisation schedules 2000–01 to 2004–05.
Audited strategic health authority summarisation forms 2002–03 to 2004–05.

NHS Finance

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the use of minimum waiting times in NHS organisations as a means of recovering from financial deficit. [60397]

Jane Kennedy: We have set minimum standards for all areas of the national health service that must be delivered, which include maximum waiting times. In addition, we would expect some patients with more urgent clinical needs, such as those with a suspected cancer, to be seen more urgently. There can be no trade-off between meeting these requirements and reducing deficits.

NHS Litigation Authority

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the NHS Litigation Authority deals with legal claims arising from NHS employment matters. [63950]

Jane Kennedy: The NHS Litigation Authority (NHSLA) administers the liabilities for third parties scheme and the clinical negligence scheme for trusts. Under these schemes, national health service trusts, primary care trusts and foundation trusts can refer legal claims for employers' liability, personal accident, professional indemnity, directors' and officers' liability, financial loss and pollution liability, and clinical negligence to the NHSLA for handling and settlement.

NovoRapid

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency approved NovoRapid for use in young children; and what post-marketing data are available for assessment regarding its suitability for use among this group. [63768]

Jane Kennedy: NovoRapid was granted an amendment to its existing marketing authorisation allowing its use in children within the age group two to six years in all European Union member states on 30 March 2005, by decision of the Commission of the European Communities. All authorised products are continuously and constantly monitored by the respective national regulatory authorities by periodic safety reviews of the product and by renewals of the marketing authorisation, as appropriate.

Nursing Procedures

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether nurses may administer controlled drugs to patients in minor injuries units; and if she will make a statement. [63775]

Jane Kennedy: Yes. Nurses can administer controlled drugs to patients in minor injuries units under a patient specific direction (PSD). Home Office regulations also allow nurses to administer some of the less potent controlled drugs under a patient group direction (PGD), namely schedule four and schedule five controlled drugs—with the exception of anabolic steroids—plus diamorphine for the treatment of cardiac pain by nurses in accident and emergency departments and in coronary care units in hospitals.

Notes:

A PSD is a written instruction from either a doctor or nurse independent prescriber for medicines to be supplied or administered to a named patient.

A PGD is a written instruction for the supply or administration of a medicine (or medicines), where the patient may not be individually identified before presenting for treatment.

Obesity

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to her answer of 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2637W, on obesity, why the Government decided not to establish the proposed National Partnership for Obesity. [61702]

Caroline Flint: The reply given on 19 December 2005 about the national partnership for obesity was incorrect as a decision not to establish the partnership had not been taken. A letter explaining this error was sent to the hon. Member on 6 February 2006 and a correction has been made in the *Official Report*.

Over the coming months, the Department will explore with relevant non-Governmental organisations how it can support the establishment of a national partnership for obesity. The objective will be to promote practical action on the prevention and management of obesity and provide a source of information and evidence of effectiveness.

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many hospital admissions have been related to obesity in each year since 1997; and if she will make a statement. [63604]

Caroline Flint: Information on admissions where obesity is a related condition is not recorded. However, information on admissions where the primary diagnosis is obesity is shown in the table.

Counts of finished admission episodes where the primary diagnosis is obesity for national health service hospitals in England, 1997–98 to 2004–05

	Finished admission episodes
1997–98	802
1998–99	999
1999–2000	1,010
2000–01	1,102
2001–02	1,058
2002–03	1,316
2003–04	1,746
2004–05	2,063

Counts of finished admission episodes where the primary diagnosis is obesity for national health service hospitals in England, 1997–98 to 2004–05

Finished admission episodes

Source:

Hospital Episode Statistics, NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre.

Orthodontistry

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the effects of guidance provided to primary care trusts under factsheets 9, 10 and 11, on recently established orthodontic practices; and if she will make a statement. [61020]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The new arrangements for commissioning orthodontic services drew on the learning from a personal dental services pilot for orthodontic care. The Department subsequently issued guidance to help primary care trusts with the provision of and financial planning for orthodontic services in their area.

Primary care trusts have a duty to commission primary dental services in their area, including orthodontic services, to the extent they consider necessary.

Outsourced NHS Procedures

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures are in place for verifying the *(a)* professional registration and *(b)* credentials of private sector providers of outsourced procedures within the NHS; and what the arrangements are for (i) terminating contracts in cases where unlawful treatment has been carried out and (ii) indemnifying patients for any injury caused during unlicensed procedures. [60165]

Jane Kennedy: Documentation to illustrate appropriate professional registration for the contracted casemix is a requirement of the statement of readiness that must be completed prior to the opening of an independent sector treatment centre (ISTC). All ISTCs are registered with, and regulated by, the Healthcare Commission.

The programme is governed by the *Official Journal* of the European Union procurement guidelines. Potential private healthcare providers are required as part of the procurement process to demonstrate their credentials to deliver the tendered services. Material submitted during the procurement process is independently evaluated as part of the tender evaluation process, prior to the award of a contract for services.

Where unlawful treatment is carried out, there is an option in the contracts to immediately suspend services on grounds of patient safety, and ultimately the contract is capable of being terminated. If termination of a contract occurs, advice must be sought on the relevant grounds and procedures of the individual contract in question, but the Department will provide support to national health service sponsors if this is required.

Patients referred to an ISTC will have the benefit of the clinical negligence scheme for trusts (CNST) arrangements within the national health service which provides indemnification cover for NHS patients. In those occasions where the provider fails to comply with the terms of the CNST arrangements, the provider is required to indemnify the referring health service body, in relation to any claim by a patient for medical or clinical negligence.

Queen Elizabeth Hospital

John Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the findings of the Audit Commission's Public Interest Report of 16 December 2005 on Queen Elizabeth Hospital; and if she will make a statement. [63853]

Jane Kennedy: The Department was first alerted to a draft copy of this Public Interest Report in November 2005, at which point it was determined to be factually accurate.

I am informed that Queen Elizabeth Hospital National Health Service Trust has accepted the findings of the report and, as a result, has accepted the recommendations made by the report. Queen Elizabeth Hospital NHS Trust continues to work with South East London Strategic Health Authority to address the recommendations made.

Resource Accounting and Budgeting

John Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the application of Resource Accounting and Budgeting funding rules mean that a cumulative deficit will continue to increase even after a trust has moved to a position of in-year breakeven; and if she will make a statement. [63036]

Jane Kennedy: Under the carry forward regime, organisations that underspend in one year receive the funding back in the following year. Organisations that overspend have their funding reduced in the following year by the amount they overspent.

This principle is part of the resource accounting and budgeting rules applied by HM Treasury across Government and which the Department applies to the national health service.

In addition to the resource accounting and budgeting rules NHS trusts must break even taking one year with the next. Any deficit must be matched by a surplus over a three or exceptionally five year period.

A NHS trust that overspends will therefore need to live within the reduced resources in the following year to break even. If they achieve break even then the accumulated deficit will not increase. To clear the accumulated deficit the NHS trust will need to generate a surplus.

Skin Cancer

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on her strategy for combating skin cancer. [63310]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Excessive exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation, both natural and artificial, is the most important modifiable risk factor in regarding skin cancer. Recent decades have seen significant increases in the number of people in the United Kingdom being diagnosed with this condition which kills around 2,000 people each year. Cancer Research UK (CR-UK) therefore advises people about how to enjoy the sun safely, to avoid sunburn by using protective screening methods and about the risks of using sun beds for cosmetic purposes.

CR-UK runs SunSmart, the national skin cancer prevention campaign, on behalf of the UK health departments. The campaign includes raising awareness of skin cancer and highlights the need for early detection and presentation. In 2006, SunSmart is targeting men and outdoor workers as malignant melanoma rates have quadrupled in men in the last 30 years and outdoor workers are exposed to three to four times more UV than indoor workers.

St. Leonard's Hospital

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when her Department plans to *(a)* develop and *(b)* release for development, that part of the St. Leonard's Hospital site in East Dorset for which it received planning permission on 17 October 2002 and consent for demolition on 9 July 2004; and if she will make a statement on the reasons for the delay. [62850]

Jane Kennedy: That part of the St Leonard's Hospital site in the ownership of the Secretary of State for Health was included in a portfolio of properties that it has been agreed would transfer to English Partnerships to assist in the Government's sustainability communities programme. Ownership of the site has now transferred to English Partnerships and it will be for them to release the site for development.

Stephen Walker

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what inquiries she has made into the references to the evidence of Stephen Walker of the NHS Litigation Authority given before the Constitutional Affairs Committee made at footnote 89 in the Committee's Third Report, HC 754–1; and if she will make a statement. [59872]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 20 March 2006]:* Mr. Stephen Walker, NHS Litigation Authority (NHSLA) chief executive, was invited by the Constitutional Affairs Select Committee (CASC) to give evidence on behalf of the NHSLA, not for the Department. The evidence given by Mr. Walker to the CASC on compensation culture, and footnote 89 in the CASC Third Report, HC 754–1, are a matter between Mr. Walker and the

committee. We are aware that Mr. Walker and the right hon. Member for Berwick-upon-Tweed (Mr. Beith) (CASC Chair) have exchanged correspondence subsequent to publication of the CASC report.

Temporary Medical Staff (Costs)

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Northavon, of 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1819W, on temporary medical staff (costs), what the equivalent figures are for 2004–05. [51882]

Mr. Byrne: I refer the hon. Member to my reply I gave to the right hon. Member for Horsham (Mr. Maude) on Monday 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 171–73W and to my response to the hon. Member for Twickenham (Dr. Cable) on Friday 10 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1827W. This information has been placed in the Library.

Trusts (Gloucestershire)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions she has had with *(a)* acute trusts, *(b)* partnership trusts and *(c)* primary care trusts in Gloucestershire on their recent funding announcements; and what plans she has to ensure that any decisions on reductions in expenditure take account of equity and social disadvantage. [63341]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Secretary of State has not had discussions with any of the trusts in Gloucestershire about their recent funding announcements.

It is the responsibility of strategic health authorities (SHAs) to deliver both overall financial balance for their local health communities and to ensure each and every organisation achieves financial balance. There is a degree of flexibility in how this is managed at a local level. SHAs can agree a recovery plan which phases the recovery of deficits over a number of years.

From 2006–07, SHAs have the responsibility to develop and implement a service and financial strategy for managing the financial position within their locality. They will develop this with primary care trusts (PCT) and national health service trusts in their area. Strategies agreed locally may include the creation of local reserves to deal with local problems. The size of the reserves and any contribution from each PCT will vary according to local circumstances, but the underlying principle will be fairness.

Waiting Lists/Times

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will visit Wellingborough to discuss local NHS waiting times. [63880]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There are no current plans to visit Wellingborough. Latest figures show that at the end of December 2005 there were no patients in the Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland Strategic Health Authority area waiting more than 13 weeks for a first out-patient appointment and that at the end of February 2006 there was one patient waiting more than six months for in-patient treatment.

PRIME MINISTER

10 Downing Street Improvements

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister how much was spent on *(a)* maintaining, *(b)* decorating and *(c)* otherwise improving 10 Downing street in 2004–05. [62717]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Bridgwater (Mr. Liddell-Grainger) on 16 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 2393W.

Appointments Commission

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Prime Minister whether he has caused particulars of the loan by each lender to the Labour party who has been recommended for a peerage by him to be notified to the House of Lords Appointments Commission; and if he will make a statement. [61430]

The Prime Minister: This is a matter for the Labour party.

Departmental Staff

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister (1) what internal reorganisation of staff has taken place in Downing street since May 2005; and if he will publish the staffing structures and lines of accountability in operation; [63143]

(2) if he will place an organogram of his Office in the Library; [63148]

(3) how many people work in the Political Operations section of his Office; and how many of those are paid by the Labour party. [63151]

The Prime Minister: Details of the key officials that work in my Office are set out in Dod's Civil Service Companion. Copies of the edition for 2006 can be found in the Libraries of the House. Details are also available on the No. 10 website.

The staffing and associated costs for my Political Office are met by the Labour party. As has been the case under successive Administrations, marginal costs associated with the Political Office are met from within the overall budget for 10 Downing street.

Departmental Televisions

Jo Swinson: To ask the Prime Minister how many television sets are in operation in his Office *(a)* in total, *(b)* in Ministers' private offices and *(c)* in each building used by his Office; and how many television licences are held by his Office. [62802]

The Prime Minister: For these purposes my office forms part of the Cabinet Office. I have therefore asked the Under-Secretary of State for the Cabinet Office, my hon. Friend the Member for East Renfrewshire (Mr. Murphy) to reply. A copy of the reply will be placed in the Library of the House.

Freedom of Information Act

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 23 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 539W, on the Freedom of Information Act, what steps

he takes to ensure that his answering practices are consistent with the February 2005 Cabinet Office guidance to departments. [62715]

The Prime Minister: I have nothing further to add to the answer I gave on 23 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 539W.

Honours (Prevention of Abuses) Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Prime Minister (1) if he will make a statement on the operation of the Honours (Prevention of Abuses) Act 1925; [62870]

(2) pursuant to his answer of 26 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 2271W, on the Honours (Prevention of Abuses) Act, if he will reconsider his decision not to review the Act. [63395]

The Prime Minister: I have nothing further to add to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Lewes (Norman Baker) on 26 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 2271W.

Ministerial Code of Conduct

Mr. Burns: To ask the Prime Minister (1) when paragraphs 2.7 to 2.10 of the Ministerial Code were drafted; and by whom; [63682]

(2) pursuant to the evidence taken by the Select Committee on the Armed Forces (Fifth Sitting) on 29 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 123, whether the hon. and learned Member for Redcar (Vera Baird) wrote the section of the Ministerial Code of Conduct referring to Parliamentary private secretaries. [63683]

The Prime Minister: The Ministerial Code is guidance issued by me to Ministers on the standards they are expected to uphold in the performance of their duties. The detailed guidance relating to the work of Parliamentary Private Secretaries is not new, and is similar to the wording in previous versions of the Ministerial Code and its predecessor document "Questions of Procedure for Ministers".

Ministerial Meetings

Keith Vaz: To ask the Prime Minister what recent discussions he has had with the Prime Minister of Australia; and if he will make a statement. [63318]

The Prime Minister: I last met Prime Minister Howard on 28 March in Canberra where we discussed a wide range of issues.

During my visit I also gave an address to both Houses of the Australian Parliament and spoke at the opening session of the second UK-Australia Leadership Forum.

I refer my hon. Friend to the press conference I held with Prime Minister Howard on 28 March. A transcript of this and my speech to the Australian Parliament are available on the Number 10 website.

Ministerial Travel

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 16 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 539W on ministerial travel, for what reason he did not provide the date on which he last travelled by train on official business. [62716]

The Prime Minister: I have nothing further to add to the answer I gave on 23 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 539W.

Parliamentary Questions

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list the *(a)* special advisers and *(b)* officials who contribute to his answers to written parliamentary questions. [63127]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to him on 10 July 2002, *Official Report*, columns 988–89W.

Wockhardt UK

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Prime Minister whether at his meeting with the chairman of the Wockhardt Group, Mr. Habil Khorakiwala in September 2005 he discussed *(a)* the ongoing difficulties that Wockhardt UK have been experiencing in supplying animal insulins and *(b)* the potentially grave consequences for UK animal insulin users of interrupted supplies. [61798]

The Prime Minister: My officials and I have meetings with a wide range of organisations and individuals on a wide range of subjects. Information relating to internal meetings, discussion and advice is not disclosed as to do so could harm the frankness and candour of internal discussion.

Yemen

Keith Vaz: To ask the Prime Minister when he next plans to meet the President of Yemen. [61015]

The Prime Minister: I have no current plans to do so.

WORK AND PENSIONS

"Trusting in the Pensions Promise" Report

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether he will publish the Government's full response to the parliamentary and health service ombudsman's report "Trusting in the Pensions Promise" before the summer recess. [62276]

Mr. Timms: Yes.

Absenteeism

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what was the total number of days lost due to *(a)* sickness absence and *(b)* unauthorised absence in (i) his Department, (ii) its agencies and (iii) its non-departmental public bodies was in each year between 2000 and 2005; and if he will make a statement. [36167]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is in the following tables.

Days lost to sickness

The information available is contained in the following tables. The figures represent average working days lost per staff year, and have been drawn from the Cabinet Office's annual reports on sickness absence in the civil service. The information for 2005 is not yet available.

The Department for Work and Pensions was formed in 2001. The overall figures prior to this date relate to absence levels in the Department of Social Security and the Employment Service. A comprehensive breakdown of the DSS' agencies' figures in 2000 is not available.

Table 1. Sickness absence information for the former DSS and ES

Department	*2000*
Employment Service	11.8
Department of Social Security	11.0

Table 2. Sickness absence information for DWP

Business	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Appeals Service	—	—	—	—
Child Support Agency	11.0	11.6	13.8	11.6
Disability and Carers Service	—	—	—	—
Employment Service	12.8	13.5	—	—
Jobcentre Plus (Benefits Agency pre-2002)	10.6	10.8	12.0	9.8
The Pensions Service	—	—	10.5	9.5
DWP overall	11.1	10.8	11.6	9.6

Days lost to unauthorised absence

The available information is in the following tables. Information about unauthorised absences in DWP prior to 2003 in not fully available. There is no centrally-held information within DWP about absence patterns in the non-departmental public bodies attached to DWP.

The vast majority of days lost are through industrial action. Days lost for reasons other than industrial action are negligible. If they occur, they are dealt with under the Department's disciplinary procedures.

Table 3. Average working days lost due to all unauthorised absences

DWP Business	*2003*	*2004*	*2005 (to end October)*
Appeals Service	—	—	—
Child Support Agency	0.01	2.21	0.03
Disability and Carers Service	0.01	1.94	0.03
Jobcentre Plus	0.02	2.08	0.03
The Pensions Service	0.01	2.14	0.03
Overall	0.01	2.08	0.03

Table 4. Average working days lost due to unauthorised absence, excluding industrial action

DWP Business	*2003*	*2004*	*2005 (to end October)*
Appeals Service	—	—	—
Child Support Agency	0.01	0.04	0.03
Disability and Carers Service	0.01	0.02	0.03
Jobcentre Plus	0.01	0.04	0.03
The Pensions Service	0.01	0.07	0.03
Overall	0.01	0.04	0.03

Benefits

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to allow payment of benefits to be sent to elderly and infirm people who are unable to collect the payments themselves and do not have close relatives who can collect them on their behalf. [59447]

Mr. Plaskitt: There are well established arrangements in place to ensure that elderly and infirm people in this situation can receive their benefit payments through a nominated third party if necessary and there are no proposals to change them. The precise nature of these arrangements depend on whether the person is capable of managing their own affairs and which method of payment best suits their needs and circumstances.

Most banks and building societies have arrangements that will allow someone to access the customer's account with the customer's permission. Some accounts that offer cheque books or building society passbooks may provide more flexibility in these circumstances. Customers who cannot be paid directly into an account are paid by means of a cheque which can be cashed by a third party if the customer is unable to collect the payment themselves.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in Ribble Valley received *(a)* widow's benefit, *(b)* housing benefit, *(c)* council tax benefit and *(d)* income support in each year since 1997. [63195]

Mr. Plaskitt: Widows benefit is not available broken down geographically prior to 1999. Housing benefit and council tax benefit figures are not available broken down by parliamentary constituency; local authority figures have been provided.

The available information is in the following tables.

Widows benefit and bereavement benefit claimants in the Ribble Valley parliamentary constituency: each August 1999–2005

	Widow's benefit	*Bereavement benefit*
1999	400	n/a
2000	400	n/a
2001	400	[1]—
2002	300	100
2003	300	100
2004	200	100
2005	200	100

n/a = Figures are not applicable.
[1] Nil or negligible.

Notes:
1. Numbers are rounded to the nearest hundred.
2. Bereavement Benefit, which replaced Widows Benefit for new claims, was introduced in April 2001.

Source:
DWP Information Directorate Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study 100 per cent.

Housing benefit and council tax benefit caseloads: Ribble Valley borough council; each August from 1997 to 2005

	Housing benefit	*Council tax benefit*
1997	1,500	2,400
1998	1,500	2,300
1999	1,400	2,200
2000	1,400	2,100
2001	1,400	2,100
2002	1,400	2,100
2003	1,400	2,100
2004	1,400	2,200
2005	1,500	2,300

Notes:
1. The data refer to benefit units, which may be a single person or a couple.
2. Figures have been rounded to the nearest hundred.

3. Council Tax Benefit totals exclude any Second Adult Rebate cases.
4. Housing Benefit figures exclude any Extended Payment cases.

Source:
Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Management Information System Quarterly 100 per cent. caseload stock-count taken in August 1997 to August 2005.

Income support claimants (excluding Minimum Income Guarantee) in the Ribble Valley parliamentary constituency; each August from 1997 to 2005

	Number
1997	1,500
1998	1,400
1999	1,500
2000	1,400
2001	1,400
2002	1,400
2003	1,400
2004	1,300
2005	1,300

Notes:
1. Figures for August 1999 to August 2005 are from the DWP 100 per cent. Work & Pensions Longitudinal Study, while figures for August 1997 and August 1998 are derived by applying 5 per cent. proportions to 100 per cent. totals.
2. Figures have been rounded to the nearest hundred.
3. Income Support figures exclude Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG); Pension Credit replaced MIG on the 6 October 2003 and ended IS entitlement to customers aged 60+. Pension Credit cases are not included in the figures in the table.

Source:
DWP Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS) and DWP Information Directorate 5 per cent. samples

Stephen Hesford: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many Wirral West residents have received council tax benefit in each of the last five years. [62347]

Mr. Plaskitt: Council tax benefit figures are not available broken down by parliamentary constituency. The information for Wirral Metroplitain Borough Council is in the table.

Council tax benefit recipients in the Wirral Metroplitain borough council area; each August, 2001 to 2005

	Number
2001	34,600
2002	34,600
2003	33,900
2004	35,000
2005	34,700

Notes:
1. Numbers are rounded to the nearest hundred.
2. Figures refer to households which may be a single person or a couple.
3. Figures exclude any Single Adult Rebate cases.

Source:
Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Management Information System Quarterly 100 per cent. caseload stock-count taken between August 2001 and August 2005.

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much has been spent on housing benefit in *(a)* cash and *(b)* real terms in each year since 1997–98. [62116]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is in the following tables.

Housing benefit expenditure, cash (Nominal) terms

£ million

	Housing benefit	Discretionary housing payments	Housing benefit and discretionary housing payments
1997–98 outturn	11,176	n/a	11,176
1998–99 outturn	11,065	n/a	11,065
1999–2000 outturn	11,066	n/a	11,066
2000–01 outturn	11,166	n/a	11,166
2001–02 outturn	11,569	20	11,589
2002–03 outturn	12,617	20	12,637
2003–04 outturn	12,325	20	12,345
2004–05 estimated outturn	13,145	20	13,165
2005–06 estimated outturn	13,895	20	14,005
2006–07 forecast	14,578	20	14,598

n/a = not applicable; Discretionary Housing Payments were introduced in July 2001.

Source:
DWP Budget 2006 Expenditure Tables.

Housing benefit expenditure, real terms 2006–07 prices

£ million

	Housing benefit	Discretionary housing payments	Housing benefit and discretionary housing payments
1997–98 outturn	13,736	n/a	13,736
1998–99 outturn	13,256	n/a	13,256
1999–2000 outturn	13,001	n/a	13,001
2000–01 outturn	12,949	n/a	12,949
2001–02 outturn	13,092	23	13,115
2002–03 outturn	13,839	22	13,860
2003–04 outturn	13,173	21	13,195

Housing benefit expenditure, real terms 2006–07 prices

£ million

	Housing benefit	Discretionary housing payments	Housing benefit and discretionary housing payments
2004–05 estimated outturn	13,748	21	13,768
2005–06 estimated outturn	14,326	20	14,347
2006–07 forecast	14,578	20	14,598

n/a = not applicable; Discretionary Housing Payments were introduced in July 2001.
Source:
DWP Budget 2006 Expenditure Tables.

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what estimate he has made of the annual increase in housing benefit if the single room rent rule for people aged under 25 years was abolished; [62129]

(2) what the cost would be of abolishing the housing benefit single room rent rule for people aged under 25 years. [62354]

Mr. Plaskitt: The cost of abolishing the Housing Benefit single room rent rule for people aged under 25 years has been estimated to be at least £20 million per year.

This estimate cost is rounded to the nearest £10 million and does not include any behavioural effects.

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether existing recipients of incapacity benefit will be able to receive the planned *(a)* higher rates of benefit and *(b)* additional services for which new claimants will be eligible. [60829]

Mrs. McGuire: We are determined to ensure that people already on incapacity benefits are treated fairly, while also ensuring that they have the right levels of support and encouragement to help them return to work where this is possible. We are therefore proposing that people already on incapacity benefits should have their existing benefit level protected but should also be able to benefit from the support we offer. Indeed, existing claimants in Pathways areas have always been able to volunteer for the programme and many already do. We have set out our proposals in the Green Paper "A new deal for welfare: Empowering people to work" (Cm 6730) published on 24 January 2006; available in the Library.

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in Scotland are in receipt of long-term incapacity benefit, broken down by *(a)* local authority and *(b)* constituency; and if he will make a statement. [62811]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is in the tables.

Incapacity benefit (IB) beneficiaries in receipt of IB long-term rate, as at 31 August 2005; by parliamentary constituency

	Number
All Scotland	158,200
Aberdeen North	3,100
Aberdeen South	1,800
Airdrie and Shotts	4,300
Angus	1,900
Argyll and Bute	2,000
Ayr, Carrick and Cumnock	3,200
Banff and Buchan	2,500
Berwickshire, Roxburgh and Selkirk	2,000
Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross	1,700

Incapacity benefit (IB) beneficiaries in receipt of IB long-term rate, as at 31 August 2005; by parliamentary constituency

	Number
Central Ayrshire	2,700
Coatbridge, Chryston and Bellshill	4,400
Cumbernauld, Kilsyth and Kirkintilloch East	3,200
Dumfries and Galloway	2,600
Dumfriesshire, Clydesdale and Tweeddale	2,000
Dundee East	2,500
Dundee West	3,100
Dunfermline and West Fife	2,700
East Dunbartonshire	1,500
East Kilbride, Strathaven and Lesmahagow	2,800
East Lothian	2,300
East Renfrewshire	1,900
Edinburgh East	2,500
Edinburgh North and Leith	1,900
Edinburgh South	1,400
Edinburgh South West	1,900
Edinburgh West	1,500
Falkirk	3,500
Glasgow Central	3,500
Glasgow East	5,100
Glasgow North	2,200
Glasgow North East	4,500
Glasgow North West	3,500
Glasgow South	3,300
Glasgow South West	3,900
Glenrothes	3,400
Gordon	1,400
Inverclyde	3,600
Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey	2,100
Kilmarnock and Loudoun	2,800
Kirkcaldy and Cowdenbeath	3,100
Lanark and Hamilton East	3,800
Linlithgow and East Falkirk	3,400
Livingston	3,400
Midlothian	2,300
Moray	1,900
Motherwell and Wishaw	4,000
Na h-Eileanan an far	700
North Ayrshire and Arran	3,100
North East Fife	1,500
Ochil and South Perthshire	2,600
Orkney and Shetland	800
Paisley and Renfrewshire North	2,900
Paisley and Renfrewshire South	3,200
Perth and North Perthshire	1,900
Ross, Skye and Lochaber	1,500
Rutherglen and Hamilton West	4,600
Stirling	2,200
West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine	1,100
West Dunbartonshire	3,600

Incapacity Benefit (IB) beneficiaries in receipt of IB long-term rate, as at 31st August 2005; by local authority

	Number
All Scotland	158,200
Aberdeen City	5,400
Aberdeenshire	4,500

Incapacity Benefit (IB) beneficiaries in receipt of IB long-term rate, as at 31st August 2005: by local authority

	Number
Angus	2,400
Argyll and Bute	2,000
Clackmannanshire	2,000
Dumfries and Galloway	4,000
Dundee City	5,100
East Ayrshire	4,000
East Dunbartonshire	2,300
East Lothian	2,300
East Renfrewshire	1,900
Edinburgh, City of	9,200
Eilean Siar	700
Falkirk	5,100
Fife	10,700
Glasgow City	26,000
Highland	5,300
Inverclyde	3,600
Midlothian	2,300
Moray	1,900
North Ayrshire	4,700
North Lanarkshire	15,100
Orkney Islands	400
Perth and Kinross	2,600
Renfrewshire	6,100
Scottish Borders	2,300
Shetland Islands	400
South Ayrshire	3,200
South Lanarkshire	11,600
Stirling	2,200
West Dunbartonshire	3,600
West Lothian	5,300

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.
2. Figures may not sum due to rounding.

Source:

DWP Information Directorate, Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study, 100 per cent. data.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what criteria were used in making the decision that people in receipt of incapacity benefit should not be eligible for social fund grants; and if he will make a statement. [63368]

Mr. Plaskitt: It has been a long-standing policy of successive Governments to focus help with one-off expenses on those people who have to manage on the lowest incomes.

When the social fund was set up eligibility was confined to those getting income support (IS) in the same way that eligibility for single payments had been restricted to those getting supplementary benefit.

Eligibility for the current scheme replicates the eligibility criteria for the previous scheme. And this continued to be the case when jobseeker's allowance was introduced with only the income-based part—previously provided through IS—being a passport to the discretionary social fund. Basing eligibility for discretionary social fund payments (apart from crisis loans) on means tested income replacement benefits provides a clear distinction between those who are eligible to apply for help and those who are not.

This ensures that available resources are targeted at the poorest and enables the scheme to be administered without additional, complex means tests being used solely for social fund purposes.

Call Centres

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether all call centres operated by his Department advise people on both benefit entitlement and employment opportunities. [60049]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department's contact centres deliver services tailored to the needs of specific groups of customers. Only those contact centres that are part of Jobcentre Plus Direct, dealing with Jobseeker Direct and benefit claims advise on employment opportunities in addition to benefit entitlement.

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much was spent by his Department on running call centres in *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* the first half of 2005–06, broken down by region. [61657]

Mrs. McGuire: In their recent study "Department for Work and Pensions, Delivering effective services through contact centres", the National Audit Office estimated that DWP contact centres cost £190 million to run in 2004–05.

As contact centres are an integral part of the businesses they support, it is not possible to precisely identify the specific costs of the call centre element. For example, the pension centres perform both contact centre and claims processing functions and it is not possible to precisely allocate the costs between these two functions.

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* calls and *(b)* calls originating from (i) Edinburgh and (ii) Scotland were unanswered by his Department's call centres in (A) 2004–05 and (B) the first half of 2005–06. [61658]

Mrs. McGuire: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws) on 14 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1056W, which gives information on all calls. Information on where calls originate from is not collated.

Capita

James Brokenshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many tenders *(a)* Capita plc. and *(b)* its subsidiaries have submitted to his Department in each of the last three years; and how many tenders were successful. [61475]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 29 March 2006]:* The information is as follows:

(a) The number of tenders Capita plc. has submitted in the last three years and those that were successful

In 2006 Capita tendered for the Travel Management lot on the Government wide Travel Framework Agreement which includes DWP.

In 2004 Capita tendered for the Records Storage contract and were successful.

In 2003 Capita were awarded a place on four lots on the DWP Consultancy and Professional Services Framework Agreement. Since then they have been invited to 30 tenders and were successful in seven.

(b) The number of tenders subsidiaries have submitted in the last three years and those that were successful

In 2005 Capita Business Services Ltd. submitted tenders for three lots on the Communications Framework Agreement and was successful in one, Internal Communications Consultancy. They have not yet been awarded any business.

In 2006 Lonsdale Travel Ltd. tendered for five lots on the Government wide Travel Framework Agreement which includes DWP. They were successful in only one lot, Air and Ferry travel and have not yet been awarded any business.

In 2005 Veredus Executive Recruitment tendered for work through the Cabinet Office Framework Agreement for Executive Level Recruitment, to run a DWP SCS recruitment campaign and were successful.

In 2005 Capita Business Services Ltd. were awarded a place on two lots on the Department's UNITY Framework Agreement for the procurement of IS/IT services. They have not yet been awarded any business.

Child Poverty

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of children have been living in families with incomes of 40 per cent. or less of median income after housing costs in each year from 1995–96 to 2005–06; and if he will make a statement. [63992]

Margaret Hodge: The information requested is not available.

Child Support

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what the backlog is of Child Support Agency cases; what plans he has to reduce the backlog; and if he will make a statement; [61855]

(2) by what date the Child Support Agency will have cleared its backlog of cases; and if he will make a statement. [63202]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is the matter for the Chief Executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Hilary Reynolds, dated 18 April 2006:

In reply to your Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency, the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive is currently unavailable as he is communicating the Operational Improvement Plan to all Agency staff. I am responding on his behalf.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the backlog is of Child Support Agency cases; what plans he has to reduce the backlog; and if he will make a statement.

You also asked, by what date the Child Support Agency will have cleared its backlog of cases; and if he will make a statement.

As at December 2005, the Agency had a total 327,000 uncleared potential applications. This consisted of 68,000 old scheme applications and 259,000 new scheme applications. These figures can be found in table 2 of the latest issue Agency's Quarterly Summary Statistics (QSS), a copy of which is available in the House library.

In the Operational Improvement Plan announced by the Secretary of State on 9th February 2006, the Agency set itself a target to reduce the volume of uncleared applications to the point where, by March 2008, 80% of new applications will be cleared within 18 weeks, and by March 2009, 80% of new applications will be cleared within 12 weeks. In addition, by March 2009, there will be no backlog in this area.

As a first step towards achieving these improvements, the Secretary of State has set the Agency a target for reducing the volume of uncleared new scheme applications over the coming year. By 31 March 2007 the Agency is to reduce the volume of uncleared new applications by 25% of the number outstanding in March 2006. This is supported by a throughput target under which the Agency will, by 31 March 2007, clear 55% of new applications within 12 weeks of receipt and 80% within 26 weeks. These and other Secretary of State targets were published in the Agency's annual Business Plan on 30th March.

It should be noted that figures presented in this answer have been rounded to the nearest thousand, and percentages to the nearest whole percent.

I hope you find this helpful.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what targets have been set for the Child Support Agency for each quarter from 2005 Q4 to 2007 Q4; and if he will make a statement. [61858]

Mr. Plaskitt: Annual targets for the Child Support Agency can be found listed in the Agency's Business Plans for the relevant year. They are set out as follows:

Target 2004–05

Case Compliance

By 31 March 2005 to be collecting child maintenance and/or arrears from 78 per cent. of all cases with a maintenance liability using the collection service.

Cash Compliance

By 31 March 2005 to be collecting 75 per cent. of child maintenance and/or arrears due to be paid through the collection service.

Accuracy

By 31 March 2005 accuracy on the last decision made for all maintenance calculations checked in the year to be correct to the nearest penny in at least 90 per cent. of cases.

Customer Perception

To develop and introduce a client perception target by October 2004.

Debt

To develop and introduce a debt reduction target by October 2004.

Unit Costs

Achieve a cost per case of 202.

Target 2005–06

Case Compliance

By 31 March 2006 to be collecting child maintenance and/or arrears from 78 per cent. of all cases with a maintenance liability using the collection service.

Cash Compliance

By 31 March 2006 to be collecting 75 per cent. of child maintenance and/or arrears due to be paid through the collection service.

Accuracy

By 31 March 2006 accuracy on the last decision made for all maintenance calculations checked in the year to be correct to the nearest penny in at least 90 per cent. of cases.

Debt

To collect arrears equivalent to 30 per cent. amount accruing (as a result of non-payment of regular maintenance) between 1 April 2005 and 31 March 2006.

Unit Costs

Achieve a cost per case of 202.

Target 2006–07

Collection rate

By 31 March 2007, where maintenance is paid through the collection service the Agency will collect, on average across both the new and old schemes, 90 per cent. of the amount due.

Maintenance outcome

By 31 March 2007, in 65 per cent. of cases across both the new and old schemes in which a liability to pay maintenance exists, the non resident parent has either made a payment via the

collection service, or a Maintenance Direct arrangement is in place. In addition, further ensuring that at least this level of performance is achieved for those new scheme cases in which the parent with care is on income support or income-based jobseeker's allowance.

Throughput

By 31 March 2007, the Agency will [illegible] 55 per cent. of new applications within 12 weeks of [illegible]nd 80 per cent. in 26 weeks.

New application backlogs

By 31 March 2007, the agency will have reduced the volume of uncleared new scheme applications by 25 per cent. of the amount outstanding by the end of March 2006.

Accuracy

By 31 March 2007, accuracy on the last decision made for all new or old scheme maintenance calculations carried out and checked in previous 12 months to be correct to the nearest penny in at least 87 per cent. of cases.

Debt

The Agency will collect arrears equivalent to 40 per cent. of the amount accruing due to non payment of regular maintenance between 1 April 2006 and 31 March 2007.

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what definition of 'non-resident parent' is used in respect of Child Support Agency decisions when the care is shared equally. [63793]

Mr. Plaskitt: If each parent cares for a qualifying child for the same number of nights, the parent who does not receive child benefit for that child is treated as the non-resident parent. If neither parent receives child benefit, the parent who, in the opinion of a decision-maker, is not the principal provider of care of the child is treated as the non-resident parent.

Correspondence

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Northavon, dated 8 December, regarding his constituent Mr. Quintana. [64178]

Mr. Plaskitt: I replied to the hon. Member on 28 March 2006.

Departmental Administrative Processes

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps he has taken to modernise and streamline back office functions of *(a)* finance and *(b)* human resources within (i) his Department and (ii) the agencies for which he has responsibility in the last three years. [51993]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department is always looking to maximise efficiency from its back office functions of Finance and Human Resources.

Finance has been modernising and streamlining (through the Finance Transformation Programme) in both the Departmental and Agency functions in order to:

improve the ability of the Department to manage value for money;

provide cost-effective, customer-focused business and administration processes and services;

ensure that clear and unambiguous accountabilities are in place;

maximise the benefits from existing technology programmes;

increase the resource awareness and resource management capability of the Department's staff. This programme of activity should be completed in 2006–07.

Key successes have included:

implementing the first two phases (of four) of an integrated finance, procurement, human resource and payroll system based on Oracle e-business software;

modernising the way that pensions and benefits are paid to customers. Ninety seven percent of customers now have payments made directly into an account;

implementing a new debt management system into a newly centralised debt management service;

providing the largest contribution to the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) targets to deliver value for money savings through improved procurement;

driving forward reductions in estate occupancy throughout the Department.

The Human Resources Modernisation Programme has been looking to harness industry best practice and investment in technology to improve the way Human Resource services are delivered across the Department and to help make significant efficiencies. This applies to both Departmental and Agency functions.

Key successes have included:

designing and implementing a new, integrated HR Service Delivery Model for the operation of all HR systems and services;

introducing the first three phases of self-service, on-line HR support for managers and staff—the staff information system—as a stepping stone to the rollout of the integrated finance, procurement, human resource and payroll system;

centralising HR Service Centres (ultimately in 2006–07 to two sites) which provide telephone based advice and guidance, with the aim of delivering a more effective and efficient service to line managers and staff, with key performance indicators for timeliness, quality and customer satisfaction in place;

freeing up Business HR Teams to concentrate on working more strategically with operational managers on the HR issues affecting business performance; and

improving HR policies, making them more business and customer focused, accessible and usable.

In 2006–07 the Department will also be combining many Finance and HR activities into a new Shared Services organisation. This will allow more effective and efficient services to be provided both within the Department and potentially on a wider cross-departmental basis.

Departmental Equipment

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* laptops and *(b)* mobile phones his Department bought in each year since 1997; and what the cost of each category of equipment was in each year. [41274]

Mrs. McGuire: DWP records on laptop purchases are available from October 2001 onwards:

	Laptops (Number)	*Value (excluding VAT) (£)*
2001[1]	546	608,079.43
2002	3,827	5,084,363.10
2003	3,773	4,219,381.04
2004	1,206	1,246,590.93
2005	364	383,869.57
Grand Total	9,716	11,542,284.07

[1] First purchase October 2001.

Mobile Phones

The information requested on mobile telephones is not available prior to 2005. Mobile phones are treated by DWP as an "expensed item" and therefore are not recorded as central assets. Each local manager is responsible for such items within their local cost centre.

Figures for calendar year 2005 are available; 2,385 mobiles were purchased in 2005 at a cost of £100,971 (excluding VAT).

Departmental Projects

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what *(a)* building and *(b)* refurbishment projects are planned by his Department in (i) 2005–06 and (ii) 2006–07; and what the expected costs are of each project. [37413]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department for Work and Pensions is undergoing an extensive, long-term programme to refurbish Jobcentre Plus sites and the Pension Service call centres. Details of these projects and other planned building and refurbishment projects are given in the tables lodged in the Library.

Departmental Telephone Numbers

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the *(a)* 0800 and *(b)* 0845 telephone numbers for the public administered by (i) his Department and (ii) agencies which report to him. [56546]

Mrs. McGuire: The hon. Member has requested information broken down by the Department and agencies; the information is not available in this format. Under the arrangements the Department and its agencies has with its supplier there are around 4,700, 0800 or 0845 numbers for the public and its internal use. The details of numbers have been placed in the Library.

Employment Advisers

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many specialist *(a)* disability employment advisers and *(b)* non-disability employment advisers (i) have been employed by Jobcentre Plus in each of the last three years and (ii) are expected to be employed in each of the next three years. [62868]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question asking how many specialists *(a)* disability employment advisers and *(b)* non-disability employment advisers (i) have been employed by Jobcentre Plus in each of the last three years and (ii) are expected to be employed in each of the next three years. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

The numbers of full time equivalent staff employed over the last three years are shown in the table below:

	2003–04	*2004–05*	*2005–06*
Disability Employment Advisers	657.64	730.08	830.28
Non Disability Employment Advisers	9,088.51	9,407.06	9,681.98
Total	9,746.15	10,137.14	10,512.26

Against a background of the national roll-out of Pathways to Work, ongoing reorganisation of Jobcentre Plus delivery, and the Department efficiency challenge, it is not possible to quantify the future numbers at this stage with certainty. However, we remain committed to maintaining the valuable service provided by our specialist advisers.

I hope this is helpful.

Financial Assistance Scheme

Ms Gisela Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the *(a)* average pension entitlement of all those eligible for the financial assistance scheme and *(b)* the average entitlement to financial assistance scheme top-up for all those eligible. [63863]

Mr. Timms: The information is as follows.

(a) We estimate that the average accrued pension of all non-pensioner members in eligible schemes within three years of retirement who will receive assistance because they have less than 80 per cent. funding levels in their schemes, and who are not affected by the de minimis rule or the benefit cap, is £5,800 per year.

(b) We estimate that the average payment from the financial assistance scheme for all those eligible is around £1,800 per year. Payments will range from £500 per year to £12,000 per year with the majority of payments towards the lower end of this scale.

Ms Gisela Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people he estimates are eligible for assistance under the financial assistance scheme qualifying criteria. [63867]

Mr. Timms: We estimate that up to 15,000 people may be eligible for assistance under the qualifying criteria for the financial assistance scheme.

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people *(a)* living in Wales and *(b)* former Allied Steel and Wire workers living in Wales have received money from the Financial Assistance Scheme; and if he will make a statement. [64132]

Mr. Timms: The information is as follows.

(a) Fifteen people living in Wales have so far received money from the Financial Assistance Scheme, *(b)* of these, 14 are former Allied Steel and Wire workers.

Gershon Review

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what progress his Department has made *(a)* in monitoring progress against the Gershon efficiency targets and *(b)* in the development of metrics for measuring the level of service delivery; what the programme is for publishing the results of these analyses; whether these data will be subject to external audit; and if he will make a statement. [53758]

Margaret Hodge: The Department's Efficiency Technical Note sets out how the Department will measure achievement of the efficiency targets from the Spending Review 2004 and departmental performance, including assurance arrangements for those measures. The Efficiency Technical Note is published on the Department's website.

Home Computing Initiative

Peter Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he had to make the Home Computing Initiative available to staff in his Department prior to its abolition. [63839]

Mrs. McGuire: DWP had set up a small project team and intended to launch an HCI scheme for staff in time for delivery at the end of 2006.

Hourly Pay Rates

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his estimate is of the hourly rate of pay which would bring a full-time worker up to the 60th median income relative deprivation line without recourse to state benefits; and if he will make a statement. [63291]

Margaret Hodge: The hourly rate of pay required to bring a full-time worker up to the 60 per cent. of median income line would depend on the number of hours actually worked.

In addition, because we equivalise (or adjust) income to take into account variations in both the size and composition of the household, the actual rate of pay required to lift someone above the poverty line would depend on the number of adults and children in the family.

Jobcentre Plus

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what regular outreach services Job Centre Plus operates in the *(a)* Banbury and *(b)* Oxford travel-to-work area. [60051]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions has asked me to reply to your question asking what regular outreach services Jobcentre Plus operates in the *(a)* Banbury and *(b)* Oxford travel-to-work area. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Jobcentre Plus provides a number of outreach services within the Banbury and Oxford travel to work area.

An advice service is provided to local prisons by an Adviser who sees all inmates before they are released. This is referred to as Freshstart, which is a partnership between Jobcentre Plus and the Prison Service. The Adviser provides advice on jobsearch and job broking as well as handling benefit related enquiries. Advisers visit Bullingdon prison 3 days a week, Reading, Grendon and Springhill prisons twice a fortnight and Woodhill prison once a week.

A Jobcentre Plus Disability Employment Adviser (DEA) for Oxford, Abingdon and Didcot attends the Enablement Centre at Nuffield Hospital to interview people with health problems who may need help finding work or staying in work. Referrals are made by the National Health Service, Oxford Mental Health Care and the Elmore Team, an independent community service team who deal with vulnerable people. The DEA attends the Enablement Centre on the first Wednesday of every month.

Jobcentre Plus also provides a Redundancy Support Service to small, medium and large employers who are faced with making redundancies. Advice and guidance is provided to these employers offering support to their employees in jobsearch, benefit advice, interview techniques, writing a CV, upskilling and retraining as well as self employment options. Meetings and support services occur as a result of a significant redundancy and are therefore primarily on an ad hoc basis. This service is usually delivered at an employer's premises.

Banbury Jobcentre Plus is represented on the steering group of the Sunshine Centre, which is due to open in July 2006 in Bretch Hill, Banbury. The Centre will help lone parents, and we are considering how best we can help those who will use the Centre.

I hope this is helpful.

Jobseeker's Allowance

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions for what average period a person aged *(a)* 16 to 20, *(b)* 21 to 25, *(c)* 26 to 35, *(d)* 35 to 50 and *(e)* 50 plus claimed jobseeker's allowance before gaining employment in the last period for which figures are available. [62837]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is not available in the format requested.

The Department for Work and Pensions Research Report No. 244—Destination of benefit leavers 2004—showed that nationally, 62 per cent. of claimants leaving income support, incapacity benefit or jobseeker's allowance entered employment of 16 hours or more a week. However, this information is not available broken down by age group or duration. Copies of the report are available in the Library.

The available information on jobseeker's allowance durations broken down by age group is in the table.

Jobseeker's allowance claimants by age and duration: Great Britain, August 2005

	All ages	*Under 20*	*20 to 24*	*25 to 34*	*35 to 49*	*50 and over*
All durations	950,540	117,695	180,260	225,735	273,090	153,760
Up to 3 months	427,145	70,045	96,965	98,790	107,100	54,240
3 months up to 6 months	224,185	31,260	46,465	52,975	61,570	31,910
6 months up to 1 year	167,775	14,570	29,055	43,300	54,410	26,440
1 year and up to 2 years	91,770	1,780	6,700	25,230	37,895	20,165
2 years and up to 5 years	31,705	40	1,060	5,070	10,235	15,300
5 years and over	7,965	[1]—	10	370	1,885	5,700

[1] Denotes nil/negligible.

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest 5.
2. Figures are not seasonally adjusted.

Source:

Count of unemployment-related benefits, Jobcentre Plus computer systems (computer held cases only).

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in Middlesbrough, South and East Cleveland constituency are claiming jobseeker's allowance; and what the percentage difference is from the same period in each year since 2001. [62838]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is in the table.

Jobseeker's allowance (JSA) claimants in the Middlesbrough, South and Cleveland, East parliamentary constituency

February	*JSA claimants*	*Percentage change against previous year*
2001	2,731	—
2002	2,537	-7.1
2003	2,297	-9.5
2004	2,063	-10.2
2005	1,727	-16.3
2006	1,897	+9.8

Notes:
1. JSA caseload figures are unrounded, percentage differences are rounded to one decimal place.
2. JSA figures are not seasonally adjusted.

Source:
Count of unemployment-related benefits, Jobcentre Plus computer systems (including clerically held cases).

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the cost of introducing the new fortnightly job review for jobseeker's allowance applicants from June; and if he will make a statement. [63199]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question asking what estimate he has made of the cost of introducing the new Fortnightly Job Review for Jobseeker's Allowance applicants from June. This is something that falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

We are not introducing new Fortnightly Jobsearch Reviews from June, but re-focusing them to make sure people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance are fulfilling their responsibilities by being available for and actively seeking work. The introduction of these re-focused reviews will be based on strengthened guidance to managers and staff and other support material. The associated costs will therefore be negligible.

I hope you find this reply helpful.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people have moved off jobseeker's allowance and onto incapacity benefit in each of the last three years. [63200]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is in the following table.

Jobseeker's allowance (JSA) claimants moving to incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disablement allowance (SDA) during periods shown

Period	*Total JSA terminations*	*IB/SDA is claimed within 90 days of JSA claim terminating*
Total[1]	7,375,900	579,200
1 June 2002 to 31 May 2003	2,580,700	213,800
1 June 2003 to 31 May 2004	2,513,900	199,200
1 June 2004 to 31 May 2005	2,281,300	176,600

[1] June 2002 to May 2005.

Notes:
1. Figures are rounded to the nearest 100. Figures may not sum due to rounding.
2. Numbers are based on 5 per cent. samples, and are therefore subject to a degree of sampling variation.
3. Figures are given for JSA terminations where the claimant goes onto claim IB/SDA within 90 days of the JSA claim ending. It is possible that claimants may not move directly from JSA to IB, e.g. they may cease claiming JSA, find work and then claim IB within the given 90 day period.
4. Number of terminations (including those flowing onto IB) in the last year will increase following receipt of late notifications.

Source:
Information Directorate, 5 per cent. samples (terminations dataset)

John Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people were claiming jobseeker's allowance in *(a)* 2003, *(b)* 2004 and *(c)* 2005; and if he will make a statement. [63371]

Mr. Plaskitt: The available information is in the following table.

Jobseeker's allowance claimants in Great Britain

As at February each year:	*Number*
2003	905,200
2004	851,400
2005	788,600

Notes:
1. Caseload figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.
2. JSA figures are seasonally adjusted.

Source:
Count of unemployment-related benefits, Jobcentre Plus computer systems

Lone Parents

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of lone parents helped into employment in *(a)* Hartlepool, *(b)* the North East and *(c)* Great Britain in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [63277]

Margaret Hodge: The lone parent employment rate has risen by 11.3 percentage points since 1997 and new deal for lone parents (NDLP) has contributed to this success by helping more than 420,000 lone parents into work.

Information on the number of lone parents helped into work in each year since 1997 through NDLP in Great Britain, the North East and Hartlepool is in the table.

People into work through new deal for lone parents

Time period	*Great Britain*	*North East*	*Hartlepool*
October-December 1998	2,510	110	0
1999	36,310	2,310	70
2000	52,100	3,080	70
2001	56,660	3,490	100
2002	71,870	4,170	160
2003	73,700	4,570	210
2004	84,320	5,440	250
January-August 2005	45,790	3,020	100
Total	423,290	26,220	970

Note:
Figures are rounded to the nearest 10 and data is to August 2005.

Source:
Department for Work and Pensions Information Directorate

Media Training

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much has been spent by his Department on media training in each year since 1997–98. [55215]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department for Work and Pensions was formed on 8 June 2001 from parts of the former Department of Social Security, the former Department for Education and Employment and the Employment Service. Information prior to 2001 is not held centrally and can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

	Amount (£)
2001–02	0
2002–03	0
2003–04	0
2004–05	3299.00
2005–06	749.24

New Deal

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what funding will be made available in each of the next three years for *(a)* New Deal for 25 plus, *(b)* Work Based Learning for Adults, *(c)* Project Work, *(d)* Jobsearch Provision, *(e)* Employment Zones and *(f)* other employment schemes in (i) West Sussex and (ii) East Worthing and Shoreham; [61564]

(2) how much his Department has spent on each programme to help the unemployed move back into work in each year since 1997 in *(a)* West Sussex, *(b)* East Worthing and Shoreham and *(c)* the UK. [61569]

Margaret Hodge: Information on programme spend and projected spend is not available broken down at parliamentary constituency or county council level.

Information is not available for the whole of the UK as this Department does not deliver employment programmes in Northern Ireland.

Information on programme spend in Great Britain, in each year since 1997 is in the table.

Programme spend since 1997

Programme	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*£ million 2004–05*
New deal for young people	12	162	282	293	219	221	265	264
New deal 25 plus	—	17	71	42	140	166	189	169
New deal for disabled people	—	0	15	7	4	16	28	65
New deal for lone parents	—	1	12	14	9	18	20	24
New deal 50 plus[1]	—	—	1	45	82	82	42	3
New deal for partners	—	—	0	1	2	0	0	1
WORKSTEP[2]	61	60	64	63	60	59	74	69
Access to Work	15	21	27	32	42	51	56	60
Work Preparation[3]	9	10	12	11	7	8	10	13
Other programmes for disabled people[4]	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Work Based Learning for Adults[5]	382	264	264	275	168	123	142	193
Employment Zones	—	1	1	72	96	94	84	75
Action Teams	—	—	—	6	23	30	38	23
Jobsearch provision[6]	31	10	32	30	19	16	19	21
Residential Training[7]	14	13	15	13	18	18	17	17
Pathways to Work	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	15
Ambition	—	—	—	—	—	—	8	14
Adviser Discretion Fund	—	—	—	—	—	—	5	9
Travel to interview scheme	1	1	1	1	2	3	3	2
Rapid Response Service	—	—	—	—	—	3	2	1
Project work	41	8	—	—	—	—	—	—
Other[8]	17	27	8	4	6	6	6	24

[1] The New Deal 50 plus Employment Credit was subsumed within the 50 plus element of the Working Tax Credit from 2003–04.

[2] WORKSTEP was previously Supported Employment.

[3] Work Preparation was previously Employment Rehabilitation.

[4] Includes the Job Introduction Scheme, marketing of programmes for disabled people and expenditure on the Disability Consulting Group.

[5] Previously Training for Work.

[6] Includes expenditure on Programme Centres (previously Jobclubs); Jobplan and Resource Centres.

[7] In England only. Figures for 2000–01 and earlier years exclude training allowances.

[8] Includes ethnic minority initiatives; Restart fares; Work Trials; Workwise; Jobmatch; Community Action; research, and publicity and marketing.

Notes:

1. Data comprise programme expenditure, allowance payments paid to New Deal participants and the New Deal 50 plus Employment Credit.

2. All figures are rounded to the nearest £ million; expenditure of less than £500,000 is shown as a zero.

Sources:

Jobcentre Plus Financial Strategy Division

Jobcentre Plus Financial Control Division

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people have participated in *(a)* New Deal for 25 plus, *(b)* Work Based Learning for Adults, *(c)* Project Work, *(d)* Jobsearch Provision, *(e)* Employment Zones and *(f)* other employment schemes in (i) West Sussex and (ii) East Worthing and Shoreham in each year since 1997. [61568]

Margaret Hodge: People living in West Sussex and East Worthing and Shoreham can access a wide range of programmes to help them into employment, including the New Deal, which has helped nearly 6,500 people into work in West Sussex, 900 of whom are in East Worthing and Shoreham.

The Ambition Energy programme, which has supported people into employment as gas network operatives and domestic gas installers, has also been available to people in West Sussex. 14 people attended a course in Albourne in July 2002; 16 people attended a course in Crawley in November 2003; and a further 16 attended another Crawley course in April 2004.

Specialist programmes like progress2work, which helps participants tackle the employment barriers they face due to drug misuse, are available to people in West Sussex. Data are not available on the number of participants broken down at county council or parliamentary constituency level. People in West Sussex with health conditions and disabilities who need support in the workplace, or help to enter employment, can access the full range of specialist programmes like Access to Work, the Job Introduction Scheme and WORKSTEP. Data on participants are not available broken down at the level requested.

From August 2001 until the end of July 2005, people living in the Adur local authority area who signed on in Brighton were able to access the Employment Zone in Brighton and Hove. During that period, less than 10 people in each year from the Adur local authority area joined the Employment Zone.

Jobsearch Provision is normally used to describe the services offered by Programme Centres. Programme Centres provide individually tailored job search help, including CV preparation, interview skills, telephone techniques and help with application forms. People in West Sussex currently access Programme Centre support in Brighton and Hastings and a contracting process is underway to re-deliver this service in West Sussex. Information on starts to Programme Centres is not available at the level requested.

Project Work was a pilot which ran in 31 areas from February 1997 and was developed by the previous administration. It has not operated since 1998–99 and starts data is not available.

The available information on the number of people who have participated in employment programmes in West Sussex and East Worthing and Shoreham in each year since 1997 is in the following tables.

Participants on the new deal in West Sussex

Time period	*New deal for young people*	*New deal 25 plus*	*Individual starts New deal for lone parents*	*New deal 50 plus*	*New deal for partners*
January to December				—	—
1998	400	170	90	—	—
1999	480	260	530	—	—
2000	380	280	540	—	—
2001	320	320	670	—	—
2002	330	240	890	—	—
2003	370	330	720	—	—
2004	440	360	950	200	200
January to August[1]*—January to November*[1]					
2005	550	340	850	80	80
Total	3,290	2,300	5,250	280	280

Participants on New Deal in East Worthing and Shoreham

Time period	*New deal for young people*	*New deal 25 plus*	*Individual starts New deal for lone parents*	*New deal 50 plus*	*New deal for partners*
January to December				—	—
1998	70	30	10	—	—
1999	80	40	70	—	—
2000	60	40	80	—	—
2001	40	40	100	—	—
2002	40	20	150	—	—
2003	70	40	90	—	—
2004	60	30	110	40	0
January to August[1]*—January to November*[1]					
2005	80	30	140	10	0
Total	500	270	740	50	0

[1] Latest data relate to the end of August 2005 for New Deal for Young People, New Deal 25 plus, and New Deal for Lone Parents, and to the end of November 2005 for New Deal 50 plus and New Deal for Partners.

Notes:

1. New Deal for Disabled People data are not available at parliamentary constituency or county council level.
2. The New Deal programmes started at the following times: New Deal for Young People: January 1998; New Deal 25 plus: July 1998; New Deal for Lone Parents: October 1998; New Deal 50 plus: April 2000; New Deal for Partners: May 1999.

3. The New Deal 50 plus starts data provided are from January 2004 and New Deal 50 plus jobs information is from April 2003. A time series breakdown is not available for New Deal 50 plus jobs prior to April 2003 broken down by county council or parliamentary constituency.
4. New Deal for Partners data for starts and jobs are from April 2004 as the data are not available at parliamentary constituency or county council level prior to then.
5. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10 and totals may not sum due to rounding.

Sources:
Department for Work and Pensions Information Directorate
DWP Information Directorate

Participants on work based learning for adults in West Sussex

Time period	*Starts*
2001[1]	230
2002	470
2003	630
2004	760
2005[2]	660

Participants on work based learning for adults in East Worthing and Shoreham

Time period	*Starts*
2001[1]	30
2002	50
2003	90
2004	110
2005[2]	90

[1] From April.
[2] To November.

Notes:
1. Data are not available at county council and parliamentary constituency level before April 2001.
2. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.

Source:
Department for Work and Pensions, Work Based Learning for Adults Evaluation Database

Obsolete Publications

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the disposal of the stock of obsolete publications identified on page 90 on his Resource Accounts 2004–05, indicating in each case *(a)* the name of publication, *(b)* the number of copies disposed of, *(c)* the nature of disposal and *(d)* the reason for overestimation of print run required. [52578]

Mrs. McGuire: The obsolete publications referred to in the Resource Account 2004–05 were those made by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). During that year some 1,032 stock lines (271,714 copies) were subject to disposal and adjustment.

Of the total there were two major disposals; 165,771 copies across 783 stock lines (61 per cent. of total) were due to the disposal of slow moving stock. This followed a recommendation from the National Audit Office that HSE should reduce its stock levels. A significant number of these publications were quite longstanding, and demand was initially based on placing orders for larger volumes in order to achieve cheaper print costs. Following the larger than usual level of disposals in 2004–05, HSE has put in place a policy of setting shorter print runs to better reflect actual demand.

A further 82,619 copies across 18 stock lines (30 per cent. of total) were disposed of due to a revision of the content, requiring the current stocks to be replaced by revised versions. This was an exceptionally high and unusual level of disposal. HSE have since changed the way in which the content of their publications is reviewed to help avoid a re-occurrence.

The remainder of the disposals in 2004–05 were due to publications being withdrawn because a brand new publication superseded current guidance, or a publication became obsolete and the guidance or information was no longer required. There were also a small number of write offs for stock damaged in transit or storage, and adjustments made following the annual stock count.

Older Workers

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people aged between 50 years and State Pension age were working *(a)* without a level 2 qualification, *(b)* with a work-limiting health condition and *(c)* without a level 2 qualification and with a work-limiting health condition in (i) 1997 and (ii) 2005. [58687]

Margaret Hodge: We have already made good progress in encouraging older people to take an active role in the labour market. The employment rates for men and women aged 50 to State Pension Age are now higher than at any time since the early-mid 1980s, and the gap between this and the overall rate has decreased. We are determined to give people greater choice and opportunity to stay in work as long as they wish.

The information requested is in the following table.

People in work aged 50 to State Pension age, Great Britain

	Without a level 2 qualification)		*With a longstanding work limiting health condition*		*Without a level 2 qualification and with a work limiting health condition*	
Summer	*Number*	*Percentage of all in work*	*Number*	*Percentage of all in work*	*Number*	*Percentage of all in work*
1997	2,410,000	47	520,000	10	270,000	5
2005	2,340,000	37	760,000	12	330,000	5

Notes:
Numbers rounded to the nearest 10,000, percentages to nearest percentage point. Individuals whose highest qualification is below O-level/ GCSE A-C and those with fewer than five O-level /GCSE A-C passes are considered to lack level 2 qualifications.

Source:
Labour Force Survey (LFS),

Parliamentary Questions

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he will respond to question *(a)* 32429, *(b)* 32430 and *(c)* 32432 on departmental staff, tabled by the hon. Member for Putney on 23 November 2005; and if he will make a statement. [42503]

Mrs. McGuire *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* Replies were given to the hon. Member as follows:

32429 on 30 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1200W.

32430 on 15 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 2177W.

32432 on 16 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1044W.

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many ordinary written parliamentary questions tabled for answer by him in the past 12 months have been answered *(a)* within 14 days, *(b)* between 14 and 28 days, *(c)* between 28 days and two months and *(d)* in excess of two months after the date of tabling; and if he will make a statement. [49892]

Mrs. McGuire: For the year 7 February 2005 to 6 February 2006 inclusive, the number of ordinary written parliamentary questions tabled for answer by him in the past 12 months which were answered *(a)* within 14 days *(b)* after between 14 and 28 days *(c)* between 28 days and two months and *(d)* in excess of two months after the date of tabling were:

	Number
(a) Within 14 days	1,469
(b) After between 14 and 28 days	617
(c) Between 28 days and two months	230
(d) In excess of two months after the date of tabling	287

Pathways to Work

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of Pathways to Work participants have found work within *(a)* one month, *(b)* two months, *(c)* six months, *(d)* 12 months and *(e)* more than 12 months; and how many in each category had been claiming incapacity benefit for (i) up to six months, (ii) six to 12 months, (iii) 12 months to five years and (iv) more than five years. [38249]

Margaret Hodge: The information requested is in the following tables:

(a) New/Repeat mandatory customers

Percentage

	Duration between Pathways to Work start date and benefit end date				
	less than one month	*between one and two months*	*between two and six months*	*between six and 12 months*	*more than 12 months*
Total number of Pathways to Work starts	1	5	22	9	2

(b) Existing customers who have volunteered for Pathways to Work

Percentage

Duration on benefit at time of benefit end	*Duration between Pathways to Work start date and benefit end date*				
	less than one month	*between one and two months*	*between two and six months*	*between six and 12 months*	*more than 12 months*
Up to six months	1	1	1	0	0
Six to 12 months	4	1	3	1	0
12 months to five years	10	4	9	6	3
More than five years	4	1	2	2	1
Total	20	7	15	8	3

Notes:

1. Statistics quoted in this response are taken from the Pathways to Work Evaluation database.
2. Due to time lags in the benefits data a cohort of Pathways starts to the end of May 2005 have been considered.
3. For new/repeat customers the Pathways start date and the benefit start date are effectively the same.
4. Not all Pathways spell starts have a benefit claim start date matched to them. This is because the benefits data are taken from the National Benefits Database which does not include a proportion of short term Incapacity Benefit claims.
5. This response is based on the number of Pathways spells rather than the number of individuals who have started Pathways. This is because an individual may have multiple spells on Pathways but their interaction within Pathways may be different in different spells.
6. Database development work is required to merge the clerical data used as a basis for reporting on mandated stock customers to our benefits data. This work is currently in progress but resource is not available to complete this within the timescale for this question.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average cost per participant has been in the job brokering option of Pathways to work. [59802]

Margaret Hodge: Job brokering services for Pathways to work participants are provided through the new deal for disabled people (NDDP). We estimate that the average cost per participant in the NDDP element of the Pathways to work pilots is £1,600.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the average cost per participant of the Condition Management Programme option of the Pathways to Work pilots. [59856]

Mrs. McGuire: We estimate that the average cost per participant in the Condition Management Programme element of the Pathways to Work pilots is £1,500.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his answer of 7 February 2006 to the hon. Member for Romford

(Andrew Rosindell), *Official Report*, column 1170W, on pathways to work, how the estimate of £400 funding per participant was calculated; and what the main components of the cost were. [59943]

Margaret Hodge: The £400 figure is an estimate of the average cost per participant in pathways to work pilots. The figure represents the total cost of the pathways to work programme, excluding the return to work credit element, divided by the total number of programme starts.

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the numbers returning to work each year *(a)* in current Pathways to work pilot areas and *(b)* when the scheme is fully operational. [49803]

Margaret Hodge: There were 13,500 recorded job entries in Pathways to work areas in the year to October 2005.

We have not yet made an assessment of the total number of annual job entries that would result from a nationally rolled out service.

Pension Credit

Stephen Hesford: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners in Wirral, West constituency are eligible for pension credit. [62443]

Mr. Timms: The information requested is not available.

Latest estimates of the number of pensioners entitled to the main income-related benefits, including Pension Credit, relate to financial year 2003–2004. They are available on a national basis only, as estimates cannot be reliably disaggregated at a lower geographical level. They can be found in the DWP report entitled "Income Related Benefits Estimates of Take-Up in 2003–2004". Copies of the publication are available in the Library. Estimates for 2004–2005 are expected to be published in May 2006.

At the end of November 2005 4,000 pensioner households in Wirral West were in receipt of Pension Credit.

Notes:

1. The caseload figure is an early estimate, and is rounded to the nearest hundred.

2. Caseload figures are taken from the Generalised Matching Service (GMS) scan at 25 November 2005, rated up to give end-month estimates.

3. Operational processing times mean that a number of claim commencements and terminations are not reflected in this figure. The final figure incorporated within the Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS) will take account of such cases.

4. Pension Credit (PC) replaced Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) on 6 October 2003. Existing MIG recipients were automatically converted onto Pension Credit on that date (assuming they still met the eligibility criteria).

5. Household recipients are those people who claim PC either on behalf of themselves only or on behalf of a household. This number is equal to the number of households in receipt of PC. The number of individual beneficiaries is the claimants plus their partners.

6. Couples may include partners who are aged less than 60.

7. Parliamentary Constituencies are assigned by matching postcodes against the relevant postcode directory.

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in Scotland are in receipt of pension credit, broken down by *(a)* local authority and *(b)* constituency. [62813]

Mr. Timms: The information requested is in the following table.

Pension credit recipients in Scotland as at November 2005

	Households	*Individual beneficiaries*
By local authority		
Local authority		
Totals	281,800	338,300
Aberdeen City	8,900	10,400
Aberdeenshire	9,100	11,000
Angus	5,900	7,100
Argyll and Bute	4,800	5,700
Scottish Borders	6,200	7,600
Clackmannanshire	2,400	2,900
West Dumbartonshire	6,800	8,100
Dumfries and Galloway	8,800	10,900
Dundee City	9,600	11,200
East Ayrshire	7,900	9,700
East Dumbartonshire	3,600	4,400
East Lothian	4,600	5,500
East Renfrewshire	3,100	3,800
Edinburgh, City of	17,500	20,300
Falkirk	7,900	9,500
Fife	16,600	20,000
Glasgow City	46,700	54,900
Highland	11,000	13,200
Inverclyde	6,000	7,100
Midlothian	3,600	4,300
Moray	4,200	5,100
North Ayrshire	8,500	10,400
North Lanarkshire	20,900	25,600
Orkney Islands	1,000	1,100
Perth and Kinross	6,500	7,800
Renfrewshire	10,200	12,200
Shetland Isles	1,000	1,200
South Ayrshire	6,400	7,800
South Lanarkshire	18,500	22,700
Stirling	3,600	4,300
West Lothian	7,700	9,400
Eilean Siar	2,500	3,000
By constituency		
Parliamentary constituency		
Totals	281,800	338,300
Aberdeen North	4,800	5,600
Aberdeen South	3,200	3,700
Airdrie and Shotts	5,400	6,700
Angus	4,900	6,000
Argyll and Bute	4,800	5,700
Ayr, Carrick and Cumnock	5,800	7,200
Banff and Buchan	4,600	5,600
Berwickshire, Roxburgh and Selkirk	5,300	6,500
Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross	3,500	4,300
Central Ayrshire	5,200	6,300
Coatbridge, Chryston and Bellshill	6,100	7,400
Cumbernauld, Kilsyth and Kirkintilloch East	4,300	5,300
Dumfries and Galloway	5,800	7,200
Dumfriesshire, Clydesdale and Tweeddale	4,600	5,700
Dundee East	4,500	5,400
Dundee West	6,100	7,100
Dunfermline and West Fife	3,300	3,900
East Dunbartonshire	2,500	3,000
East Kilbride, Strathaven and Lesmahagow	5,100	6,300
East Lothian	4,600	5,500
East Renfrewshire	3,100	3,800
Edinburgh East	4,500	5,200
Edinburgh North and Leith	3,600	4,100
Edinburgh South	2,700	3,200
Edinburgh South West	3,300	3,800
Edinburgh West	3,300	3,900

Pension credit recipients in Scotland as at November 2005

	Households	Individual beneficiaries
Falkirk	5,600	6,700
Glasgow Central	6,500	7,600
Glasgow East	7,900	9,400
Glasgow North	4,200	4,900
Glasgow North East	8,800	10,400
Glasgow North West	6,500	7,600
Glasgow South	5,600	6,600
Glasgow South West	7,100	8,300
Glenrothes	5,000	6,100
Gordon	2,800	3,300
Inverclyde	6,000	7,100
Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey	4,000	4,700
Kilmarnock and Loudoun	6,100	7,500
Kirkcaldy and Cowdenbeath	5,100	6,200
Lanark and Hamilton East	5,900	7,200
Linlithgow and East Falkirk	5,500	6,700
Livingston	4,500	5,500
Midlothian	3,600	4,300
Moray	4,200	5,100
Motherwell and Wishaw	6,200	7,400
Na h-Eileanan an Iar	2,500	3,000
North Ayrshire and Arran	5,700	7,000
North East Fife	3,200	3,900
Ochil and South Perthshire	4,400	5,300
Orkney and Shetland	2,000	2,300
Paisley and Renfrewshire North	4,400	5,300
Paisley and Renfrewshire South	5,700	6,800
Perth and North Perthshire	4,600	5,400
Ross, Skye and Lochaber	3,400	4,100
Rutherglen and Hamilton West	6,700	8,200
Stirling	3,600	4,300
West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine	2,500	3,000
West Dunbartonshire	6,800	8,100

Notes:

1. These figures are early estimates. Operational processing times mean that a number of claim commencements and terminations are not reflected in the figures. The final figures incorporated within the Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS) will take account of such cases.
2. Caseloads are rounded to the nearest hundred. Totals may not sum due to rounding.
3. Caseload figures are taken from the GMS scan at 25 November 2005, rated up to give end-month estimates.
4. Pension credit (PC) replaced minimum income guarantee (MIG) on 6 October 2003. Existing MIG recipients were automatically converted onto pension credit on that date (assuming constituencies are assigned by matching postcodes against the relevant postcode directory.)
5. This table uses the new Scottish parliamentary constituencies created in May 2005.
6. Household recipients are those people who claim PC either on behalf of themselves only or on behalf of a household. This number is equal to the number of households in receipt of PC. The number of individual beneficiaries is the claimants plus their partners.
7. Couples may include partners who are aged less than 60.

Source:

Information Directorate: 100 per cent. data from the Generalised Matching Service (GMS).
Pension credit scan taken as at 25 November 2005.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his estimate is of the total cost of administering pension credit since it was established, including IT and set up costs. [63303]

Mr. Timms: The information requested is not available.

The cost of administering pension credit claims during the year to March 2005 has been estimated as £237 million. This figure is an approximate assessment only.

The Pension Service continues to develop its unit cost information. A modern resource management system which will support improved costing analysis is being rolled out across the Department in 2006.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what is the anticipated future *(a)* pension credit expenditure in real terms assuming constant take-up and *(b)* projected proportion of the pensioner population who will be eligible for pension credit in (i) 2010, (ii) 2020, (iii) 2030, (iv) 2040 and (v) 2050. [63951]

Mr. Timms: Projections of pension credit expenditure in real terms are published as part of the long-term DWP benefit expenditure tables at www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd4/LT3.xls. For pension credit the projections assume constant overall take-up from March 2008.

The numbers eligible for pension credit in the future are subject to a range of uncertainties and a number of factors including the ways that Governments choose to uprate benefits. The table shows the projected proportion of pensioner households eligible for pension credit in each year if basic state pension was to be uprated with prices and pension credit guarantee with earnings every year to 2050.

Projected proportion of pensioner households eligible for pension credit for selected years

	Range (percentage)
2010	46–52
2020	55–61
2030	59–64
2040	65–69
2050	75–78

Notes:

1. Estimates are based on Family Resources Survey data for 2003–04, with incomes and benefits projected forward into the future in order to estimate the eligibility for each pensioner household on the survey.
2. As with National Statistics estimates of eligibility to pension credit in 2003–04, estimates are given as ranges in order to account for possible biases in Family Resource Survey data. They also take account of the effects of sampling variation. It is assumed that the size of this range remains constant in future years relative to the decreasing proportion of non-eligible pensioner households.
3. Estimates of eligibility cover all those aged above women's state pension age in the private household population of Great Britain.
4. The projections assume the continuation of the current uprating of the standard minimum guarantee by earnings, although the Government are not committed to this beyond 2008.
5. Estimates account for equalisation of state pension age between 2010 and 2020. It is assumed that the minimum age at which people can claim pension credit rises in line with women's state pension age.
6. Estimates are calibrated to the 2003–04 National Statistics estimates of non-eligibility to pension credit, which adjust 2003–04 Family Resources Survey data to take account of possible biases in reporting.

Pensioners (Cost of Living)

Willie Rennie: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions by how much the cost of living changed for pensioners in each year since 1997. [64423]

Mr. Timms: The following table shows the annual increase in the retail prices index (RPI) in each calendar year.

	RPI (percentage)
1997	3.1
1998	3.4
1999	1.5
2000	3.0
2001	1.8
2002	1.7
2003	2.9
2004	3.0
2005	2.8

Source:
Office for National Statistics

The Office for National Statistics also produces separate price indices for one and two pensioner households, which are published in their publication 'Focus on Consumer Price Indices'. These are based on the expenditure patterns of households where the head of the household is over state pension age (at least 65 for men and 60 for women), economically inactive, and where at least three quarters of the household's income is from state benefits. Housing costs (including council tax) are excluded from these indices as most of these pensioners will be cushioned against some rises by housing benefit and council tax benefits.

Pensioner price indices have risen marginally more slowly than RPI excluding housing (the best comparator) between 1996 and 2005.

Pensions

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the comments of David Norgrove, Chair of the Pensions Protection Fund and the Pensions Regulator to the Work and Pensions Committee on 22 March 2006 that pensions is a data free zone; what action he proposes to take to improve the data held which forms the basis for decisions made on pensions; and if he will make a statement. [62039]

Mr. Timms: Mr. Norgrove, Chair of the Pensions Regulator, was highlighting the considerable gaps in information that exist in relation to pension schemes in the UK. He also highlighted the steps that the Pensions Regulator has been taking to fill those gaps.

Prior to the coming into force of the Pensions Act 2004, pension scheme trustees were obliged to provide the Occupational Pensions Regulatory Authority (Opra) with basic information in the form of scheme name and address, scheme size in terms of number of members, benefit type (whether defined benefit, defined contribution, hybrid or not known), status (open, closed, frozen, winding-up, wound-up).

This made it possible for Opra to collect the pension schemes levy and provide a pension tracing service for the public. However, it provided no information on the funding level, the nature of the employer's business, names and contact details for scheme advisers. In terms of the current challenges in relation to scheme funding this data was insufficient.

The situation is already being addressed. The Pensions Act 2004 requires UK occupational pension schemes to complete a scheme return and supply it to the Pensions Regulator. Considerable improvements in the quality of data available on pensions are expected by the end of 2006 when the majority of scheme returns will have been received by the Regulator. The new scheme return will include:

- general scheme information (name, benefit type, registration and approval details, status and membership information)
- information about the trustees, trustee advisers and service providers (insurance company, auditor, actuary, fund manager, custodian, investment adviser, administrator)
- scheme financial information (Minimum Funding Requirement valuation, scheme funding valuation or technical provisions, Pension Protection Fund section 179 of the Pensions Act 2004 valuation (valuation to determine scheme underfunding), information from estimated coverage on a buyout basis, FRS17 liabilities)
- scheme investment policy
- basic employer information

While the steps the Regulator is taking to gather information through the scheme return will make a big difference, it has also analysed existing data to inform current policy issues. For example, the Pensions Regulator engaged PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) to provide an analysis of the potential impacts on employer solvency and investment of the new scheme funding regime, which included an analysis by PwC of the potential impact on 550 employers. The PwC research has been laid in the libraries of both Houses, and is also available through the Pensions Regulator website, www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk.

Ms Gisela Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many people the Government estimate are included in the Parliamentary Ombudsman's recommendations on occupational pensions; and what the average pension entitlement is of those in each age group, broken down by those aged *(a)* over 65, *(b)* 55 to 65, *(c)* 45 to 55, *(d)* 35 to 45 and *(e)* under 35 years on 14 May 2004; [63862]

(2) what proportion of members of pension schemes covered by recommendations of the Parliamentary Ombudsman report are aged *(a)* over 60 and *(b)* 50 to 59 years. [63870]

Mr. Timms: We estimate that around 125,000 people are included in the Ombudsman's recommendations. The sample on which this estimate is based is too small to produce a reliable breakdown of average pension entitlement for each of the age bands requested. However, we estimate that around 20 per cent. of the people concerned are aged 60 and over, and around 35 per cent. are aged 50 to 59.

Post Office Card Account

John Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many recipients of retirement pension in Easington constituency use Post Office card accounts. [62957]

Mr. Plaskitt: Information showing the number of DWP benefit and state pension payment accounts paid by direct payment into a Post Office card account for each parliamentary constituency has been placed in the Library.

Poverty

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people were living in relative

poverty in the UK at the latest date for which information is available; how many of these were *(a)* pensioners, *(b)* people of working age not in employment, *(c)* people of working age in part-time employment and *(d)* people of working age in full-time employment; and if he will make a statement. [63299]

Margaret Hodge: Specific information regarding relative low income for pensioners and for those of working age is available in the latest publication of the 'Households Below Average Income 1994–95 to 2004–05'. The threshold of below 60 per cent. of relative or contemporary median income is the most commonly used in reporting trends in low income.

Figures for the United Kingdom for 2004–05 showing the numbers of pensioners, people of working age in full-time employment, people of working age in part-time employment, people of working age not in employment, children, and all individuals living in households with incomes below 60 per cent. of the contemporary median, are in the following table.

Numbers (in millions) of pensioners, working age people by employment status, children, and all individuals living in contemporary low-income households in 2004–05, United Kingdom

	Before housing costs	*After housing costs*
Pensioners[1]	2.1	1.8
Working-age[2]	4.8	6.3
of which:		
Full-time employed[3]	1.2	1.7
Part-time employed[4]	0.7	0.9
Not in employment	2.9	3.7
Children[5]	2.5	3.5
All individuals	9.4	11.7

[1] Pensioners are all females aged 60 years or over, and all males aged 65 years or over.
[2] A person of working-age is—for women—ages 16 to 59, and for men—ages 16 to 64.
[3] Full-time work is when an individual works 31 hours or more a week.
[4] Part-time work is when an individual works fewer than 31 hours a week.
[5] A child is an individual aged under 16 years, or an unmarried 16 to 18-year-old on a course up to and including 'A' level standard, up to and including Scottish 'Highers' or up to and including an equivalent course in Northern Ireland.

Note:
Due to rounding the estimates for the sub-groups may not add to the total for all individuals.

Source:
Family Resources Survey

Background notes:
Appendix 4 of the latest publication of the 'Households Below Average Income 1994–95 to 2004–05' presents figures for the United Kingdom for pensioners, people of working age, children, and all individuals. Data at UK level are only available from 2002–03.

Figures are for the UK, and are marginally different from the GB headline figures shown in the main section of the HBAI publication.

Press Coverage

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on how many occasions since 1 April 2003 he has complained to the Press Complaints Commission about the coverage in the press of *(a)* Ministers or officials and *(b)* his Department; and how many of these complaints were upheld. [47090]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department has made no such complaints during this period.

Press Officers

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much his Department spent on press officers in each year since 1996–97, broken down by grade. [42769]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department for Work and Pensions was formed on 8 June 2001 from parts of the former Department of Social Security, the former Department for Education and Employment and the Employment Service. Information prior to 2001 is not held centrally and can only be obtained at disproportionate cost. The information regarding grade is not available and can only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

	Costs
	Cost (£)
2001–02	816,725
2002–03	1,739,935
2003–04	1,146,255
2004–05	1,533,703

Number of press officers employed

	National press officers[1]	*Regional press officers*[1]
2001–02	21	0
2002–03	16	13
2003–04	20	20
2004–05	19	23

[1] The number of staff is the number in post at 31 March each year.

Note:
The costs are based on average salaries for the year and take into account the actual number of press officers and changes in post each month.

Regulatory Reform Orders

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many regulatory reform orders his Department has laid before Parliament in each of the last five calendar years. [46808]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department has laid before Parliament two regulatory reform orders during the last five years, as set out in the following table.

	Title	*Initial scrutiny start*	*Outcome*
2001	None	—	—
2002	The Regulatory Reform (Vaccine Damage Payments Act 1979) Order 2002	14 January 2002	Made
	The Regulatory Reform (Carer's Allowance) Order 2002	17 December 2001	Made
2003	None	—	—
2004	None	—	—
2005	None	—	—

Spending Review (Efficiency Targets)

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much is expected to be saved as a result of meeting the civil service work force reductions targets for his Department set out in the 2004 Spending Review; and whether these savings count towards the agreed efficiency target for his Department set out in the review. [52803]

Mrs. McGuire: On the basis of current average wage costs the efficiency headcount reduction of 30,000 net, the Department forecasts savings of around £698 million per annum at the end of March 2008. The actual savings will be influenced by factors such as the grades of staff remaining in the Department once the headcount reductions have been achieved. The savings achieved by March 2008 will count towards the agreed efficiency target for the Department.

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what interim targets he has set for achieving *(a)* the agreed efficiency target for his Department and *(b)* the civil service work force reductions targets for (i) gross reductions in posts, (ii) net reductions in posts and (iii) relocations for his Department, as set out in the 2004 Spending Review; what the baseline figures are against which these interim targets are assessed; on what dates they will take effect; and by what dates these interim targets are intended to be met. [52913]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department has not set interim targets for achieving the financial or headcount targets for the Department's overall efficiency targets but does monitor progress towards the achievement of its targets against indicative profiles by year and by business area. The baselines for the relocation of posts was zero and the baseline for the gross and net headcount reductions was 132,550 in Full Time Equivalent posts as defined in the current counting methodology. Financial savings were defined by the Department's financial allocations as set out in the Spending Review 2004 White Paper.

Volunteering

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment his Department has made of the role of voluntary groups and volunteering in helping move people from benefits into work. [60011]

Margaret Hodge: Volunteering is one of the key ways an individual can build up confidence and gain valuable work-related skills after a period out of work. People on incapacity benefits can already undertake unlimited voluntary work for charities and voluntary organisations and we intend to extend this provision to the new employment and support allowance. The recent Russell Commission report on youth action and engagement recommended that young people on benefits and their families should not suffer a financial barrier when they volunteer. The Department for Work and Pensions and the Home Office are working together to communicate existing rules more effectively to volunteer-involving organisations, local authorities and young people.

Voluntary groups undertake a very important role in helping people into work. Jobcentre Plus has recently carried out a stock take of its current and planned non-contractual partnerships with voluntary and community sector organisations. The findings show that nationally Jobcentre Plus has a relationship with over 1,900 voluntary organisations. We provide information for them about our services, policies and programmes through local liaison, our customer representative Forum programme, and our magazine for advisers, intermediaries and other advisers, Touchbase. We also consult widely with key national voluntary sector organisations in shaping our policies and services.

Through these partnerships, Jobcentre Plus customers can access confidential advice and support on issues such as housing, redundancy, job matching, health, various forms of rehabilitation, citizenship courses, debt counselling, and child care.

Winter Fuel Allowance

Mr. Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what the cost of the winter fuel allowance was in 2005; and what the total cost has been since the scheme was established; [63432]

(2) what the total cost of the winter fuel allowance in the Walsall borough *(a)* was for 2005 and *(b)* has been since the scheme started. [63612]

Mr. Timms: The information is in the following table.

£ million, cash terms

	Winter fuel allowance paid in Great Britain	*Winter fuel allowance paid in Walsall*
1997–98	191	n/a
1998–99	194	n/a
1999–2000	759	4
2000–01	1,749	8
2001–02	1,681	8
2002–03	1,705	8
2003–04	1,916	9
2004–05	2,475	11
2005–06	1,994	n/a
Total	12,664	n/a

Notes:

1. Breakdowns at borough level are only available from 1999–2000 to 2004–05.
2. Figures for 2004–05 include age-related payments, for people aged 70 or over, which cannot be separated from winter fuel payments.
3. Figures are rounded to the nearest £ million.
4. The figure for the total amount spent in 2005–06 is estimated outturn- the outturn figure and a figure for Walsall will be available later in the year.
5. The DWP expenditure tables can be viewed on the internet at http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd4/expenditure.asp

Source:

DWP Expenditure tables, consistent with Budget 2006, and accounting data from DWP Information Directorate.

World Cup (Complimentary Tickets)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many complimentary tickets his Department has received for games taking place at the FIFA World Cup 2006 in Germany. [63912]

Mrs. McGuire: My Department has received no complimentary tickets for any games taking place at the FIFA World Cup 2006 in Germany.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Departmental Staff (Stress)

David Simpson: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many people have been on sick leave suffering from stress in her Department in each of the last three years; and what percentage of the total staff number this represents.[63541]

Bridget Prentice: The number of sickness absence days is recorded by the Department, however there is limited current information available on how much of that is attributable to stress. The way that absence is recorded does not show how many individuals the figures relate to but it does show what percentage of absence is stress-related. The most recent available figures are for the years between April 2000 and March 2003, and are broken down as follows:

	Days lost to stress	*Percentage of all absences*
April 2000 to March 2001	25,246	25.4
April 2001 to March 2002	20,075	19.8
April 2002 to March 2003	30,096	21

Departmental Televisions

Jo Swinson: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many television sets are in operation in the Department *(a)* in total, *(b)* in Minister's private offices and *(c)* in each office building in the Department; and how many television licences are held by the Department. [62800]

Ms Harman: My Department has *(a)* a total of 41 working televisions including *(b)* 15 which are in Minister's Private Offices and *(c)* are located as follows:

	Number
Selborne House, London	30
Chancery Lane, London	2
Clive House, London	3
Abbey Orchard Street, London	2
Millbank Tower, London	1
Steel House, London	1
Archway Tower, London	2

The number of television licences held by my Department totals five. These cover the core HQ Buildings; Selborne House, Steel House, Clive House, Abbey Orchard Street and Archway Tower.

This answer relates solely to the Department for Constitutional Affairs, HQ Estate and not to Her Majesty's Court Service, related agencies or NDPB's as to gather this information would incur a disproportionate cost. The Scotland and Wales offices have submitted their own, separate answers to this question.

Jersey, Guernsey and Sark

Justine Greening: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs on what occasions members of the Privy Council for the Affairs of Jersey, Guernsey and Sark have not recommended legislation proposed by those Crown dependencies in the last 10 years; on what basis such decisions were made; and if she will make a statement. [63816]

Ms Harman: There has been only one occasion in the last 10 years when Channel Islands legislation submitted for approval was not recommended for Royal Assent. On that occasion the request for approval of the Constitution of Sark Law was withdrawn by the Sark Parliament before the Committee for the Affairs of Jersey and Guernsey had come to a conclusion.

Notaries Public

Mr. Davey: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what representations her Department has received on the removal of barriers to British notaries public working in the EU. [64390]

Bridget Prentice: As I set out in my response to the hon. Member for North-East Hertfordshire (Mr. Heald):

> "In 2006, my Department received one letter from a Member of Parliament concerning notaries public. No correspondence from notaries public or from members of the public was received in 2005.
>
> The Notaries Society touched upon this issue in their response to the White Paper, "The Future of Legal Services".".—[*Official Report*, 22 March 2006; Vol. 444, c. 457W]

Mr. Davey: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what research her Department has commissioned into the barriers to British notaries public working in the EU. [64391]

Bridget Prentice: No research has been commissioned or is planned.

Mr. Davey: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what guidance she has provided for British notaries public practising abroad. [64392]

Bridget Prentice: As the Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs has no role in the regulation or conduct of notaries, no guidance has been provided.

Political Parties (Liquidation)

Chris Huhne: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what arrangements are in place for *(a)* liquidation, *(b)* bankruptcy and *(c)* placing in administration of registered political parties. [63873]

Bridget Prentice: The requirements for the registration and administration of political parties is set out in the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA). There are no rules regarding liquidation, bankruptcy or placing in administration of registered political parties in the Act. There are over 300 registered political parties in the United Kingdom. Some of these are also registered companies, and therefore will be subject to the specific requirements of companies legislation.

Post-mortems (Haringey)

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many *(a)* routine and *(b)* special post-mortems were carried out by each pathologist in Haringey Coroner Services in 2005. [61872]

Ms Harman: The North London coroner believes that *(a)* about 700 routine post-mortem examinations and *(b)* about 25 to 30 special post-mortem examinations were performed at Hornsey in 2005. Exact information is not held centrally.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many *(a)* special and *(b)* routine post-mortems have been carried out by the Haringey Coroner Services in each of the last five years. [61874]

Ms Harman: The North London coroner believes that *(a)* about 700 routine post-mortem examinations and *(b)* about 25 to 30 special post-mortem examinations are performed at Hornsey Public Mortuary each year. Exact information is not held centrally.

Superannuation Liability

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the total amount of employers' normal contributions accruing superannuation liability charge that have been accounted for by her Office has been in each of the last five years for which data are available. [61366]

Bridget Prentice: The amount of employers' accruing superannuation liability charges in respect of members of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme in the last five years is:

£ million

	Amount
2004–05[1]	33.2
2003–04[1]	31.3
2002–03[1]	28.7
2001–02	26.0
2000–01	24.8

[1] From 1 October 2002 new entrants have been able to opt for a partnership pension account, a stakeholder arrangement with an employer contribution. Employers' contributions to partnership pension accounts are not included in the above figures.

SCOTLAND

2014 Commonwealth Games

Mr. Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what assistance his Department is giving to Glasgow and Scotland's bid to host the 2014 Commonwealth Games; and if he will make a statement. [63599]

David Cairns: Patricia Ferguson, the Scottish Executive Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport, and I are jointly hosting a reception in the Scotland Office, in London, on 25 April to back the Glasgow bid for 2014 Commonwealth Games.

Capita Group

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how much business his Department has placed with *(a)* Capita Group plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries in each of the last five years; what the total value is of outstanding contracts placed with Capita Group plc and its subsidiaries by his Department; for which current tenders issued by his Department (i) Capita Group plc and (ii) its subsidiaries have been invited to bid; and whether (A) Capita Group plc and (B) its subsidiaries have seconded staff (1) temporarily and (2) on a longer-term basis to his Department. [61067]

David Cairns: The Scotland Office has made use of Capita Business Services on the following one-off occasions;

	£
2001–02	340
2002–03	10,044
2003–04	0
2004–05	0
2005–06	0

In the last five years, no contracts have been awarded to, tenders invited from, or staff seconded from, Capita plc or its subsidiaries.

James Brokenshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) what the value of contracts held by his Department with *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries was in the last three financial years; [61450]

(2) how many tenders *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries has submitted to his Department in each of the last three years; and how many tenders were successful; [61451]

(3) how many contracts his Department holds with *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries which still have a potential duration of five years or more. [61452]

David Cairns: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave today to the hon. Member for Epsom and Ewell (Chris Grayling).

Departmental Staff

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many and what proportion of *(a)* staff and *(b)* new staff employed in his Department were registered as disabled in each of the last three years for which data are available. [61381]

David Cairns: The Cabinet Office collects and publishes annually statistical information on the civil service by Department. This includes data on the number of staff in departments who have voluntarily declared a disability. The latest available information at April 2004 is available in the Library and on the civil service website and the following addresses.

http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management/statistics/publications/xls/disability_apr04_4nov04.xls for data relating to 1 April 2004 and

http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management/statistics/archive/index.asp for previous reporting periods.

Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what proportion of members of the principal civil service pension scheme in his Department joined the scheme before the age of *(a)* 20, *(b)* 25, *(c)* 30, *(d)* 35, *(e)* 40, *(f)* 45 and *(g)* over 45 years old. [61995]

David Cairns: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given by my hon. Friend, the Parliamentary Secretary for the Cabinet Office, on Wednesday 29 March.

Time

David Mundell: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will assess the merits of devolving to the Scottish Parliament responsibility for setting time in Scotland. [62929]

David Cairns: This matter was considered at some length during the passage of the Scotland Bill. The Government remain of the view that this issue should be reserved.

World Cup (Complimentary Tickets)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many complimentary tickets his Department has received for games taking place at the FIFA World Cup 2006 in Germany. [63902]

David Cairns: The Scotland Office has not received any complimentary tickets for the World Cup taking place in Germany this summer.

World Heritage

David Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland which Minister in his Department has responsibility for issues relating to World Heritage sites. [63477]

David Cairns: Lead responsibility for policy on World Heritage sites rests with my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. I take an interest in issues relating to such sites in Scotland.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Animal Testing

Mr. Goodwill: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many LD50 animal tests have been carried out on botulinum toxin in each of the last 10 years. [58344]

Andy Burnham: Information regarding acute lethal toxicity tests is contained in Table 12 of the annual publication Statistics of Scientific Procedures on Living Animals Great Britain, a copy of which is in the Library.

It is not possible to identify individual substances which were tested using the various types of test described in Table 12 using the data collected by the Home Office under the provisions of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986. Neither is it possible to identify separately LD50 tests from other types of lethal toxicity test.

Mr. Goodwill: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of botulinum toxin subject to LD50 animal tests was destined for *(a)* cosmetic and *(b)* therapeutic uses in the last period for which figures are available. [58345]

Andy Burnham: Animal testing of botulinum toxin, licensed under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986, is conducted solely in relation to its use for clinical purposes as a prescription-only medicine.

Furthermore, no substances intended solely for use as cosmetics, or cosmetic ingredients, have been tested on animals in the United Kingdom since 1998 and no licences for this purpose have been granted since that date.

Information regarding acute lethal toxicity tests is contained in Table 12 of the annual publication Statistics of Scientific Procedures on Living Animals Great Britain 2004, a copy of which is in the Library. Home Office records do not show how many of these procedures related to the testing of botulinum toxin.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much his Department spent on temporary staff in each year between 2001 and 2005; and how much it has spent on such staff since July 2004. [59912]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Between the years 2001 and 2005, the Home Office has spent the following amounts on temporary staff:

	Spend on temporary staff (£)
2001	20,669,056
2002	41,713,675
2003	54,466,279
2004	38,963,830
2005	15,309,071

Expenditure on temporary staff since July 2004 is £55,371,473.14.

The immigration and nationality directorate accounted for approximately 75 per cent. of the cost for this financial year, 2004–05. During the current financial year, this has reduced to approximately 36 per cent. of the total cost.

The use of temporary staff provides the Home Office with cost effective, flexible resources which can be employed at very short notice. Their employment often allows the Department to react quickly to changes in the demands that it faces by deploying appropriately skilled and experienced individuals quickly to those areas of the business where they are most needed.

Departmental Televisions

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many television sets are in operation in the Department *(a)* in total, *(b)* in Minister's private offices and *(c)* in each office building in the Department; and how many television licences are held by the Department. [62792]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Department does not hold central records of television sets in operation across its estate. Within 2 Marsham Street there are 77 sets centrally provided for operational purposes, 21 of which are in Ministers' private offices and a further 70 are provided for general staff communications. The latter provision has enabled a saving of over £140,000 per annum on poster campaigns and other methods of communication previously used. This amends the reply given to the hon. Member for North Norfolk (Norman Lamb) on 11 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 185W, which did not refer to all sets used for operational purposes. No TV licence is required for these sets.

2 Marsham Street televisions

Owners of TVs	*Number*
CD	70
Press Office	17
Private Office (Ministers and others combined)	37 (21 in Ministers' Private Offices)
Private TVs	
Mark Neale DG Security and Organised Crime	1
Helen Field CD	1
ISLU	1
Private Office Drivers	1
Private Office Protection	1
Permanent Secretary	1
Louise Casey	1
Jim Acton ISLU	1
Duty Officers Room (CSSU)	1
LAB	1
LAB Library	1
TPU	11
ISLU	1
Total	147

DNA Databases

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the compatibility of DNA databases in England and Wales with those in *(a)* Scotland and *(b)* Northern Ireland; and what procedures need to be followed for making samples held by the police in one part of the UK available to police in another part. [63095]

Andy Burnham: The profiles on the 'local' DNA databases in Scotland and Northern Ireland are fully compatible with those on the national DNA database. Subject sample profiles taken in Scotland and Northern Ireland and crime scene profiles from Scotland and Northern Ireland are added to the national DNA database (NDNAD) as well as the local databases. Any matches resulting from a speculative search of the Scottish and Northern Ireland profiles against the NDNAD are automatically reported to the relevant police forces in Scotland, Northern Ireland, England and Wales.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the countries to whom DNA data collected in the UK has been sent; and how many pieces of data were sent to each in each year in which such data was sent. [63157]

Andy Burnham: There are a number of channels for the exchange of DNA information between the United Kingdom and other countries. They include: the United Kingdom National Central Bureau for Interpol (UK NCB) based at the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) which is often used to provide DNA profile data to other countries; bi-lateral direct liaison between law enforcement authorities; and formal mutual legal assistance channels. Exchanges of DNA information via these channels will almost always be a response to the needs of a specific criminal investigation.

The UK NCB is not currently able to provide data on the countries to which DNA profiles have been sent or on the number of DNA profiles sent to other countries in pursuit of specific criminal investigations. This information will be available later this year following the introduction of a new data collection system (this will not apply to retrospective data). However, it is estimated that DNA data are sent out by the UK NCB to one or more countries on two or three occasions each week. DNA data are only sent abroad where this is deemed necessary by the investigator, and are subject to data protection and human rights risk assessment. No data are available on the number of exchanges of DNA information which occur through direct liaison between law enforcement authorities or formal mutual legal assistance channels.

There have been two significant exchanges of DNA information in the last two years. In October 2004, 1,687 DNA crime scene profiles from undetected sexual offences in the UK were submitted to the Interpol DNA database (via the UK NCB). In February 2006, 10,763 DNA crime scene profiles from unsolved serious crimes committed in the UK were sent to the Netherlands for checking against the Netherlands DNA database.

The latter resulted from direct liaison and the development of a reciprocal agreement between the Dutch police and UK police representatives as the Netherlands is currently unable to take advantage of existing exchange mechanisms such as the Interpol database due to legislative restrictions. The Dutch authorities are working towards a solution to allow ratification of the existing mechanisms and also intend to send DNA profiles from unsolved Dutch crime scenes for checking against the UK national DNA database.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has ruled out use of DNA material as part of his proposed identity card scheme. [63158]

Andy Burnham: There are no powers in the Identity Cards Act 2006 to require an applicant for an ID card to provide a DNA sample.

Identity Cards

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much his Department *(a)* has paid and *(b)* plans to pay in future years to companies working on the Identity Cards programme; which companies have so far received payments; and how much each such company was paid. [43144]

Andy Burnham: The amounts paid to companies for work on the Identity Cards Programme since 6 April 2005 is shown in the table. Companies are engaged on different commercial terms depending on the nature of the work. For example KPMG was engaged for a one-

off assignment, while others have ongoing contracts or have supplied secondees or personnel. Field Fisher Waterhouse is engaged on a call-off basis and its services are used as and when commercial legal advice is required.

The contract with PA Consulting commenced in May 2004 and lasts up to a maximum of three years. The contract may be terminated with one month's notice.

The total values of the contracts with Whitehead Mann and SIGMA are £50,000 and £75,000 respectively. We cannot release details of estimated contract values for suppliers who will deliver the Identity Cards Scheme as the procurement phase has not yet commenced. These estimates are therefore commercially sensitive and releasing them may prejudice the programme's ability to achieve value for money from the market.

Company	*Services received*	*Total paid since 6 April 2005 (£)*
Field Fisher Waterhouse	Commercial Legal advice	521,567.37
Interleader Ltd	Provides a member of the Independent Assurance Panel	1,582.19
Veredus London	Provision of an Interim Manager	134,846.45
The Metropolitan Police	Provision of a secondee	34,902.00
PA Consulting	Consultancy Services	14,248,799.21
KPMG	Accountancy (review of business case)	90,000
CESG	Technical and Security Consultancy Services	92,508.31
Ernst and Young	Human Resources Consultancy Services	111,211.00
Partnership UK Ltd	Consultancy Services	57,302.70
SIGMA	Benefits Mapping Consultancy Services	36,600
Abbey Consulting Ltd	Consultancy Services	4,054.57
Whitehead Mann Ltd	Recruitment Services	16,666.67
Alan Hughes	Provides Chair of Independent Assurance Panel	16,329.29
Total	—	15,366,369.76

Jury Service

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to extend the age limits for possible jury service; and if he will make a statement. [62231]

Fiona Mactaggart: The age range for eligibility for jury service is 18 to 70. The Government agree with Lord Justice Auld's finding in his Review of the Criminal Courts that there is no compelling case for changing the present upper limit.

Police

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 9 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1671W, on police, if he will list the members of the working group led by his Department; on what dates it met; and if he will place in the Library the minutes of the meetings. [59972]

Hazel Blears: The Restructuring Finance Working Group provides continuing advice to inform the development of government policy. It is chaired by the Head of the Police Finance and Information Technology Unit, Home Office. Members are drawn from the Home Office, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, HM Treasury, Welsh Assembly Government, the Local Government Association, the Association of Chief Police Officers, the Association of Police Authorities, the Metropolitan Police Authority and Metropolitan Police Service. It has met on 14 December, 12 January and 10 February and will meet again shortly. We do not routinely publish minutes from the Working Group.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police stations have *(a)* opened and *(b)* closed in each police force area in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [63062]

Hazel Blears: The local police authorities own all police stations. The management of the police estate and allocation of resources are matters for each police authority and the chief officer, who are responsible for assessing local needs. Information provided by the forces is set out in the table.

Number of police stations opened and closed since 2000–01

	2000–01		*2001–02*		*2002–03*	
	Opened	*Closed*	*Opened*	*Closed*	*Opened*	*Closed*
Avon and Somerset	2	0	2	0	1	-1
Bedfordshire	0	0	2	0	0	0
Cambridgeshire	0	-1	0	0	0	-1
Cheshire	1	-2	0	-1	1	0
City of London	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cleveland	[—]	[—]	[—]	[—]	1	-1
Cumbria	0	0	1	-1	0	0
Derbyshire	1	0	1	-1	0	0
Devon and Cornwall	[—]	[—]	[—]	[—]	0	0
Dorset	0	-3	3	-2	0	-1
Durham	3	-3	0	-2	1	-1
Dyfed-Powys	0	0	5	0	5	-5
Essex	4	-19	1	-3	0	0
Gloucestershire	1	-6	2	-4	0	-1
Gtr Manchester	0	-2	0	0	0	0

Number of police stations opened and closed since 2000–01

	2000–01		2001–02		2002–03	
	Opened	*Closed*	*Opened*	*Closed*	*Opened*	*Closed*
Gwent	0	-7	0	0	0	-3
Hampshire	1	-4	0	-4	0	-4
Hertfordshire	4	0	0	0	0	0
Humberside	2	-2	0	-1	2	-1
Kent	0	0	2	-2	0	0
Lancashire	0	-1	0	0	2	-2
Leicestershire	0	0	1	-1	3	-3
Lincolnshire	0	0	0	-1	0	-2
Metropolitan	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	0	-2
Merseyside	0	-1	0	0	0	0
Norfolk	0	0	1	-3	2	-1
Northamptonshire	0	-1	0	0	0	0
Northumbria	0	0	0	0	0	0
North Wales	0	-2	0	-1	0	-1
North Yorkshire	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nottinghamshire	2	0	1	0	1	-2
South Wales	1	-4	1	-4	1	-4
South Yorkshire	3	-6	6	-8	2	-5
Staffordshire	0	0	2	-2	0	0
Suffolk	0	0	0	0	0	0
Surrey	6	0	1	0	3	0
Sussex	0	0	0	0	2	0
Thames Valley	0	-4	2	0	5	-5
Warwickshire	0	0	0	0	0	-1
West Mercia	1	-1	1	-1	0	0
West Midlands	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
West Yorkshire	2	0	0	-1	0	0
Wiltshire	0	0	1	-1	3	-1
Total	34	-69	36	-44	35	-48

	2003–04		2004–05	
	Opened	*Closed*	*Opened*	*Closed*
Avon and Somerset	0	0	1	-1
Bedfordshire	0	0	1	-2
Cambridgeshire	1	-1	2	-2
Cheshire	1	-1	1	-4
City of London	0	0	0	0
Cleveland	2	0	2	-1
Cumbria	1	-1	3	-1
Derbyshire	0	0	1	-3
Devon and Cornwall	0	0	3	-3
Dorset	2	-1	2	-1
Durham	0	-2	0	0
Dyfed-Powys	2	-1	1	1
Essex	1	0	2	-1
Gloucestershire	0	0	0	0
Gtr Manchester	4	-5	14	-15
Gwent	2	-1	2	0
Hampshire	0	-7	0	0
Hertfordshire	0	0	0	0
Humberside	5	-2	7	-2
Kent	0	-1	0	0
Lancashire	1	-7	0	-6
Leicestershire	0	0	0	-1
Lincolnshire	0	-1	0	-1
Metropolitan	3	-3	0	1
Merseyside	0	0	0	0
Norfolk	0	-4	0	0
Northamptonshire	0	0	0	0
Northumbria	0	0	0	0

	2003–04		2004–05	
	Opened	Closed	Opened	Closed
North Wales	0	0	0	1
North Yorkshire	2	-1	2	-1
Nottinghamshire	1	-1	3	-3
South Wales	0	0	0	0
South Yorkshire	0	-1	0	-1
Staffordshire	0	-1	0	0
Suffolk	1	-1	1	1
Surrey	0	0	0	0
Sussex	0	0	0	0
Thames Valley	1	-1	10	0
Warwickshire	0	-1	1	-2
West Mercia	2	0	0	0
West Midlands	1	-4	1	2
West Yorkshire	0	0	0	0
Wiltshire	3	-2	2	-1
Total	36	-51	62	-47

[1] Police forces were unable to supply confirmed data.

Note:

Avon and Somerset, Greater Manchester, Hampshire and West Midlands: Updated data previously supplied in 2004.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the set up costs of the proposed Welsh police force will be; what the average set up costs of amalgamated forces in England will be; and if he will make a statement. [60367]

Hazel Blears: The estimated set up costs of a strategic police force for Wales is £35 million. Long term savings made possible by the merger are currently estimated at around £16 million a year.

The varied conditions in different merger groups are reflected in different estimates of set-up costs. For most groups estimated set-up costs are in the range £30 million to £50 million.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the latest review of the proposed merger of the south west police constabularies is expected *(a)* to begin and *(b)* to report to Ministers; and what the terms of reference are of the review. [63342]

Hazel Blears: Assessment of options involving the south west police forces and authorities is nearing completion. Once complete the Home Secretary will discuss with chief officers and chairs of police authorities in the south west the best option for that area.

Prison

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to undertake further research into the proportion of the prison population that have *(a)* learning disabilities, *(b)* mental health problems and *(c)* learning disabilities and mental health problems; and if he will make a statement. [62241]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I have been asked to reply.

The Home Office began a four-year longitudinal study of 4,000 prisoners, Surveying Prisoner Crime Reduction, in late 2005. The Department of Health, Department for Work and Pensions, and the Department for Education and Skills are also stakeholders. The aims of the study are to assess prisoners' problems and needs on reception, examine how these are addressed during and after custody, and to measure the association between prisoners' participation in interventions and outcomes, including re-offending. The study involves interviews with a large and representative sample of prisoners at three stages: on reception to custody, prior to release and finally back in the community. The initial stage, on first reception into custody, will measure the proportion of this group with mental disorder. Prisoners will also be asked if they believe themselves to have a learning disability.

Mr. Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 14 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 2120W, what assessment he has made of the extent to which attempts have been made by prisoners to indoctrinate other prisoners with fundamentalist religious views. [59552]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 17 March 2006]:* The extent to which any person influences another is very difficult to measure. Indoctrination is a very subtle process and would not in itself constitute a measurable incident. If one prisoner were to be seen as exerting a disproportionate power over another, this would classify as a bullying incident. Incidents of bullying are monitored at a local level as part of each prison's violence reduction strategy, but no central data is held. All prisons have multi-faith chaplaincy teams to meet the faith needs of prisoners, and to provide religious education and awareness, and pastoral support.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what assessment he has made of the impact of returning a prisoner who has successfully completed his course at HM Prison Grendon into the general prison population on his continued mental health and well being; [55528]

(2) what steps are being taken by his Department to increase support for prisoners who have successfully completed courses at HM Prison Grendon and who have been returned to the general prison population. [55597]

Fiona Mactaggart: We are starting work to better address the requirements of prisoners with mental health needs who have participated in therapeutic regimes like those at HMP Grendon. We are taking these steps in recognition that the beneficial effects of such regimes need to be maintained, and be part of a

care pathway for individual prisoners that includes appropriate care on return to the mainstream regime and upon release into the community.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many inmates at each prison were resuscitated by staff after serious self-harm incidents in each of the last five years. [59320]

Fiona Mactaggart: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 20 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 122W.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the *(a)* accessibility to and *(b)* take-up by prisoners of higher education. [62126]

Fiona Mactaggart: Higher education is available, in principle, to each offender detained in custody, although the process by which courses of study are approved take account of public protection issues in barring some offenders from some courses. No central assessment has been made of the take up of higher education opportunities by offenders in custody.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent assessment he has made of the *(a)* demand and *(b)* supply of (i) further and (ii) higher education in each prison; what mechanisms exist to ensure that supply equals demand; and what action he is taking to increase levels of education provision in prison establishments. [62131]

Fiona Mactaggart: I have appointed a head of learning and skills within each prison. Their role includes the assessment of education supply and demand within each prison, and local management of the education provider's contract. Heads of learning and skills report direct to the governor and are members of the prison's senior management team.

New offender learning and skills delivery arrangements, set out in the Green Paper "Reducing Re-Offending Through Skills and Employment" (December 2005). As the new Learning and Skills Council planning and funding responsibilities are implemented, the strategic role of the head of learning and skills in assessing education supply and demand across the entire prison regime becomes a key function. The new arrangements will also increase the supply of education provision by reducing the incidence of wasteful repeat assessment as offenders move around the criminal justice system.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 7 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 1135W, on prisons, what plans he has to increase enrolment in education activities at each prison. [62137]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Green Paper "Reducing Re-Offending Through Skills and Employment" set out the Government's plans for delivering a better quality and increasingly effective learning and skills service for offenders. Closely allied to the introduction of end-to-end offender management, we expect to increase enrolment in education activities in prisons through better assessment and planning, through a wider curriculum choice and through progressive development of the offender learning and correctional services work force.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the provision of education at HM Prison Bullingdon. [62145]

Fiona Mactaggart: Education at HMP Bullingdon is provided by Milton Keynes College through a contract it holds with the Prison Service. Vocational training is provided by Prison Service staff. The Learning and Skills Council will take responsibility for planning and funding learning and skills at HMP Bullingdon from 31 July 2006 and is currently engaged in a procurement process to appoint a provider to deliver both elements of the current service at the establishment.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many staff are *(a)* designated and *(b)* deployed at (i) each prison and (ii) Prison Service Headquarters for the operation of the OASys computer system. [62150]

Fiona Mactaggart: Information about OASys staff in prison establishments is not held centrally and cannot be provided without incurring disproportionate cost. However, all prison establishments have an OASys manager, an OASys clerk and OASys assessors and supervisors sufficient to meet operational needs.

22 staff, expressed as full time equivalents, work in Prison Service Headquarters and the Headquarters of the National Offender Management Service to support OASys in prisons.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners have *(a)* studied and *(b)* graduated with (i) a Bachelor's degree, (ii) a Master's degree and (iii) a Doctorate in each prison establishment in each year since 1997; what plans he has to increase the higher education qualifications achieved in prisons; what timetable he envisages for the planned increases in higher education delivered in prisons; and if he will make a statement. [62152]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information requested on the number of prisoners who have studied for, and graduated with, Bachelor's degrees, Master's degrees, and Doctorates, by establishment, is not collected centrally and could be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Spending on higher education in prisons is again planned to exceed £1 million in 2006–07. We expect that budget to fund 350 Access Courses and 450 First Modules for new starters, in addition to funding the tutorial costs of those students already engaged in courses of higher study.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to extend access to offending behaviour programmes for those in custody. [62755]

Fiona Mactaggart: The national offender manager and the ten regional offender managers commission services for offenders in custody and the community. Decisions about extending offending behaviour programmes for offenders in custody will be made by the commissioners on the basis of evidence of need, and the effectiveness of programmes.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of vulnerable inmates are sex offenders. [62757]

Fiona Mactaggart: All sex offenders could be considered to be vulnerable in certain settings. However, not all sex offenders are located in vulnerable prisoner units (VPUs). A large proportion are managed successfully and safely on normal location, for example in prisons holding exclusively sex offenders. Information on the proportion of prisoners in VPUs who are sex offenders is not held centrally and could be obtained only by examining the records of every prisoner held in a VPU. This would incur disproportionate cost.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the prisons which house vulnerable inmates. [62758]

Fiona Mactaggart: Many prisoners could be considered vulnerable at times during their period in custody, and may be managed in a variety of ways including temporary segregation for their own protection or transfer to another establishment. The list of prisons with designated vulnerable prisoner units is as follows.

Prisons in England and Wales with designated vulnerable prisoner units

Eastern area
- Bedford
- Chelmsford
- Norwich
- Littlehey [1]
- Wayland

East Midlands area
- Lincoln
- Whatton [1]

High Security Prisons
- Belmarsh
- Frankland
- Full Sutton
- Long Lartin
- Manchester
- Wakefield [1]
- Whitemoor
- Woodhill

Kent area
- Elmley
- Maidstone

London area
- Holloway [2]
- Pentonville
- Wandsworth

North-east area
- Acklington [1]
- North-west area
- Liverpool
- Risley
- Styal [2]
- Wymott [1]

South-west area
- Bristol
- Channings Wood
- Dartmoor
- Dorchester
- Exeter

Surrey and Sussex area
- Lewes

Thames Valley, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight area
- Albany [1]
- Aylesbury
- Bullingdon
- Parkhurst
- Reading
- Winchester

Wales
- Swansea
- Usk

West Midlands area
- Birmingham
- Blakenhurst
- Stafford
- Shrewsbury

Yorkshire and Humberside area
- Hull
- Leeds

Contracted Prisons
- Parc (Wales)
- Rye Hill (East Midlands)

[1] Denotes prison holding predominantly prisoners participating in Sex Offender Treatment Programmes.

[2] Denotes female prison.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the use of segregation unit facilities for mentally ill inmates at each prison. [62767]

Fiona Mactaggart: Decisions on the circumstances under which prisoners may be placed within segregation units is for governing governors locally, mindful of the provisions in Prison Service Order 1700 on Segregation; Prison Service Order 2000, The Adjudications Manual, and Prison Service Order 2700 on Suicide and Self Harm.

A national Steering Group has recently been formed in partnership with Prison Health and Safer Custody Group, from the Health and Offender Partnerships unit within the National Offender Management Service (NOMS), and the Prison Service Security Group. Its purpose is to ensure that people being managed in segregated settings have access to a similar range of high quality health and mental health services as those living in the community receive.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the costs of transporting inmates from HMP Belmarsh to *(a)* Woolwich Crown Court and *(b)* the Central Criminal Court; and if he will make a statement. [62784]

Fiona Mactaggart: Under the contract for escorting non-category A prisoners the cost of escorts from HMP Belmarsh to both Woolwich Crown Court and the Central Criminal Court is £29.72 per journey. These costs may be subject to penalties imposed for failing to meet the terms of the contract.

Separate arrangements exist for category A prisoners who are moved by the Prison Service. The total cost of category A prisoner escorts are not recorded. However,

the cost in staff time of escorting category A prisoners from HMP Belmarsh to the Central Criminal Court is on average approximately £989 per prisoner per day for a standard risk category A prisoner and £1,385 per prisoner per day for a high risk category A prisoner.

The cost in staff time of escorting prisoners from Belmarsh to Woolwich Crown Court is on average approximately £445 per prisoner per day for a standard risk category A prisoner and £742 per prisoner for a high risk category A prisoner.

Probation Service

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the future of the probation service. [62720]

Fiona Mactaggart: There have been significant improvements in the performance of the probation service in recent years. However, we need to do more. We published on Thursday 30 March "Working with probation to protect the public and reduce re-offending", a summary of responses to our recent consultation on restructuring probation. This sets out how we will work with the probation service and other partners and providers to develop more effective end to end management of offenders throughout their sentence. We intend to bring forward legislation to give effect to our proposals as soon as parliamentary time allows.

Rahidar Aktar Coli

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will determine the status of Rahidar Aktar Coli, wife of Habibur Rahman, about whom he wrote to Dhama Douglas Solicitors on 27 August 2004 and about whom the hon. Member for Totnes wrote to the Home Secretary on 7 November 2005; and if he will make a statement. [63411]

Mr. McNulty: I refer the hon. Member to my reply of 6 April 2006.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Academic Selection

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many representations he has received from *(a)* individuals and *(b)* organisations about the draft Education (Northern Ireland) Order; how many of those representations favoured (i) retaining and (ii) prohibiting academic ability as a criteria for admission to post-primary schools; and if he will make a statement. [62609]

Angela E. Smith: The responses to the consultation on the draft Education (Northern Ireland) Order are currently being analysed and it is not possible to provide the information requested. I will consider the responses carefully and a summary report on the consultation will be made available when the draft order is laid in May.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much each health trust in the Province has paid for services from the Northern Ireland Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder Family Support Group in each of the last three years. [62365]

Mr. Woodward: The Health and Social Services Trusts have not commissioned any services from the Northern Ireland ADHD Family Support Group in the last three years.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what multidisciplinary early intervention services are available in the Province for those with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. [62366]

Mr. Woodward: Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder would usually be diagnosed at an early age and children suspected of having attention deficit hyperactivity disorder are in the first instance referred to child development clinics for diagnosis. Services for children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder are provided by community paediatric clinics and child and adolescent mental health services.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans there are to increase the services available to those with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder in the Province. [62367]

Mr. Woodward: Policy and services for those with attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder are currently being examined under the Review of Mental Health and Learning Disability (Northern Ireland). The Review will make recommendations as to future service configuration.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what research has been conducted in the Province into the education of those with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. [62368]

Angela E. Smith: The Department of Education has not funded any research into the education of those with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), though does collect annual statistics on the number of children with this condition. However, Loughshore Education Resource Centre began documenting information about ADHD three years ago in a bid to be proactive in the effective teaching of these difficult to manage young people. The centre recorded specific behaviours, observable triggers, response times, lifestyle issues, parental effectiveness and community influences. It found that a child with ADHD could have a widely varying package of care depending on the circumstances of their diagnosis. The research is available in electronic or written form from the centre.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what provision is available to people with attention deficit hyperactivity disorders in the Province. [62377]

Mr. Woodward: Services for children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder are provided by community paediatric clinics and Child and Adolescent Mental Health services. A person aged 18 or over presenting with symptoms of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder would be dealt with through primary care and generic mental health services.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder have committed suicide in the Province in each of the last five years. [62378]

Mr. Woodward: The General Register Office only records information on the cause of death. No information is collected on whether the deceased had attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much funding has been provided to the Northern Ireland Attention Deficit Disorder support centre in Eglantine Avenue, Belfast, in each of the last three years. [62379]

Mr. Woodward: The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety assisted the Northern Ireland Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder Support Centre as follows:

	Funding provided (£)
2003–04	[1]32,954
2004–05	25,000
2005–06	25,000

[1] Includes a one-off grant of £7,954 for equipment.

Aggregates Levy

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the effect in Northern Ireland of aggregates tax levels. [63470]

Angela E. Smith: The Government are aware of the unique market conditions that prevail in Northern Ireland and have already taken action by securing an 80 per. cent relief from the Aggregates Levy until 2012.

Members of the Aggregates Levy Credit Scheme (ALCS) can avail of the tax relief in return for an undertaking to carry out environmental improvements on an incremental basis. Currently 163 sites are in the ALSC and further 15 sites are currently being investigated for membership. This represents virtually all the aggregates producers in Northern Ireland. Even at the reduced rate, there were concerns over the potential negative economic impact of the Levy at the time of its introduction in 2002.

However, an examination of headline economic indicators shows that the sector has not suffered a downturn in performance. Indeed the sector appears to have performed quite well:

Turnover in 2004 was 18.5 per. cent higher than in 2001.

GVA in 2004 was 12 per cent. higher than in 2001.

In 2004 Employment was around 14 per. cent above 2001 levels.

No redundancies have been recorded in the sector since 2001.

However, it will not be until 2008 before comprehensive data is available to show the level of environmental improvement attained through the creation of the ALSC.

Alcohol-related Conditions

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people have presented with alcohol-related conditions at Accident and Emergency in Northern Ireland in each of the last three years. [63466]

Mr. Woodward: Information is not collected centrally on the number of people who have presented at Accident and Emergency Departments with alcohol-related conditions. However, the number of emergency admissions to hospital for alcohol-related conditions is available.

The table provides figures on the number of emergency admissions[1] to acute hospitals in Northern Ireland, where the primary or secondary diagnosis was an alcohol-related condition, in each of the last three years for which data are available.

	Number of admissions1 to hospital for alcohol-related conditions
2004-05	6,581
2003-04	6,062
2002-03	6,137

[1] Discharges and Deaths are used as an approximation to admissions. It is possible that any individual could be admitted to hospital more than once in any year and will thus be counted more than once as an admission.

Source:
Hospital Inpatient System

Ambulance Services

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what level of night-time ambulance provision is available in each health board area in Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [62529]

Mr. Woodward: The following table shows night-time cover in each health and social services board area. The figures refer to numbers of ambulance crews on duty.

	Monday	*Tuesday*	*Wednesday*	*Thursday*	*Friday*	*Saturday*	*Sunday*
Northern	10	10	11	11	11	11	11
Southern	8	8	8	8	8	9	9
Eastern	18	17	17	18	18	19	19
Western	9	9	9	9	10	10	10
Total	45	44	45	46	47	49	49

Levels of ambulance cover provided by the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) are determined by the four health and social services boards, based on historical patterns of demand. NIAS defines "night-time" as 12 am to 07.59 am.

Antisocial Behaviour Orders

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many antisocial behaviour orders have been issued in Northern Ireland since their introduction. [63493]

Mr. Hanson: The relevant authorities have notified the Northern Ireland Office of two antisocial behaviour orders and one antisocial behaviour order on conviction in Larne district council area, one interim antisocial behaviour order in Belfast city council area, two interim anti-social behaviour orders in Coleraine borough council area one antisocial behaviour order on conviction in Dungannon district council area, and one interim antisocial behaviour order in Magherafelt district council area.

Benefit Payments

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether his plans to improve cross-border co-operation and harmonisation of services will include consid..ration of household benefits available to retired workers in the Republic of Ireland. [62696]

Mr. Hanson: The benefit system in Northern Ireland operates in accordance with a long-standing principle of parity with Great Britain. There are no plans to change this policy.

Birth Statistics

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the birth rate was for 16-year olds and under in each of the last five years in Northern Ireland. [63489]

Angela E. Smith: The following table gives Northern Ireland birth rates in each year between 2001 and 2005 where the mother was a Northern Ireland resident aged 16 years old or under at time of birth.

Registration year	*Number of births to mothers aged 16 and under*	*Female population aged 13–16*	*Birth rate*[1,2]
2001	171	52,800	3.2
2002	150	52,400	2.9
2003	155	52,000	3.0
2004	172	51,600	3.3
2005[3]	145	—	2.8

[1] Birth is defined to be either still or live birth. Pregnancies which resulted in the birth of twins, triplets or other multiple births are counted twice, three times, etc.

[2] Rate per 1,000 females aged 13 to 16 years. Rate for 2005 calculated using 2004 mid-year estimates of population.

[3] Provisional data.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the birth rate was for *(a)* 19, *(b)* 18, *(c)* 17, *(d)* 16, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 14 and *(g)* 13-year-olds in each of the four health boards in Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 years. [63490]

Angela E. Smith: The following table gives birth rates by Health Board and age of mother in each year between 1996 and 2005 where the mother was a Northern Ireland resident.

Birth rates[1,2] per 1,000 females by Health Board and age of mother, 1996–2005

Registration year / Mother's age[3]	*Eastern H&SSB*	*Northern H&SSB*	*Southern H&SSB*	*Western H&SSB*	*Northern Ireland*
1996					
Under 15	/	1	0	0	1
15	3	4	2	3	3
16	16	11	10	8	12
17	28	28	19	26	26
18	43	27	37	38	37
19	54	49	57	72	56
19 and under	20	17	15	19	18
1997					
Under 15	0	0	0	0	0
15	4	2	1	3	3
16	16	11	7	10	12
17	28	33	18	25	27
18	51	39	36	39	43
19	51	43	56	72	53
19 and under	21	18	14	19	19
1998					
Under 15	0	0	0	0	0
15	3	5	2	4	4
16	12	13	7	13	11
17	28	23	23	28	26
18	54	42	50	50	50
19	55	49	57	57	54
19 and under	22	18	17	20	20
1999					
Under 15	0	0	0	0	0
15	6	3	3	4	4
16	14	10	7	13	12
17	27	29	21	29	27
18	48	46	41	53	47
19	57	51	59	76	59
19 and under	22	19	16	22	20
2000					
Under 15	0	1	0	1	0
15	4	3	3	4	4
16	19	9	7	11	13
17	29	24	18	21	24
18	42	30	41	46	40
19	51	50	53	61	52
19 and under	21	16	15	18	18
2001					
Under 15	0	0	0	0	0
15	5	2	1	2	3
16	12	8	10	7	10
17	27	21	20	13	21
18	45	34	35	40	39
19	44	54	49	62	50
19 and under	19	16	15	16	17
2002					
Under 15	0	0	0	0	0
15	3	3	1	2	2
16	11	7	6	8	9
17	27	19	16	26	23
18	42	38	32	40	39
19	49	47	39	51	47
19 and under	19	16	13	18	17

Birth rates[1,2] per 1,000 females by Health Board and age of mother, 1996–2005

Registration year / Mother's age[3]	*Eastern H&SSB*	*Northern H&SSB*	*Southern H&SSB*	*Western H&SSB*	*Northern Ireland*
2003					
Under 15	0	0	0	0	0
15	2	3	3	2	2
16	13	7	8	7	9
17	25	14	18	21	20
18	47	32	25	31	36
19	45	49	57	52	48
19 and under	20	14	14	15	16
2004					
Under 15	0	0	0	0	0
15	4	2	2	1	3
16	11	12	8	8	10
17	26	20	14	20	21
18	44	31	30	31	36
19	45	50	52	49	48
19 and under	19	16	13	15	17
2005P					
Under 15	0	0	0	0	0
15	4	2	0	2	2
16	11	9	5	7	8
17	28	17	20	18	22
18	41	27	26	24	31
19	44	44	48	50	46
19 and under	19	14	13	14	16

[1] Birth is defined to be either still or live birth. Pregnancies which resulted in the birth of twins, triplets or other multiple births are counted twice, three times, etc.
[2] Rate per 1,000 females aged 13–14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 13–19 respectively. Rate for 2005 calculated using 2004 mid-year estimates of population.
[3] Under 15 is defined to be females aged 13 or 14-year-olds.
[P] Provisional data.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many live births there were in Northern Ireland in 2005; and what the estimated figure is for 2015. [62821]

Angela E. Smith: The following table gives the provisional number of births registered in 2005 and the projected number of births for 2015 in Northern Ireland.

Registered/projected number of births

	Number
2005[1]	22,328
2015[2]	21,700

[1] Provisional.
[2] Projected number based on current demographic trends.

Blind People

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what field worker provision is available for blind people in *(a)* Northern Ireland and *(b)* in the Newtownards, North Down and Ards peninsula area. [62498]

Mr. Woodward: Every trust makes provision for sensory impairment but field workers in the area of sensory support can provide services to individuals with either a visual or hearing impairment or both. As field workers can encompass a number of grades within the Health and Personal Social Services and are also provided by the voluntary and community sector, it is impossible to provide the information as requested.

Bullying

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many pupils in Northern Ireland had to move school as a result of bullying in each of the last three years. [63492]

Angela E. Smith: The Department of Education does not collect information about the number of pupils who move schools as a result of bullying. Parents may move their children from one school to another, provided that there is a place available in the receiving school. Parents move their children from one school to another for a variety of reasons, which may include alleged bullying. However, there is no requirement for parents to advise any statutory agency of the reasons for the move.

The Department recognises that bullying in whatever form and for whatever reason, has no place in schools. The Department has issued comprehensive guidance to all schools about how to tackle bullying. Further, the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 2003, which came into operation on 1 April 2003, places a duty on all grant-aided schools to have an anti-bullying policy and to draw up measures to prevent all forms of bullying among pupils.

Buses

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on how many occasions bus routes were *(a)* stopped and *(b)* altered in Northern Ireland as a result of riotous behaviour in each of the last three years. [63267]

Mr. Woodward: Translink recorded the following incidents of bus routes being altered in the last three years due to riotous behaviour. The estimates relate to service disruptions due to civil unrest, rioting, stone throwing and angry crowds.

	Number
2003	132
2004	54
2005	122

Translink does not record separately occasions where bus routes were stopped. This is because very few complete routes are stopped in any year. Even under riotous conditions a bus service would run on at least part of the route.

Cancer Patients (Benefits)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what actions have been taken to assist cancer patients in the Province to access benefits. [62387]

Mr. Hanson: For those suffering from cancer, the Social Security Agency's Disability and Carer's Service contact centre assists with telephone applications for disability living allowance (DLA), attendance allowance (AA) and carer's allowance (CA). They can also avail of the special rules scheme within DLA and AA to fast track claims for terminally ill customers. Getting either benefit under special rules means the customer gets the highest rate for help with personal care.

In conjunction with Macmillan Cancer Relief, the agency has worked to identify and address the barriers facing cancer patients when accessing benefits. As a result of this there has been:

enhanced cancer awareness training for agency staff;

an information booklet "Help with the Cost of Cancer" was launched in March 2005; and

an outreach service of specialist benefit advisers for those with cancer has been piloted. The pilot is currently under review.

Child Sex Abuse

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will establish an inquiry into sexual abuse of children by members of the clergy in Northern Ireland. [63962]

Mr. Woodward: There are no current plans to establish an inquiry into sexual abuse by members of the clergy in Northern Ireland.

The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) continues to engage with officials from the Republic of Ireland to identify ways in which we can work together to strengthen child protection within both jurisdictions, including taking account of the content of the Ferns report.

Officials from DHSSPS and the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) have also met representatives of the Roman Catholic on a number of occasions to discuss matters relevant to the Ferns report.

The department has recently published new proposals to enhance child protection and these were detailed in the Written Ministerial Statement of 20 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 8WS.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what discussions he has had with the government of the Republic of Ireland on sexual abuse of children by members of the clergy. [63963]

Mr. Woodward: Child protection was discussed at the British Irish Inter Governmental Conference on 1 February 2006.

The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety has written to his counterpart in the Republic of Ireland on the Ferns Report. Officials have also held discussions and exchanged information with Republic of Ireland colleagues on a range of issues arising from the Ferns Report, aimed at identifying ways in which we can strengthen co-operation in order to protect children in both jurisdictions. This includes two face-to-face meetings held on 8 November 2005 and 16 March 2006.

Officials from the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety are working jointly with Republic of Ireland colleagues to organise a child protection event later this year.

It is anticipated that further meetings will take place with colleagues from the Republic of Ireland.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what representations he has received from members of the public about sexual abuse of children by members of the clergy in Northern Ireland. [63964]

Mr. Woodward: To date, the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety has received, from members of the general public, one letter asking if there was going to be an independent public inquiry into allegations of clerical child sexual abuse and two general telephone calls seeking advice on how to report allegations of abuse by clergy.

In terms of actual allegations of abuse, PSNI and Social Services are the statutory organisations with powers to investigate such allegations of abuse.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* Roman Catholic clergy and *(b)* Roman Catholic school officials have been interviewed (i) as potential witnesses and (ii) as suspects by the Police Service of Northern Ireland in connection with child sexual abuse by the clergy. [63468]

Mr. Woodward: The Police Service of Northern Ireland do not record the religious background of persons interviewed. The professional status of persons interviewed is not held on a central record and to obtain these details would require a manual trawl of records at disproportionate cost.

Children's Fund

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what projects originally funded by the Executive Programme Funds Children's Fund are operating; what provision will be made to allocate resources to those projects from the £14.6 million voluntary children's funding package announced on 6 March; how those resources will be allocated; and what the timescale is for allocation. [63120]

Mr. Woodward: Ninety-seven of the one hundred projects originally supported by the Children's Fund continue to receive grant assistance from the Fund. Three projects experienced implementation difficulties at an early stage and terminated their activities. Moneys have been set aside from the additional £14.6 million announced by the Secretary of State to help existing voluntary and community sector groups in their work with disadvantaged children and young people, to continue support to these projects until March 2008, as long as the assistance is still required by them, and subject to satisfactory progress being made, and monitoring and accountability requirements being satisfied.

Civil Service

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many vacancies there are in the Northern Ireland Civil Service in each Government Department at *(a)* AO, *(b)* EOII, *(c)* EOI and *(d)* SO grades. [61390]

Angela E. Smith: Details of vacancies in the Northern Ireland Civil Service in each Government Department at *(a)* AO, *(b)* EOII, *(c)* EOI and *(d)* SO grades at 23 March 2006 are shown in the following table. These figures relate to vacancies for which Departments have current financial provision and are within the Departmental headcount. The table also shows identified surpluses for each grade.

Vacancies/surpluses in the Northern Ireland civil service in each Government Department at 23 March 2006

Department	*SO vacancies*	*SO surpluses*	*EOI vacancies*	*EOI surpluses*	*EOII vacancies*	*EOII surpluses*	*AO vacancies*	*AO surpluses*
DARD	10	0	5	0	11 (inc 1P/T)	0	10	0
DETI	2	0	1	3	1	4	3	3
DE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DRD	12	1	9	0	15	0	22	15
DFP	8	0	2	1P/T	3	0	5	1P/T
DHSSPS	4	0	0	0	3	1P/T	2	1F/T 1P/T
NIO[1]	11 (B2)	0	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	18 (DI)	0
DSD/CSA/SS A	29	12	68	14.5	71	81	26	133
DEL	7	4	3	3	5	0	4.5	1P/T 0.6
DOE	14	0	6	0	14.5	0	32	0
DCAL	0	0	0	0	3	0	2	0
OFMDFM	5	0	1	0	1	0	1	0

[1] In NIO, SO is Grade B2, EOI and EOII are Grade C and AO is Grade DI.
[2] Grade C = 16 vacancies 1 surplus.

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many casual workers have been employed by the Northern Ireland Civil Service in each of the last four years. [63123]

Angela E. Smith: The number of NICS casual workers employed in the 11 Northern Ireland Departments and the NIO, including Agencies, at 1 January for each of the past 4 years is as follows:

	Number
2003	897
2004	1,076
2005	641
2006	530

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many casual workers in the Northern Ireland Civil Service who had been employed for under two years had their employment terminated in each of the last four years. [63124]

Angela E. Smith: The number of NICS casual workers in the 11 Northern Ireland Departments and the NIO, including Agencies, who had been employed for under two years and had their employment terminated in each of the last four years is as follows:

	Number
2002	724
2003	880
2004	954
2005	673

For the purpose of this answer, "terminated" is deemed to refer to the ending of the period of casual employment, regardless of the reason (e.g. end of contract/seasonal work, voluntary resignation, casual services no longer required).

Figures do not include those casual staff whose employment status was changed to permanent as a result of success in open competition for entry to the NICS.

Civil Service (Travel Expenses)

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to his Answer of 16 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 2490W, on Civil Service travel expenses, what the travel policy is for members of staff in the *(a)* Northern Ireland Civil Service and *(b)* Northern Ireland Office. [62512]

Angela E. Smith: The current policy on official travel by Northern Ireland Civil Servants is set out in Chapter 3 of the Travel and Subsistence Part of the NICS Staff Handbook. This policy is currently under review. The NICS policy applies to Northern Ireland Civil Servants employed in the Northern Ireland Office. Home Civil Servants employed in the Northern Ireland Office are subject to the policy in the Home Civil Service Handbook.

An electronic copy of the NICS, Travel and Subsistence Part of the Handbook can be found at http://www.nics.gov.uk/pay/handbook/content/travel/index.html.

A printed copy of the Travel and Subsistence Part of the NICS Staff Handbook is also available from the Library of the House. A copy of the NIO HCS Staff Handbook is available on request.

Classroom Assistants

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many classroom assistants were employed to help children with special educational needs in each education and library board in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [63383]

Angela E. Smith: This information is not available from the education and library boards within the time scale. I will place the information in the Library as soon as possible.

Community Sentences (Reoffending)

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many and what percentage of *(a)* adult males and *(b)* adult females in Northern Ireland have reoffended while serving a community sentence in each of the last five years. [62522]

Mr. Hanson: The information is not available in the form requested.

The following table provides statistics for calendar year 2001 for the number and percentage of reconvictions within two years for offenders given a community-based disposal. Reconviction data is not yet available in respect of those convicted after 2001. Further explanation is provided in the footnotes.

Community disposal two-year reconviction rate, 2001

	Number	*Reconvicted*	*Percentage*
Male			
Probation Order	491	190	38.7
Community Service Order	420	150	35.7
Combination Order	23	10	43.5
Total	934	350	37.5
Female			
Probation Order	144	29	20.1
Community Service Order	63	8	12.7
Combination Order	0	—	—
Total	207	37	17.9
All			
Probation Order	635	219	34.5
Community Service Order	483	158	32.7
Combination Order	23	10	43.5
Total	1,141	387	33.9

Notes:

1. Figures are sourced to the Northern Ireland Office and are based on a principal offence/main disposal rule. Thus only where a community-based disposal is the main disposal related to the principal offence tried at a court sitting, will that individual be counted in the table. The base dataset also only reflects the first conviction for an individual in that year, thus the total number of community-based disposals handed out at court in that year may not be represented.
2. A valid two-year reconviction rate is defined as a conviction, for any offence, within two years from the date of the original (or baseline) disposal in 2001 (i.e. reconvictions between 2001 and 2003). Data beyond 2003 is currently not available.
3. An adult is defined as being 17 years or older.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of *(a)* men and *(b)* women who had been serving community sentences in the last year for which figures are available had breached those sentences and had (i) been permitted to continue to serve those sentences and (ii) had those sentences revoked; and, of those whose sentence was revoked, what percentage were re-sentenced to (A) a non-custodial sentence and (B) a custodial sentence. [62530]

Mr. Hanson: The Probation Board for Northern Ireland has advised that information is available centrally from June 2005 onwards regarding the outcome of breaches of community sentences. In the six-month period June to December 2005, 98 breaches initiated by PBNI were dealt with by the courts. Of these, 92 (94 per cent.) were regarding male offenders, the remaining 6 (8 per cent.) were female offenders. On four occasions males were permitted to continue to serve their sentence. In 51 of the 92 occasions (55 per cent.) concerning male offenders resulted in the order being revoked, and 50 per cent. of breaches concerning females resulted in the order being revoked. No information is held centrally concerning further sentencing.

Commuter Car Journeys

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many commuter car journeys are estimated to be undertaken in and out of Belfast on a daily basis; and what percentage is estimated to be driver-only occupancy. [62842]

Mr. Woodward: The Chief Executive of Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has been asked to write to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Dr. Malcolm McKibbin, dated 6 April 2006:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question regarding how many commuter car journeys are estimated in and out of Belfast on a daily basis and what percentage is estimated to be driver-only occupancy.

I have been asked to reply as the issues raised fall within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service.

I should explain that while Roads Service holds information on traffic flows at a number of census points strategically located throughout the road network, it does not generally hold estimates of the total number of vehicles coming into and out of Belfast. However, work carried out in 1999 as part of the preparation of the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan estimated the daily number of cars travelling into and out of Belfast across an outer cordon, defined by the A55 outer ring road at 297,000 cars. Similarly, the number of cars travelling into and out of Belfast's central core on a daily basis, defined as the area bounded by Westlink in the West of the City and the River Lagan in the South and East, was estimated at 149,000.

A survey carried out in November 2005 to establish the mode of transport used by people travelling into Belfast's inner cordon during the morning peak hour showed that 68 per cent. of all cars were driver-only occupancy.

I hope this information is helpful.

Compensation Claims

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much was claimed in compensation for injuries caused to pedestrians in Northern Ireland from the Department of Regional Development in each year between 1995 and 2005. [62822]

Mr. Woodward: It is not known how much was claimed in compensation for injuries caused to pedestrians in Northern Ireland because that information is not provided by claimants. Also, the IT records of the Department for Regional Development do not distinguish pedestrians from other claimants, eg car passengers. It is believed however, that the vast majority of claimants claiming against the Department for personal injury are pedestrians. It is only possible to answer the question in terms of total compensation paid and, therefore, the following table sets out the total compensation paid by the Department for Regional Development in respect of public liability personal injury claims by members of the public in each financial year since 1995–96.

	£
2004–05	1,760,490
2003–04	2,142,323
2002–03	2,504,607
2001–02	2,326,203
2000–01	1,822,419
1999–2000	2,674,217
1989–99	1.856,823
1997–98	2,147,192
1996–97	1,436,091
1995–96	1,451,575

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much was claimed in compensation by patients due to maladministration by the NHS in Northern Ireland in each year between 1995 and 2005. [62823]

Mr. Woodward: The information is not available in the form requested and could be provided only at a disproportionate cost.

Contracts (Voluntary Sector)

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many contracts are let by his Department to voluntary sector organisations; how many of those are let on an annual basis; and how many of those had received finalised contracts for 2006–07 by 31 March. [63204]

Mr. Hain: The information is as follows.

	Number
Number of contracts let to voluntary sector organisations	5
of which:	
How many were let on an annual basis	—
How many had received finalised contracts for 2006–07 by 31 March	5

Coolkeeragh Power Station

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the total running hours were against anticipated hours for Coolkeeragh Power Station between 1 January 2006 and 24 March 2006. [63585]

Angela E. Smith: Coolkeeragh Power Station operated for 1,359 hours against an anticipated 1,832 hours during the period 1 January 2006 to 24 March 2006.

Criminal Records

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of adult *(a)* males and *(b)* females resident in Northern Ireland has a criminal record. [62528]

Mr. Hanson: The requested information is not available. Current databases, for example, contain information on persons not normally resident in Northern Ireland or who have subsequently died or left Northern Ireland. It would incur disproportionate cost to obtain the information requested.

Defibrillation

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the merits of developing a Province-wide public access defibrillation scheme. [62376]

Mr. Woodward: The effectiveness of public access to defibrillators is currently being assessed through a research project commissioned by the Research and Development Office, on behalf of the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS), entitled "A study of the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of public access to defibrillation in urban and rural populations in Northern Ireland". This three-year project, which began on 1 January 2004 is due to be completed and evaluated by 31 March 2007. At that point, DHSSPS will be in a better position to make decisions about the merits of developing a province-wide public access defibrillation scheme.

Dental Patients (Compensation Claims)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much was claimed in compensation by patients from the NHS in Northern Ireland where a dentist was involved, in each year between 1995 and 2005. [63265]

Mr. Woodward: The information is not available in the form requested and could be provided only at a disproportionate cost.

Departmental Job Vacancies

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what criteria are used to determine which departmental job vacancies in Northern Ireland are *(a)* internally advertised in trawl notices, *(b)* advertised publicly and *(c)* appointed via the Central Transfer List. [63450]

Angela E. Smith: The decision may be made to trawl a specific vacancy where the post in question requires specialist skills or aptitudes, which are unlikely to be

confined to staff in any one discipline (i.e. General Service, Scientific, IT etc.) within the Northern Ireland Civil Service. It is normal practice to fill job vacancies in the basic recruitment grades by open competition, for example, Administrative Assistant, Administrative Officer, Assistant Scientific Officer, Professional & Technology Officer. Departments reserve the right to fill vacancies above the basic recruitment grades by open competition where the skills/qualifications required are not available in the Northern Ireland Civil Service.

A Staff Officer Graduate recruitment programme is held annually to recruit and develop good graduates to improve the skills mix within our middle management cadre and to recruit and develop our share of graduates in the marketplace who have the potential to rise to senior management positions within the Service. To comply with recommendations made under the Criminal Justice Review that a more representative workforce could be achieved through increasing the candidate pool, all administrative posts at Grade A (Grade 7) and above, and all legal posts in the Public Prosecution Service are filled through open recruitment.

Vacancies within the Senior Civil Service are normally filled by open competition. When a Department has a vacancy, the Personnel Division will in the first instance consider the claim of officers on the Central Transfer List irrespective of the Department in which they are working. Priority is given to staff with Welfare Officer ratings 1 and 2. The final decision on whether to offer a particular post to an applicant on the Central Transfer List rests with the Personnel Officer of the Department in which the vacancy has occurred.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many and what proportion of *(a)* staff and *(b)* new staff employed in (i) his Department and (ii) each of the agencies for which he has responsibility, were registered as disabled in each of the last three years for which data are available. [61382]

Mr. Woodward: With the introduction of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, the requirement to register as disabled was abolished, and information on disability is now provided by staff on a voluntary basis. The following table provides details of the numbers and percentages of staff in the Northern Ireland Office and its agencies declaring a disability from 2003 to 2005. Information on new staff is not available.

	2003		2004		2005	
	Number	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*
NIO Core	45	3.9	46	3.8	47	3.7
NI Prison Service	17	4.4	17	4.6	15	3.8
Compensation Agency	6	4.2	6	4.7	6	5.5
Youth Justice Agency	1	9.1	2	3.6	3	4.4
Forensic Science NI	5	3.5	6	3.9	7	4.0
Total	74	4.0	77	4.0	78	3.8

Notes:
1. Figures are based on work force figures for 1 September of each year.
2. Percentages shown are calculated as a percentage of total work force at that time.

Eating Disorders

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people in Northern Ireland are estimated to be suffering from an eating disorder; and what assistance is available to them. [63491]

Mr. Woodward: In Northern Ireland, it is estimated that approximately 1,700 people suffer from anorexia nervosa and 17,000 people suffer from bulimia nervosa. Health and Social Services Trusts provide a range of services largely through generic mental health, primary care and acute services, including community-based specialist eating disorder teams within each Board area.

Elderly Population

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people over the age of 85 years in Northern Ireland *(a)* there were at the end of 2005 and *(b)* there are expected to be at the end of 2015. [62820]

Angela E. Smith: The latest estimate of the Northern Ireland resident population relates to mid-year 2004; for people aged 85 years and over the estimate was 24,000 people.

At mid-year 2015, the number of people resident in Northern Ireland aged 85 years and over is projected to be 36,300.

Employment

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of likely trends in employment in Northern Ireland in each of the next three years. [63482]

Angela E. Smith: The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment does not provide forecasts of labour market trends. However, research commissioned by the department predicts a continuation of the broad trends experienced over the last five years, which have been characterised by growth in private services and a decline in manufacturing.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people were employed in Northern Ireland's manufacturing industry in each of the last five years *(a)* in total and *(b)* in each constituency. [63483]

Angela E. Smith: The most recent estimates of the number of employee jobs at Northern Ireland level are available from the Quarterly Employment Survey. The

number of employee jobs in the manufacturing industry in Northern Ireland at December for each of the last five years is shown in table 1.

Estimates of the number of employee jobs below Northern Ireland level are only available from the Census of Employment on a biennial basis and the most up to date figures relate to September 2003. Estimates of the number of employee jobs in manufacturing at September 2001 and September 2003 for each parliamentary constituency area within Northern Ireland can be found in table 2.

Table 1: number of employee jobs in manufacturing in Northern Ireland 2001–05 (December of each year)

	Manufacturing jobs
2001	99,120
2002	95,540
2003	90,760
2004	88,090
2005	86,640

Source:
Quarterly Employment Survey, DETI

Table 2: number of employee jobs in manufacturing at September 2001 and September 2003 for each parliamentary constituency area

Parliamentary constituency area	*September 2001*	*September 2003*
Belfast East	9,537	7,600
Belfast North	4,377	3,712
Belfast South	2,819	2,557
Belfast West	2,801	2,466
East Antrim	4,883	3,646
East Londonderry	5,276	4,905
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	7,103	7,083
Foyle	6,640	5,765
Lagan Valley	7,322	6,664
Mid-Ulster	6,418	6,876
Newry and Armagh	3,958	4,041
North Antrim	7,201	7,205
North Down	2,399	1,995
South Antrim	6,505	6,218
South Down	3,268	3,408
Strangford	4,624	4,200
Upper Bann	10,494	9,490
West Tyrone	4,561	4,053
Northern Ireland	100,186	91,884

Source:
Census of Employment, DETI

Employment Statistics

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* males over 65 and *(b)* females over 60 years of age were in (i) full-time and *(b)* part-time employment in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [63486]

Angela E. Smith: The relevant estimates from the Northern Ireland Labour Force Survey are contained in the following table.

Full-time and part-time employment in NI by age and sex[1]

	Males aged 65 and over		*Females aged 60 and over*	
	Full-time	*Part-time*	*Full-time*	*Part-time*
2001	3,000	4,000	4,000	8,000
2002	7,000	6,000	3,000	10,000
2003	5,000	2,000	4,000	9,000
2004	4,000	4,000	4,000	8,000
2005	6,000	5,000	3,000	10,000

[1] Estimates are based on small sample sizes and are therefore subject to a higher than usual degree of sampling variability. They should therefore be treated with caution.

Source:
Labour Force Survey, Autumn (September—November) quarters.

Ethnic Minorities

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many members of the ethnic minority community in Northern Ireland are employed within *(a)* the Police Service for Northern Ireland (PSNI) and *(b)* the PSNI staff support services, broken down by (i) ethnic minority and (ii) rank. [61495]

Mr. Woodward: The following tables represent the current monitoring information on race, as at 23 March 2006, that has been gathered through the usual voluntary monitoring.

PSNI officers

	Black Other	*Chinese*	*Indian*	*Mixed ethnic*	*Pakistan*	*Other*	*Total*
Student Officer	—	—	—	1	—	—	1
Constable	1	5	1	3	1	7	18
Sergeant	—	—	—	—	—	2	2
Total	1	5	1	4	1	9	21

PSNI police staff—direct recruit

	Irish Traveller	*Mixed ethnic*	*Other*	*Total*
Administrative Assistant	—	1	1	2
Financial Investigator	—	1	—	1
Imaging Officer	—	1	—	1
SGB2 Day Cleaner	1	—	—	1
Total	1	3	1	5

I am advised there are also two civilian staff from an ethnic background, the details of which are held by the Civil Service who maintain monitoring information on these individuals.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps are being taken to promote recruitment to *(a)* the Police Service of Northern Ireland, *(b)* the Public Prosecution Service and *(c)* the judiciary from ethnic minorities in Northern Ireland. [61496]

Mr. Woodward: I am advised by the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), Public Prosecution Service (PPS) and Judicial Appointments Commission, who are responsible for promoting recruitment from ethnic minorities in Northern Ireland within these areas respectively, that they take the following steps:

Police Service of Northern Ireland

The PSNI have a number of outreach measures for recruiting people from ethnic minority backgrounds. They include:

an extensive advertising medium and producing specific articles in specialist magazines aimed at minority ethnic readers;

the provision of recruitment posters and booklets to over 50 Community Groups;

attending numerous Career Fairs, educational facilities and community events;

the use of focus group work to establish how best to develop and encourage applications from ethnic minority communities; and

the constant reviewing of recruitment processes to ensure that, whilst meeting operational needs, they do not adversely affect those applying for a job with the PSNI.

Public Prosecution Service

Open recruitment exercises for legal and some administrative grades within the PPS are managed and delivered by the Northern Ireland Civil Service Recruitment Service (RS) who actively seek, through the use of relevant NI equality legislation, to encourage applications from all under-represented groups and minorities in order to create a truly reflective and balanced workforce.

The PPS has sought to assist RS throughout this process by advertising such vacancies in local papers of the towns in which new PPS regional offices will be opened. Adverts have also been placed in the three regional daily newspapers and a major national daily. As RS are the NICS recruitment providers with approved equality systems in place, and are acting as the PPS's agent, all other positive advertisement and equality issues are taken forward by them.

Administrative staff are not always recruited directly by the PPS but are assigned directly via the Northern Ireland Office from other Northern Ireland Departments. As these staff were initially recruited through RS, they were subject to the same equality of opportunity processes as those staff currently being recruited.

Judiciary

The Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission has responsibility for recommending candidates for appointment as judges up to the level of High Court Judge to the Lord Chancellor. The Commission is required to engage in a programme of action which is designed to secure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that appointments to listed judicial offices are such that those holding such offices are reflective of the community in Northern Ireland. The Commission is also required to secure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that a range of persons reflective of the community in Northern Ireland is available for consideration to be appointed as a judge. Appointment is on the basis of merit.

Farm Incomes

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average annual income of farmers was in the Province in each of the last 15 years. [62466]

Angela E. Smith: Net farm income is a standard measure of farm business income in the UK. It represents the return to the farmer and spouse for their manual and managerial labour as well as the return on the tenant type assets of the farm, such as livestock, crops and machinery. The average annual net farm income in Northern Ireland for all types of farms and sizes above 0.5 standard labour requirements, for the most recent 15 years available, is presented in the table.

Average net farm income, all farm types, Northern Ireland 1990–91 to 2004–05

	Net farm income (£)
1990–91	5,765
1991–92	7,378
1992–93	10,607
1993–94	10,458
1994–95	12,351
1995–96	14,105
1996–97	9,265
1997–98	4,915
1998–99	2,154
1999–2000	1,141
2000–01	5,800
2001–02	8,278
2002–03	4,499
2003–04	8,652
2004–05	9,413

General Practitioner Clinics

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland *(a)* how many attendees at general practitioner clinics there were in Northern Ireland in 2004–05; and *(b)* what estimate he has made of that number which could be treated by a suitably qualified nurse or pharmacist. [63266]

Mr. Woodward: The information is as follows.

(a) Information is not available in the format requested. It is possible, however, to estimate from surveys, the total number of persons who had a consultation with a GP at either the GP surgery, in their own home or by telephone. The total number of such consultations and the number per head of NI population are shown in the following table for 2004–05.

2004–05 financial year	Number
Estimated total number of GP consultations (million)	7.03
Estimated number of GP consultations per person	4.11

Source:
Northern Ireland Continuous Household Survey 2004–05 and 2004 Civilian Mid-year Estimate

(b) Information on the number of attendees at general practitioner clinics who could be treated by a suitably qualified nurse or pharmacist is not available.

Grammar Schools

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make it his policy to give to parents in Northern Ireland the right to determine by ballot whether selection by academic ability should continue in Northern Ireland's grammar schools. [62066]

Angela E. Smith: Following a lengthy review the Government have decided to end academic selection in Northern Ireland. Under the new arrangements parents will choose a school which best meets the educational needs of their child from a range of schools including those with an academic curricular focus to those with a more vocational focus and specialist schools.

Health Services

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the Answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 327W, on health services, how much each regional fertility clinic spent on each gonadotropin product in each year. [62389]

Mr. Woodward: Health and Social Services Boards in Northern Ireland commission publicly funded fertility treatment for their patients from the Regional Fertility Centre (RFC) in Belfast. The RFC also provides privately funded fertility treatment.

The RFC has advised that the total cost of gonadotropins issued over the last three years was as follows:

Product	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Puregon	245,056	502,013	452,662
Gonal-F	0	3,148	2,231
Menogon	23,542	1,585	1,298
Menopur	420	14,140	18,015
Total	269,018	520,886	474,206

Health Spending

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made in developing better audit trails for health spending in the Province. [62469]

Mr. Woodward: My Department has been developing, over the past few years, a Strategic Resources Framework which demonstrates how funding allocated to the health and social services boards is to be spent in terms of major programmes, key areas of service provision and geographical areas within boards. The report on the 2005–06 planned spend was the first to be published and I intend to continue and develop this approach.

Heroin Addicts

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many heroin addicts in Northern Ireland have been provided with methadone in each of the last five years; and what the success rate of methadone treatment is in Northern Ireland. [63346]

Mr. Woodward: The information is not available as requested.

Substitute prescribing is the controlled prescribing of opiate medication, such as methadone, to heroin users as part of an overall care plan.

In April 2004, DHSSPS introduced the Substitute Prescribing monitoring system to record information on persons receiving substitute prescribing treatment for opiate dependence.

Using the information held in the Substitute Prescribing monitoring system as of 29 March 2006, we are able to provide the following information on persons who reported that heroin was a problem drug:

	Number being provided with methadone
2004–05	73
2005–06[1] (to date)	[2]108

[1] These data are subject to change as the end of year validation is yet to be completed.
[2] The 108 persons on methadone in 2005–06 includes the 73 persons on methadone in 2004–05.

Substitute prescribing has been shown to reduce illicit opiate use and the associated harm to the individual, their family, carers and the community. As part of the monitoring system information is being collected on continuing illicit drug use, injecting behaviour and accommodation and employment issues. It is expected a report containing this information gathered over the past two years will be published in the autumn.

Hotel Beds

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many hotel beds were available in Northern Ireland in each of the last three years. [63488]

Angela E. Smith: Figures for the number of available hotel beds in Northern Ireland in each of the last three years, are detailed in the following table.

Year end	Hotel rooms	Number of: Hotel bed spaces[1]
2003	5,837	13,247
2004	5,944	13,523
2005	5,957	13,525

[1] NITB collates statistics with regard to bed spaces as opposed to beds i.e. one double bed equates to two available bed spaces.

House Prices

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average house price was in each district council area in the Province in each of the last five years. [62390]

Angela E. Smith: The Valuation and Lands Agency (VLA) maintains a database of house sales which covers the period from mid-2002 to present. Prior to mid-2002 this data was not recorded in a way that permits statistical analysis, except at disproportionate cost.

The average prices in each district council area, for each year in which data is available are shown in the following table. The hon. Member should note that the averages shown for 2002 are representative of sales in the second half of that year only.

Mean average sale price by district council

Council	*Average price (£) 2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Antrim	102,812	108,897	107,596	109,116
Ards	116,413	118,041	118,864	119,423
Armagh	86,956	89,255	100,031	103,789
Ballymena	90,536	97,310	107,160	119,118
Ballymoney	71,314	81,221	97,323	113,543
Banbridge	95,431	106,169	105,159	125,696
Belfast	114,436	119,079	118,498	123,453
Carrickfergus	89,614	100,263	104,222	114,813
Castlereagh	121,876	119,650	129,681	149,350
Coleraine	93,171	105,435	121,973	132,238
Cookstown	87,459	89,452	103,740	129,362
Craigavon	77,334	87,102	88,359	98,412
Derry	81,744	87,372	97,424	111,169
Down	108,953	115,414	121,278	124,552
Dungannon and South Tyrone	77,801	85,373	97,135	114,893
Fermanagh	81,954	88,374	99,283	117,471
Larne	82,607	87,260	91,584	93,192
Limavady	76,397	81,966	91,941	104,637
Lisburn	115,469	122,202	125,330	133,155
Magherafelt	84,620	93,742	109,789	110,526
Moyle	90,862	94,750	114,577	115,272
Newry and Mourne	98,197	101,164	108,676	125,718
Newtownabbey	106,034	105,769	104,097	112,005
North Down	137,488	135,517	143,927	209,142
Omagh	81,875	86,358	97,471	108,670
Strabane	65,936	73,098	80,777	86,459

Note:
2002 average is for sales in the 2nd half of the year only

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average house price was in each Westminster constituency in the Province in each of the last five years. [62473]

Angela E. Smith: The Valuation and Lands Agency (VLA) maintains a database of house sales, which covers the period from mid-2002 to present. Prior to mid-2002 these data were not recorded in a way that permits statistical analysis, except at disproportionate cost.

The average prices in each Westminster constituency, for each year in which data are available are shown in the following table. The hon. Member should note that the averages shown for 2002 are representative of sales in the second half of that year only.

Average sales price of houses by Westminster constituency

Westminster constituency	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Belfast East	104,25C	111,934	116,343	128,408
Belfast North	79,848	88,420	86,367	94,185
Belfast South	146,399	142,095	147,350	153,419
Belfast West	86,646	88,967	94,243	98,984
East Antrim	95,128	102,014	103,389	109,685
East Londonderry	89,834	98,806	113,813	122,681
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	80,757	87,495	99,470	118,056
Foyle	81,744	87,372	97,424	111,169
Lagan Valley	115,754	122,702	125,952	135,499
Mid Ulster	83,240	90,265	104,718	119,697
Newry and Armagh	88,143	92,764	100,629	111,474
North Antrim	84,254	91,833	105,338	116,795
North Down	133,744	134,936	141,696	176,409
South Antrim	101,626	105,058	106,549	111,686
South Down	106,867	108,301	117,413	129,662
Strangford	118,656	119,409	122,323	119,535
Upper Bann	79,890	89,954	90,613	99,660
West Tyrone	74,705	79,815	90,107	97,188

Note:
2002 average is for sales in the second half of the year only

Independent Monitoring Commission

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 14 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 2152W, on the Independent Monitoring Commission (IMC), whether he has discussed with the IMC the definition it uses of criminality. [63581]

Mr. Woodward: At meetings with the Commissioners, the Secretary of State has discussed a range of matters connected with the remit of the Independent Monitoring Commission (IMC), as defined in the Agreement that established the IMC.

Housing

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 21 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 208W, on housing, how many households this represents in each case; and what percentage of the total number of Housing Executive households this represents in each district. [63473]

Mr. Hanson: The information is not available for the period requested. The following table details the numbers of Housing Executive debtors, by district office area for the seven year period 1999–2005. This includes households who are no longer Housing Executive tenants.

Debtors by NIHE district office area[1]

	March 1999		*March 2000*		*March 2001*		*March 2002*	
	Total debtors	*Percentage*	*Total debtors*	*Percentage*	*Total debtors*	*Percentage*	*Total debtors*	*Percentage*
Belfast 1	526	0.4	527	0.4	559	0.5	575	0.5
Belfast 2	767	0.6	730	0.6	852	0.7	879	0.8
Belfast 3	577	0.4	565	0.4	574	0.5	513	0.4
Belfast 4	743	0.6	726	0.6	831	0.7	880	0.8
Belfast 5	764	0.6	759	0.6	918	0.7	905	0.8
Belfast 6	630	0.5	627	0.5	649	0.5	625	0.5
Belfast 7	895	0.7	960	0.7	982	0.8	953	0.8
Total	4,902	3.7	4,894	3.8	5,365	4.4	5,330	4.6
Bangor	637	0.5	656	0.5	772	0.6	826	0.7
N'ards	868	0.6	927	0.7	980	0.8	996	0.9
C'reagh	867	0.6	879	0.7	969	0.8	978	0.8
Lisburn	872	0.6	1,047	0.8	1,112	0.9	1,187	1.0
Lisburn D/F	441	0.3	460	0.4	431	0.4	450	0.4
Down	587	0.4	578	0.4	591	0.5	577	0.5
Total	4,272	3.2	4,547	3.5	4,855	4.0	5,014	4.3
Banbridge	384	0.3	473	0.4	477	0.4	494	0.4
Newry	523	0.4	514	0.4	580	0.5	540	0.5
Armagh	345	0.3	354	0.3	355	0.3	413	0.4
Lur/Brown	434	0.3	455	0.4	528	0.4	491	0.4
P'down	279	0.2	256	0.2	297	0.2	334	0.3
Dungannon	242	0.2	290	0.2	315	0.3	366	0.3
Fermanagh	260	0.2	294	0.2	312	0.3	331	0.3
Total	2,467	1.8	2,636	2.0	2,864	2.3	2,969	2.6
Ballymena	471	0.4	488	0.4	474	0.4	497	0.4
Antrim	667	0.5	695	0.5	645	0.5	650	0.6
N'abbey 1	613	0.5	603	0.5	552	0.4	621	0.5
N'abbey 2	717	0.5	718	0.6	669	0.5	658	0.6
Carrick	619	0.5	631	0.5	545	0.4	490	0.4
Larne	474	0.4	514	0.4	543	0.4	517	0.4
B'castle	142	0.1	148	0.1	125	0.1	125	0.1
B'money	247	0.2	271	0.2	224	0.2	217	0.2
Coleraine	611	0.5	675	0.5	657	0.5	647	0.6
Total	4,561	3.4	4,743	3.7	4,434	3.6	4,422	3.8
Waterloo	516	0.4	538	0.4	587	0.5	522	0.4
Waterside	592	0.4	629	0.5	700	0.6	713	0.6
Collon	413	0.3	400	0.3	486	0.4	522	0.4
Limavady	317	0.2	379	0.3	342	0.3	361	0.3
M'felt	256	0.2	309	0.2	308	0.3	365	0.3
Strabane	393	0.3	494	0.4	489	0.4	546	0.5
Omagh	291	0.2	291	0.2	284	0.2	339	0.3
C'town	248	0.2	248	0.2	229	0.2	214	0.2
Total	3,026	2.3	3,288	2.6	3,425	2.8	3,582	3.1
NI total	19,228	14.3	20,108	15.6	20,943	17.0	21,317	18.3
Housing stock	134,220		128,622		122,875		116,431	

	March 2003		*March 2004*		*March 2005*	
	Total debtors	*Percentage*	*Total debtors*	*Percentage*	*Total debtors*	*Percentage*
Belfast 1	572	0.5	496	0.5	445	0.5
Belfast 2	894	0.8	790	0.8	713	0.7
Belfast 3	475	0.4	410	0.4	377	0.4
Belfast 4	778	0.7	848	0.8	788	0.8
Belfast 5	897	0.8	870	0.8	847	0.9

	March 2003		March 2004		March 2005	
	Total debtors	Percentage	Total debtors	Percentage	Total debtors	Percentage
Belfast 6	629	0.6	648	0.6	571	0.6
Belfast 7	967	0.9	1,072	1.0	892	0.9
Total	5,212	4.7	5,134	5.0	4,633	4.7
Bangor	777	0.7	723	0.7	625	0.6
N'ards	1,005	0.9	958	0.9	792	0.8
C'reagh	940	0.9	968	0.9	948	1.0
Lisburn	1,043	1.0	990	1.0	931	0.9
Lisburn D/F	387	0.4	422	0.4	340	0.3
Down	506	0.5	497	0.5	453	0.5
Total	4,658	4.2	4,558	4.4	4,089	4.2
Banbridge	426	0.4	394	0.4	379	0.4
Newry	479	0.4	476	0.5	451	0.5
Armagh	327	0.3	305	0.3	286	0.3
Lur/Brown	447	0.4	461	0.4	466	0.5
P'down	300	0.3	323	0.3	306	0.3
Dungannon	328	0.3	331	0.3	291	0.3
Fermanagh	265	0.2	269	0.3	257	0.3
Total	2,572	2.3	2,559	2.5	2,436	2.5
Ballymena	462	0.4	436	0.4	389	0.4
Antrim	495	0.5	492	0.5	429	0.4
N'abbey 1	512	0.5	479	0.5	445	0.5
N'abbey 2	569	0.5	509	0.5	450	0.5
Carrick	413	0.4	416	0.4	372	0.4
Larne	424	0.4	391	0.4	343	0.3
B'castle	117	0.1	126	0.1	113	0.1
B'money	205	0.2	212	0.2	215	0.2
Coleraine	560	0.5	564	0.5	553	0.6
Total	3,757	3.4	3,625	3.5	3,309	3.4
Waterloo	458	0.4	400	0.4	320	0.3
Waterside	611	0.6	590	0.6	571	0.6
Colloo	493	0.4	503	0.5	446	0.5
Limavady	299	0.3	321	0.3	282	0.3
M'felt	330	0.3	350	0.3	265	0.3
Strabane	426	0.4	421	0.4	403	0.4
Omagh	316	0.3	314	0.3	300	0.3
C'town	151	0.1	182	0.2	166	0.2
Total	3,084	2.8	3,081	3.0	2,753	2.8
NI total	19,283	17.6	18,957	18.4	17,220	17.5
Housing stock	109,742		102,850		98,287	

[1] The figures quoted are at the end of the financial year ie 31 March and include debtors from previous years.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer, of 21 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 208W, on housing, how much and what percentage of the unpaid Housing Executive rent arrears in each district were as a result of deliberate non-payment; and what percentage of the total number of Housing Executive households this represents in each case. [63583]

Mr. Hanson: The figures provided in respect of tenant debt include the total annual amounts for tenant rent and rates debt through non-payment, and also public sector housing benefit overpayments, which resulted from the tenants supplying incorrect information for the housing benefit assessment.

Illegal Firearms

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on how many occasions since 26 September 2005 the Police Service Northern Ireland have been called on to deal with cases of suspected illegal activity involving the use or possession of illegal firearms. [60070]

Mr. Woodward: The Chief Constable has advised me that during the time period 26 September 2005 to 28 February 2006 there have been 349 crimes recorded by the police where a firearm has, or is alleged to have been involved in the incident. This figure includes all crime types, from possession of firearm to robbery assisted by the use of a firearm or an alleged firearm. It is not always possible to determine whether a firearm used was illegal, for example if a firearm is not recovered at the scene.

Integrated Education Fund

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) how much has been distributed by the Integrated Education Fund in each year since its inception; [62050]

(2) if he will list the projects supported by the Integrated Education Fund in each year since its inception. [62052]

Angela E. Smith: The Integrated Education Fund is an independent charitable body and as such, the projects it supports, and how much funding it provides, is entirely the responsibility of the Board of Governors of the fund except where the Department of Education has placed stipulations on funding it has provided.

The Department has stipulated that the fund must keep £1 million as a restricted reserve with the purpose of providing interest free loans for capital building

works at schools that have been approved by the Department for recurrent grant. In January 2005 the Department provided funding of £1,331.67 for the preparation of a report on the operation of the Club Bank. In March 2006 the Department made a donation of £750,000 for the delivery of an agreed plan to provide enhanced support for transformation, exploring opportunities for collaborative work between schools, and an expansion of its Promoting A Culture of Tolerance (PACT) programme.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much the Government has allocated to the Integrated Education Fund in each year since its inception. [62051]

Angela E. Smith: The Department of Education has made the following donations to the Integrated Education Fund since its establishment:

£

Year of grant	*Amount*
1992–93	750,000
1994–95	2,000,000
1999–2000	750,000
2003–04	50,000
2004–05	1,331.67
2005–06	750,000
Total	4,301,331.67

Intertrade Ireland

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 9 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1739–40W, on Intertrade Ireland, what steps are being taken to ensure that the work force of Intertrade Ireland more closely reflects the community composition of Northern Ireland. [61628]

Angela E. Smith: The religious make up of InterTrade Ireland (ITI) shows a slight under-representation in employees from the Protestant community when compared to the community balance in the Newry and Mourne area, its primary employment catchment area. Fair participation in employment is dependent on a number of relevant factors, including workplace location. ITI has carried out an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) on its employment practices and prepared an Article 55 Report and, resulting from this work, is currently considering, in consultation with the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, the actions required to attract more job applications from the Protestant community. The InterTrade Ireland Board has approved a number of affirmative action measures.

Knives

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what research has been conducted on a system of licensing for the possession of knives in public places; and if he will make a statement. [62554]

Mr. Hanson: It is already an offence to have a knife in public without good reason or lawful authority. We are monitoring closely the consideration being given by the Scottish Executive to the introduction of a system to license the sale of non-domestic knives, and other measures to tackle knife crime in that jurisdiction.

Lignite Mining

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the Go ernment's policy on lignite mining in County Antrim. [63487]

Angela E. Smith: The planning strategy for Rural Northern Ireland refers to mineral reserves and states that

> "where there are mineral reserves, e.g. lignite (brown coal) which are considered to be of particular value to the economy and those reserves have been proven to acceptable standards, surface development which would prejudice their exploitation would not be permitted. Policy Areas in respect of such minerals will, where appropriate, be defined in development plans."

The policy therefore requires the Department of Environment (DOE) to identify policy areas where appropriate, in plans to protect reserves of valuable minerals, i.e. those of particular value to the economy. The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI) advises DOE of the minerals that are of particular value to the economy. DETI is responsible for issuing and regulating prospecting and extraction licences for all base minerals (including lignite) and petroleum. A company lodging an application for a mining licence or lease will be required to obtain planning and other statutory approvals before consideration is given to the application. Any planning application would be treated on its merits and all environmental implications considered.

In relation to County Antrim, the North East Area Plan 2002, which was adopted in August 1990, protected an area of lignite reserves between Bally money and Stranocum. The draft Northern Area Plan (NAP) 2016 published on 11 May 2005 proposes to protect a larger area between Ballymoney and Stranocum.

The Antrim Area Plan 1984–2001 adopted June 1989 has a protected area of lignite reserves on lands south west of Crumlin. The review of the aforementioned plan within the Antrim, Ballymena and Larne Area (ABL) Plan 2016, which is currently under preparation, will therefore also be required to identify the protected area where appropriate.

Long-term Sick Leave

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people in the NHS in Northern Ireland have been on long-term sick leave in each of the last three years, *(a)* in total and *(b)* broken down by grade; and how many were suffering from stress. [63467]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is not held centrally and will take some time to collate. I will write to the hon. Member with the information as soon as it is available and place a copy in the Library.

Manufacturing Industry

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the impact of European Union enlargement on Northern Ireland's manufacturing industry. [63481]

Angela E. Smith: The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI) commissioned a report into the Future of Manufacturing in Northern Ireland. This report was published in March 2006 and highlighted the competitive pressures facing Northern Ireland (NI) manufacturing companies. The report also acknowledged the increased competition from new EU member states, alongside low cost competition from China, India and the Far East. While EU enlargement and globalisation provide increasing opportunities for trade, the enhanced competitive environment has direct implications for future manufacturing employment. In its policy response, DETI highlights that manufacturing will continue to play a vital role in the NI economy. The report highlighted that Government will continue to provide a range of assistance to manufacturing companies, particularly those that are innovative and enterprising.

Medical Equipment

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the most expensive piece of medical equipment is in each hospital in Northern Ireland; and how many continuous hours per day each is in operation. [63463]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is not held centrally and will take some time to collate. I will write to the hon. Member with the information as soon as it is available and place a copy in the Library.

Mental Health Services

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what counselling services are available for those in the Ards and North Down region with mental health difficulties. [62375]

Mr. Woodward: A range of counselling services in a range of settings are provided by professionals and the voluntary sector for those with mental health difficulties in Ards and North Down region. These include Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, Psychology Services, Community Mental Health Teams, Mental Health Day Hospital services and Addiction services.

Music Therapy

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much funding has been allocated by each health trust in the Province for music therapy services in each of the last three years. [62386]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is as follows.

£

Trust	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06*	*Total*
Homefirst Community Health and Social Services Trust	6,717	7,264	7,380	21,361
Altnagelvin Health and Social Services Trust	9,042	9,105	4,787	22,934
South and East Belfast Health and Social Services Trust	0	1,933	4,401	6,334
North and West Belfast Health and Social Services Trust	39,110	38,394	39,889	117,393
Total	54,869	56,696	56,457	168,022

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the role of music therapy in treating individuals with autistic spectrum disorders; and if he will make a statement. [62499]

Mr. Woodward: The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to date has not undertaken an assessment of the role of music therapy in treating individuals with Autistic Spectrum Disorders. It has been monitoring carefully what is happening regionally and nationally. The Department will be informed of the findings of the current music therapy projects and will consider these findings in agreeing what future action is required relating to future deployment of music therapists within the HPSS.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans there are to develop music therapy services in the Province. [62500]

Mr. Woodward: The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, at present, has no specific plans to develop music therapy services throughout Northern Ireland. However, the Department is currently monitoring the work that has been taking place through the Northern Ireland Music Therapy Trust and developments UK-wide in relation to music therapy provision and is aware that there is a growing awareness of the need for music therapy services to be integral to health and social service provision. These factors will be taken into consideration when developing future plans for services.

North-South Bodies

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many meetings there were of each of the North-South Bodies in each of the last four years. [60980]

Angela E. Smith: Four of the North/South Implementation Bodies and Tourism Ireland Limited have boards. The number of board meetings held in each of the last four years in each of the bodies is contained in the following table.

Body	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission	7	6	5	7
Food Safety Promotion Board	8	7	8	8
The Trade and Business Development Body	11	10	10	10
Tourism Ireland Limited	8	8	8	8
The North/South Language Body[1]	0	0	1	1
Ulster-Scots Agency	11	7	9	10
Foras na Gaeilge	8	8	8	7

[1] The Agreement between the Government of Ireland and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland establishing Implementation bodies done at Dublin on 8 March 1999 provided that the North/South Language Body shall have a board of 24 members. 16 members have responsibility for the functions of the Body relating to the Irish Language Agency and eight members have responsibility for the

functions of the Body relating to the Ulster-Scots Agency. The above figures reflect the numbers of meetings of the full board and, separately, of its two component parts.

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland who the members are of each of the North-South Bodies; and how many meetings each member has attended since they were established. [60981]

Angela E. Smith: The information requested is as follows:

Trade and Business Development Body

Name	*Date of appointment*	*Number of meetings attended*
Martin Naughton	December 1999	61
Barry Fitzimmons	December 1999	61
Jackie Harrison	December 1999	47
Feargal McCormack	December 1999	61
Carl McCann	December 1999	32
Inez McCormack	December 1999	41
Mary Ainscough	December 1999	45
Robbie Smyth	December 1999	55
Jack Gilmour	December 2002	29
John Fitzgerald	December 2002	24

Tourism Ireland Limited

Name	*Date of appointment*	*Number of meetings attended*
Andrew Coppel	December 2000	40
Ann Riordan	December 2000	35
Denis Galway	December 2000	41
Howard Hastings	December 2000	38
Tony Kelly	December 2000	38
Felix Mooney	December 2000	37
John Power	December 2000	39
Charles Sinnott	December 2000	41
Alan Clarke	September 2001	30
Tom McGrath	January 2003	22
Shaun Quinn	May 2003	19
Patrick O'Donoghue	December 2005	3

The North/South Language Body—Foras na Gaeilge

Name	*Date of appointment*	*Number of meetings attended*
Maighréad Uí Mháirtín	December 1999	48
Aodán Mac Póilin	December 1999	46
Maolsheachlainn Caollái	December 1999	48
Pádraig Duibhir	December 1999	45
Gordon McCoy	December 1999	46
Treasa Ni Ailpin	December 1999	45
Liam Corey	December 1999	36
Brid Ui Néill	December 1999	39
Leachlain Cathain	December 1999	45
Anne Craig	December 1999	40
Gearóid Mac Siacuis	December 1999	37
Gearóid hEara	December 2000	32

The North/South Language Body—Foras na Gaeilge

Name	*Date of appointment*	*Number of meetings attended*
Mairéad Nic Sheagain	April 2002	28
Caitríona Ni Cheallaigh	December 2002	23
Diarmuid Murchú	December 2002	25

The North/South Language Body—Ulster-Scots Agency

Name	*Date of appointment*	*Number of meetings attended*
Padraig de Bhal	December 1999	47
James Devenney	December 1999	49
Linde Lunney	December 1999	46
Eddie O'Donnell	December 2001	35
Bob Stoker	December 2002	10
Alistair Simpson	December 2002	23
Ian Adamson	September 2003	20
Mark Thompson	June 2005	7

Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission

Name	*Date of appointment*	*Number of meetings attended*
Peter Savage	December 1999	34
Jack Allen	December 1999	31
Dick Blakiston-Houston	December 1999	27
Francis Feely	December 1999	23
Pat Griffin	December 1999	32
Siobhan Logue	December 1999	26
Joseph Martin	December 1999	33
Andrew Ward	December 1999	32
Tarlagh O'Connor	December 2002	19
Jacqui McConville	December 2002	17

Food Safety Promotion Board

Name	*Date of appointment*	*Number of meetings attended*
Bertie Kerr	December 1999	45
Don Anderson	December 1999	39
Leslie Craig	December 1999	43
Carmel Foley	December 1999	23
Damien O'Dwyer	December 1999	29
Anne Speed	December 1999	36
Sean Strain	December 1999	26
Charlie Daly	December 2002	16
Odran Flynn	December 2002	24
Patrick Fottrell	December 2002	19
Patrick McColgan	December 2002	22
Catherine Murphy	December 2002	22

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the total administrative costs were of each of the North-South Bodies in each of the last four years. [60982]

Angela E. Smith: The information is as follows.

Annual administration costs of each cross border body

Body	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*£ 2005*
Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission	973,974	1,107,360	1,175,902	1,227,878
Waterways Ireland	6,450,134	9,638,986	10,436,350	10,459,740
The Trade and Business Development Body	1,349,746	1,530,941	1,631,431	1,548,282
Special EU Programmes Body	1,122,472	1,284,631	1,237,146	[2]—
The North/South Language Body[3]	1,567,353	1,934,202	2,197,867	2,395,716
The Food Safety Promotion Board	749,000	1,236,000	1,357,000	1,440,000
Tourism Ireland Limited	7,400,230	8,608,667	9,297,000	9,671,000

[1] The figures for 2005 are provisional as the accounts are still in preparation.
[2] The Special EU Programmes Body accounts for 2005 are not yet available.
[3] The costs quoted for the North/South Language Body for each of these years are based on unaudited accounts.

Operating Theatres

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) how many operations were conducted in each operating theatre in Northern Ireland in each of the last three years; [63464]

(2) how many hours per week each operating theatre in Northern Ireland was in use in the last 12 months. [63465]

Mr. Woodward: Information on the number of operations conducted in an operating theatre is collected centrally by hospital, and is provided in the following table.

Hospital	*Number of operations carried out* 2003	2004	2005
Altnagelvin area	13,409	14,245	14,626
Antrim	5,903	7,135	7,265
Ards	2,849	2,556	2,272
Belfast City	11,711	11,618	10,593
Belvoir Park NICCO	78	58	59
Causeway Hospital	6,043	5,917	6,260
Craigavon Area	10,909	11,137	10,857
Daisy Hill	7,482	5,832	5,159
Downe	1,542	1,531	1,868
Erne	2,348	2,796	3,141
Lagan Valley	5,214	4,892	4,615
Mater Infirmorum	6,093	6,200	6,474
Mid Ulster	3,846	4,089	3,543
Musgrave Park	5,172	6,813	6,897
RBHSC	4,834	4,435	4,365
Eloyal Maternity	2,007	2,214	2,381
Royal Victoria	18,113	18,944	18,928
South Tyrone	4,577	3,974	4,066
Tyrone County	3,226	3,069	3,017
Ulster	10,444	10,374	10,187
Whiteabbey	2,164	1,773	1,807
Northern Ireland total	127,964	129,602	128,380

Source:
Departmental Information Return KH08

Information on the number of hours per week each operating theatre in Northern Ireland was in use is not collected centrally and can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Osteoporosis

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 14 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 2153W, on osteoporosis, if he will ensure that additional funding for specialist drugs in 2006–07 and 2007–08 includes funding for new specialist drugs including teriparatide. [63516]

Mr. Woodward: I will be announcing shortly details of my plans for additional funding for specialist drugs in 2006–07 and 2007–08. The additional funding will include an amount for the introduction of new drugs, such as teriparatide, as well as other specialist drugs pressures.

It will be for the Health and Social Services Boards, as commissioners of services, to prioritise how this funding is used, taking into account the competing demands and pressures in their areas and the strategic objectives and priorities of my Department.

Parenting Strategy

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when he expects a parenting strategy for Northern Ireland to be produced. [62391]

Mr. Woodward: The Department is currently developing a "Family and Parenting Strategy", which will be looking at current intervention and support services focusing on parents needs.

It is envisaged that the strategy will be ready for consultation by early summer of this year.

Personal Care (Funding)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will estimate the funding required to provide free personal care for all individuals in the Province who are receiving it. [62471]

Mr. Woodward: The latest estimate of the potential cost of introducing free personal care is £45 million, which includes an element for the predicted increase in demand for personal care, based on experience elsewhere.

An estimate of this nature is of course subject to decisions about the level and scope of any such scheme.

Personal Debt Advice Schemes

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what personal debt advice schemes are available in Northern Ireland. [63469]

Angela E. Smith: The Department of Enterprise Trade and Investment (DETI) has recently completed a tender process for the provision of a free face to face debt advice service across Northern Ireland. This will involve DETI providing direct funding to provide 11 advisers based at offices throughout Northern Ireland and two central training and research posts. A number of community and voluntary agencies will provide free advice in other offices that are not covered by this contract. In addition Consumer Credit Counselling, a registered charity, provides a telephone advice service while several private companies offer free to use advice for consumers and many others provide the service on a professional basis.

Physiotherapy Posts

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many physiotherapy posts were available in each *(a)* education and library board and *(b)* health trust in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [63381]

Mr. Woodward: Physiotherapists are not employed by Education and Library Boards. The number of physiotherapy posts in each Health Trust is only available centrally for the last three years. This information is presented in the following table.

Physiotherapy posts available within the NI HPSS as at September 2003–05

Trust	2003 H'count	2003 WTE	2004 H'count	2004 WTE	2005 H'count	2005 WTE
Altnagelvin Group HSS Trust	42	38.93	40	37.85	47	44.45
Armagh and Dungannon HSS Trust	34	27.44	34	28.36	36	29.87
Belfast City Hospital HSS Trust	62	55.47	66	59.80	61	53.16
Causeway HSS Trust	39	31.50	41	33.20	43	34.55
Craigavon Area Hospital Group HSS Trust	67	55.57	73	60.64	72	62.26
Down Lisburn HSS Trust	69	55.82	75	65.19	80	67.75
Foyle Community HSS Trust	3	2.83	3	2.83	3	2.64
Green Park Healthcare HSS Trust	68	58.60	81	69.21	77	65.72
Mater Infirmorum Hospital HSS Trust	18	16.58	23	20.59	23	20.45
Newry and Mourne HSS Trust	36	29.43	40	33.67	41	32.56
North and West Belfast HSS Trust	39	23.99	42	27.46	48	33.27
Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust	81	71.36	86	74.38	90	80.74
South and East Belfast HSS Trust	39	27.35	46	34.66	42	30.61
Sperrin/Lakeland HSS Trust	35	29.67	31	26.08	38	31.95
Ulster Community and Hospitals Group HSS Trust	81	62.70	89	70.53	83	65.67
United Hospitals Group HSS Trust	94	78.71	100	84.22	110	91.91
Total	807	665.95	870	728.67	894	747.56

Notes:
1. H' count = headcount
2. WTE = whole-time equivalent
3. The number of Physiotherapy posts available is calculated as the number of staff in post as at 30 September plus the number of current vacancies available as at 30 September.
4. The figure for September 2004 combines staff in post figures as at September 2004 with current vacancy figures as at June 2004.
5. A current vacancy is an unoccupied post, which at 30 September 2003 (30 June 2004 or 30 September 2005) was vacant and which the organisation was actively trying to fill.

Sources:
Staff in post information—Human Resource Management System
Current vacancy information—NI HPSS Trusts and Organisations

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many physiotherapy graduates there were from higher education establishments in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years; and how many such graduates had not obtained employment in their chosen profession one year after graduating in each year. [63382]

Angela E. Smith: Students gaining qualifications from physiotherapy courses at Northern Ireland higher education institutions, 1999–2000 to 2004–05 are as follows:

Academic year	Qualifiers
1999–2000	56
2000–01	90
2001–02	58
2002–03	63
2003–04	74
2004–05	78

Source:
HESA.

Figures include students gaining both undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications.

EU graduates from physiotherapy courses at Northern Ireland higher education institutions and not recorded as employed as physiotherapist six months after graduation, 1999–2000 to 2003–04 (overseas students are not included) are as follows:

Academic year	Qualifiers not employed as physiotherapists
1999–2000	7
2000–01	8
2001–02	Fewer than 5
2002–03	8
2003–04	8

Source:
HESA.

Graduates not employed as physiotherapists include those undertaking further study/training, employed in occupations other than physiotherapy, assumed to be unemployed and those not available for employment/ training. Data on the destinations of 2004–05 leavers is not yet available.

Plastic Bags

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to introduce a ban on the use of non-biodegradable plastic bags in Northern Ireland. [63615]

Angela E. Smith: The Department of the Environment plans to start a preliminary "Cleaner Neighbourhoods" consultation exercise covering a range of local environmental quality issues by the end of May 2006. One of the issues to be addressed in the consultation document is the subject of litter, including plastic bag litter. The consultation will outline a number of options designed to reduce litter, including options to deal with plastic bag litter, and will seek views from consultees on the best way forward.

Police

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many hours of training police recruits in Northern Ireland receive in *(a)* dealing with ethnic disputes and *(b)* awareness of ethnic minorities. [61494]

Mr. Woodward: Police trainees currently receive approx 9 hours direct training in relation to working with ethnic minority groups. This training varies from people making reports to police and police dealing with victims of crime.

This aspect, as with all strands of diversity, is core themed throughout the 21 week training programme.

Police Trainees are assessed in relation to how they deal with ethnic minorities on a pass/fail basis.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the recent statement by the vice-chairman of the Northern Ireland Policing Board regarding the policy of 50:50 recruitment to the Police Service of Northern Ireland. [61615]

Mr. Woodward: The temporary 50:50 recruitment measures are being applied as a response to the imperative of achieving a police service in Northern Ireland that is more representative of the community that it serves. Our goal, in line both with the patten report and the comments made by Mr Bradley at the Social Democratic Labour party conference in November 2005, is to achieve a 30 percentage Catholic composition amongst officers by 2010–11. As we are on target to achieve this goal, these measures will not be applied after this time.

These provisions are subject to review and possible renewal every three years, next due in March 2007, when the policy will be subject to detailed review, extensive consultation, and debate in both Houses.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many investigators employed by the police ombudsman have experience in the investigation of terrorist-related crime. [63497]

Mr. Woodward: The police ombudsman has advised that of those investigatory staff currently employed by her office, forty-five have experience in the investigation of terrorist-related crime.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of applications to the police in Northern Ireland in the last two open competitions were *(a)* Protestant and *(b)* Roman Catholic; and what percentage from each community were subsequently appointed. [61419]

Mr. Woodward: I am advised that the community breakdown of applications for the last two PSNI trainee constable competitions have been as follows:

Competition	*Protestant on application*	*Percentage Catholic on application*	*Non-determined*
9	63.48	33.87	2.65
10	59.45	37.07	3.48

The appointment process for both of these competitions is still in the early stages. I am advised, however, that a projected number of 220 applicants from each competition will be recruited under the temporary 50:50 recruitment provisions of which 110 Catholics and 110 non-Catholics will be appointed.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many full-time police officers in Northern Ireland have *(a)* retired and *(b)* been recruited over the past five years. [62101]

Mr. Woodward: The number of full-time police officers retired and recruited between 24 March 2001 and 24 March 2006 can be found in the following table:

Number

	Retired	*Recruited*
Regular Officers	2,569	2,187
Full Time Reserve	1,481	[1]—

[1] Recruitment ceased in 1998.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the outcome was of the research project tasked with ascertaining the justifiable requirements for visual standards for recruits to the Police Service of Northern Ireland. [63418]

Mr. Woodward: I am advised that during the original visual task analysis specific concerns were raised by the research team with regard to safety issues and the impact of colour deficiencies on both firearms handling and operational police driving.

Therefore a further detailed visual risk assessment has been carried out on these police functions which will be reported on shortly by the City of London University researchers. In addition, senior staff from the Royal Victoria hospital have been asked to give specific advice on the practical implications of the findings. With this information, an appropriate risk assessment will then be carried out to ensure the new visual standards at recruitment are sufficient to protect both the public and officers in the performance of their duties.

An exact timescale for the publication of the researchers' report is not yet known.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what Mr. Colin Ashe's role is in the Northern Ireland Police Fund; what his key tasks are; and what relevant experience he has. [63461]

Mr. Woodward: Mr. Colin Ashe is currently performing the role of acting chief executive of the fund. He is a civil servant with a range of experience which includes policy development, finance, customer support services and project management.

Prisons (Suicides)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people committed suicide in Northern Ireland prisons while *(a)* on remand and *(b)* serving a sentence in the last five years. [61619]

Mr. Woodward: In the last five years coroners' court inquests have determined that no sentenced prisoner committed suicide, and that three remand prisoners committed suicide. Coroners' court inquests have still to be held into a further six separate deaths in prison custody which occurred during the last five years.

Public Transport

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average number of daily users of public transport was in each *(a)* district council area and *(b)* Westminster constituency in the Province in each of the last five years. [62468]

Mr. Woodward: Passenger journey information is not collected on the basis of district council area or Westminster constituency area. Therefore the information is not available.

The following information gives the average number of public transport journeys per day for the whole of Northern Ireland for the last five years.

	Number
2001–02	195,000
2002–03	198,000
2003–04	198,000
2004–05	199,000
2005–06[1]	204,000

[1] estimate

Source:
Translink, figures rounded to the nearest thousand.

Religious Discrimination

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many cases of religious discrimination *(a)* with respect to job applications and *(b)* while at work have been successfully brought by (i) Roman Catholics and (ii) Protestants in Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 years. [63494]

Angela E. Smith: The industrial tribunals do not collect information on the basis of the religious background of claimants, nor does it keep information about religious discrimination with respect to job applications or while at work. The table below shows the number of cases received, based on a complaint of discrimination on the grounds of religious belief or political opinion, in each of the last 10 years and the numbers where the complaint was upheld by the tribunal. The vast majority of cases are resolved outside of the formal tribunal process and outcomes may be confidential to the parties.

	Cases of religious belief/political opinion registered in the year	*Cases that were successful*
1996	566	8
1997	666	2
1998	559	7
1999	499	2
2000	561	2
2001	268	8
2002	480	5
2003	467	12
2004	479	1
2005	190	3

Restaurant Closures

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many restaurants in Northern Ireland have been closed on health grounds in each of the last five years. [63452]

Mr. Woodward: The Food Standards Agency collects data on district council enforcement activities in relation to food hygiene on a yearly basis. Between 2000 and 2003 this information was collected on a calendar year basis however from 1 April 2004 it is being gathered on a financial year basis.

In relation to the closure of food premises on food hygiene grounds, the data distinguishes between those premises that have been closed by means of formal enforcement action using emergency prohibition procedures and those that have closed voluntarily.

The number of restaurants and caterers that have been closed formally or have closed voluntarily in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years is as follows:

	Number of restaurants formally closed	*Number of restaurants closed voluntarily*
2000	1	1
2001	1	6
2002	0	3
2003	0	0
2004–05	1	2
Total	3	12

Data for the period 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006 is not yet available as district councils have until 31 May 2006 to submit returns for this period to the Food Standards Agency.

Sexual Health

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many young people in the Province aged 13 years and under have *(a)* attended sexual health clinics and *(b)* subsequently been referred to social services in each of the last five years. [62388]

Mr. Woodward: The information is as follows.

(a) Information on the total number of attendances at sexual health clinics by age is not routinely collected centrally. Information is, however, available on the number of new episodes of selected diagnoses[1] of sexually transmitted infections at Genito-Urinary Medicine clinics each year for those aged under 15. An individual may contribute to more than one diagnosis and/or more than one episode in a year. This information is shown in the following table.

	Number of new episodes of selected diagnoses[1]
2001	6
2002	<5
2003	5
2004	7
2005[2]	<5

[1] Selected diagnoses include:
Uncomplicated genital chlamydial infection; Uncomplicated gonorrhoea; Primary and secondary infectious syphilis; Anogenital herpes simplex (first attack) and Anogenital warts (first attack).

[2] 2005 data are provisional.

Notes:
1. Figures are shown for calendar years.

2. Please note that cell sizes that have a value of less than 5 have been masked in order to help protect confidentiality.
Source:
Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre Northern Ireland (CDSC (NI)).

Additionally the number of HIV antibody tests carried out are available for those aged under 15 and are shown in the following table.

	Number of HIV antibody tests performed[1]
2001	<5
2002	<5
2003	12
2004	18
2005[2]	21

[1] Until 1 April 2003 this figure comprised of code P1A only, which was described as HIV antibody counselling with testing. From 1 April 2003 this figure comprises codes P1A (HIV antibody testing (no sexual health screen) and S2 (HIV antibody test and sexual health screen)).
[2] 2005 data are provisional
Notes:
1. Figures are shown for calendar years.
2. Please note that cell sizes that have a value of less than 5 have been masked in order to help protect confidentiality.
Source:
Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre Northern Ireland (CDSC (NI)).

Information is also available on the number of first attendances at family planning clinics by females aged under 16. The information is shown in the following table, for the calendar years 2001–04[1].

	Number of first attendances
2001	678
2002	657
2003	703
2004	611

[1] Information for 2005 is not yet available.
Note:
Corresponding information for males is not collected centrally.
Source:
Departmental Information Return, KT31.

(b) The information requested can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Special Educational Needs

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average waiting time is in each education and library board area in Northern Ireland for assessment by an educational psychologist to assess the special educational needs of a child. [63380]

Angela E. Smith: The following table shows the average waiting times for assessment by an educational psychologist as at December 2005, the latest data available. The second column shows the average waiting times for an assessment by pupils at Stage 3 of the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (the Code). It should be noted that there are no statutory time limits for provision of these assessments. Column three shows average waiting times for an assessment by pupils at Stage 4 of the Code. The statutory time limit in this case is 16 weeks.

Weeks

Education and library board	*Average waiting time*	
	Stage 3	*Stage 4*
Belfast Education and Library Board	5.29	5
North Eastern Education and Library Board	9.6	5
South Eastern Education and Library Board	47.6	3.35
Southern Education and Library Board	26	6
Western Education and Library Board	7.5	5

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many children with special education needs there were in *(a)* mainstream and *(b)* special schools in each education and library board area in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [63384]

Angela E. Smith: The requested information is as follows:

(a) Pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools, 2001–02 to 2005–06

Education and Library Board area	*2001–02*[1,2]	*2002–03*[2]	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06*
Belfast	3,450	8,529	9,380	9,580	9,926
Western	3,236	8,590	9,308	10,100	10,277
North Eastern	2,193	7,009	7,860	8,691	8,712
South Eastern	3,305	8,562	9,535	9,926	10,097
Southern	3,274	8,609	9,156	9,675	10,081
Northern Ireland total	15,458	41,299	45,239	47,972	49,093

Some of the pupils in the above table were in special units in mainstream schools and the remainder were in mainstream classes. A breakdown is given in the following two tables:

Pupils with special educational needs in special units in mainstream schools, 2001–02 to 2005–06

Education and Library Board area	*2001–02*[1]	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06*
Belfast	156	169	184	179	166
Western	56	79	74	68	63
North Eastern	327	329	302	296	306
South Eastern	509	542	577	594	631
Southern	718	719	758	766	765
Northern Ireland total	1,766	1,838	1,895	1,903	1,931

Pupils with special educational needs in mainstream classes in mainstream schools, 2001–02 to 2005–06

Education and Library Board area	2001–02[1]	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06
Belfast	3,294	8,360	9,196	9,401	9,760
Western	3,180	8,511	9,234	10,032	10,214
North Eastern	1,866	6,680	7,558	8,395	8,406
South Eastern	2,796	8,020	8,958	9,332	9,466
Southern	2,556	7,890	8,398	8,909	9,316
Northern Ireland total	13,692	39,461	43,344	46,069	47,162

(b) Pupils with special educational needs in special schools, 2001–02 to 2005–06

Education and Library Board area	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06
Belfast	1,252	1,440	1,359	1,235	1,248
Western	793	789	800	786	748
North Eastern	981	976	1,000	1,000	1,010
South Eastern	1,311	1,290	1,289	1,257	1,199
Southern	373	384	386	391	394
Northern Ireland total	4,710	4,879	4,834	4,669	4,599

[1] Data was only available for statemented children with special educational needs (SEN) in mainstream primary classes and in special units in primary schools in 2001–02.
[2] In one post primary school, data was only available for statemented SEN children in mainstream classes in 2001–02 and 2002–03.

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much in additional resources was made available to each education and library board in Northern Ireland to ensure that the provision of the Special Educational Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 could be met. [63385]

Angela E. Smith: Additional resources made available to each education and library board in Northern Ireland to ensure that the provisions of the Special Educational Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 could be met in schools are as outlined in the attached Appendix.

Appendix

£000

Board	Disabled access	Dispute resolution service/information and advice service	Awareness training	Total
2005–06				
BELB	1200	101	150	1451
NEELB	1200	101	150	1451
SEELB	1200	101	150	1451
SELB	1200	101	150	1451
WELB	1200	101	150	1451
Total	6000	505	750	7255
2006–07				
BELB	1000	95		1095
NEELB	1000	95		1095
SEELB	1000	95		1095
SELB	1000	95		1095
WELB	1000	95		1095
Total	5000	475		5475
2007–08				
BELB	1000	102		1102
NEELB	1000	102		1102
SEELB	1000	102		1102
SELB	1000	102		1102
WELB	1000	102		1102
Total	5000	510		5510
Total	16000	1490	750	18240

Unused Medications

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the estimated cost of unused medications in Northern Ireland was in the last 12 months. [63484]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is not collected routinely. Extrapolating figures from Great Britain, it is estimated that the cost of unused medicines in Northern Ireland amounts to approximately £2.5 million per year. The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety is pursuing a number of initiatives to reduce waste in drug costs.

Superannuation Liability

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what total amount of employers' normal contributions accruing superannuation liability charge has been accounted for by his Office in each of the last five years for which data are available. [61359]

Mr. Woodward: The amount of employers' accruing superannuation liability charges in respect of members of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme, within the Northern Ireland Office, excluding its agencies and NDPBs, in the last five years is:

	£000
2004–05[1]	3,644
2003–04[1]	3,508
2002–03[1]	3,346
2001–02	3,085
2000–01	2,886

[1] From 1 October 2002 new entrants have been able to opt for a partnership pension partnership account, a stakeholder arrangement with an employer contribution. Employers' contributions to partnership pension accounts are not included in the figures.

Television Sets

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many television sets are in operation in the Department *(a)* in total, *(b)* in Ministers' private offices and *(c)* in each building in the Department; and how many television licences are held by the Department. [62803]

Mr. Hain: The information is as follows.

(a) A total of 166 television sets are in operation in our offices in Belfast and London

(b) of which 14 are in Ministers' London and Belfast private offices and

(c) table as follows shows breakdown by building:

	Number
Castle Buildings—Block B	10
Corn Exchange	2
Hillsborough Castle	[1]23
Hillview Buildings	3
Knockview	3
Lagan House	4
Massey House	2
Millbank	28
Millennium House	2
Royston House	2
Stormont House/Annexe/Bungalow	41
Stormont Castle	37
Windsor House	9

[1] Including for guests and offices

Note:

5 television licences held.

Transport (Rural Areas)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what support is given to assist public transport in rural areas of Northern Ireland. [62843]

Mr. Woodward: The Department for Regional Development continues to support 19 rural community transport partnerships, which offer a range of transport services for their members that complement conventional public transport networks and which in particular provide transport opportunities for people with reduced mobility in rural areas. These partnerships now cover most of rural Northern Ireland. The Department also provides revenue support to Translink to maintain a network of some 50 rural routes across Northern Ireland that would otherwise be uneconomic to run. Additionally, the Department has also provided support to pilot two new and innovative demand responsive public transport services in rural areas. In total in 2005–06 DRD spent £2.45 million to support these rural public transport services.

Victims' March (Dublin)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what discussions he had with *(a)* the Government of the Republic of Ireland and *(b)* the Republic of Ireland police force on the Northern Ireland victims' march in Dublin on 25 February. [57624]

Mr. Hain: There were no discussions between myself and the Government of the Republic of Ireland or the Republic of Ireland police force in relation to the Love Ulster Rally on 25 February 2006. This was an operational matter that was dealt with between the PSNI and Garda Siochána.

Vision-impaired Pupils (GCSE results)

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* partially-sighted and *(b)* totally blind pupils left school in Northern Ireland with five or more GCSE grades A to C in the last period for which figures are available. [63379]

Angela E. Smith: Figures for 2004–05 are not yet available. Out of a total of fifteen children with a statement of special educational needs who were recorded as blind and who left school in the previous three years, five achieved five or more GCSE's at grades A*-C.

Because of the very small numbers in any one year, it is not appropriate to break the figures down into individual years.

Out of a total of 86 children with a statement of special educational needs who were recorded as partially sighted and who left school in the same three year period, 26 achieved five or more GCSE's at grades A*-C.

Waiting Times

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the extent to which the health service in Northern Ireland is meeting recommended waiting times for *(a)* an initial consultation and *(b)* operations. [62380]

Mr. Woodward: I have set targets this year to ensure that no patient is waiting more than 12 months for in-patient or day case treatment by 31 March, with shorter waiting times for major joint replacement surgery (nine months), cataract surgery (six months), and cardiac

surgery (six months). Excellent progress has been made to date and provisional figures indicate that hospitals here are on course to achieve these waiting time targets. I will make an announcement on the achievement of these targets on 3 April 2006.

With regard to waiting times for an initial consultation, current waiting times are much too long, with one in nine of the population waiting for a first out-patient appointment. I have set a target to ensure that no patient is waiting more than 13 weeks by 31 March 2008 and in January this year I announced a major overhaul of out-patient services to ensure that this target is achieved.

Whitefish Fishing Ban

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will pay transitional aid to those Northern Ireland fishermen affected by the 11 week whitefish fishing ban. [63426]

Angela E. Smith: My colleague Lord Rooker, has carefully reviewed the options, and taking account of questions of affordability, value for money and sustainability, he will not approve payments which last year cost some £800,000 in total and ranged from around £40,000 to £70,000 per vessel for a tie-up period of just under 11 weeks. In the current climate of competing resource pressures, a transitional aid scheme could result in less money for urgent projects like infrastructure improvements at Northern Ireland fishing ports.

World Cup (Complimentary Tickets)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many complimentary tickets his Department has received for games taking place at the FIFA World Cup 2006 in Germany. [63904]

Mr. Hain: My Department has not received any tickets for the FIFA World Cup 2006.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Council Tax

John Hemming: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the 2005 tax base is; and what the 2005–06 assumed national council tax is. [63226]

Mr. Woolas: The tax base used in the calculation of the 2005–06 formula grant was 17,711,318 band D equivalent properties. The assumed national council tax was £1,101.96.

John Hemming: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the 2006–07 tax base is; and what the 2006–07 implicit national council tax is. [63228]

Mr. Woolas: The council tax base used in the 2006–07 formula grant settlement was 17,979,549 band D equivalent properties. In distributing formula grant, we do not make assumptions about the amount that authorities should spend on services neither do we make assumptions about the average level of council tax.

John Hemming: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assumptions of the rate of inflation are being used in calculating increases in the assumed value for council tax; whether the change between the 2005–06 assumed national council tax and the 2006–07 implicit national council tax is estimated to be more or less than the forecast rate of inflation; and if he will take steps to ensure that policy assumptions are not made that council tax rises will rise at a rate higher than inflation. [63229]

Mr. Woolas: In distributing formula grant, we did not make an assumption about the level of national council tax in 2006–07. Council tax levels are set by local authorities themselves; they are not set by central Government.

John Hemming: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what criteria are used to determine whether council tax increases by individual authorities trigger capping; and whether there is an absolute figure above which a council tax increase is deemed too high. [63230]

Mr. Woolas: I announced in my statement to the House on 27 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 567–69, about council tax that the principles determined by my right hon. Friend, the Deputy Prime Minister, as Secretary of State, were that authorities' 2006–07 budget requirements were excessive:

if they showed an increase of more than 6 per cent. compared with 2005–06; and

if their council tax had increased by more than 5 per cent. in the same period.

As was the case in 2005–06, a single set of principles was applied to all authorities.

Coventry City Council (Planning)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many *(a)* successful and *(b)* unsuccessful appeals have been made against planning decisions made by Coventry City Council in each year since 1997. [62406]

Yvette Cooper: The following table shows the number of planning appeals relating to Coventry City Council *(a)* successful (allowed) and *(b)* unsuccessful (dismissed) and the total number of appeals decided in each calendar year from 2000. Unfortunately in this instance reliable data can only be provided from 2000 onwards.

	(a) Number of appeals allowed	*(b) Number of appeals dismissed*	*Number of appeals decided*
2000	12	23	35
2001	10	16	26
2002	3	19	22
2003	17	21	38
2004	17	23	40
2005	28	37	65

Development (Runnymede)

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the ability of the borough of Runnymede to absorb new development *(a)* after the implementation of the Thames Basin Heaths special protection area and *(b)* while respecting existing metropolitan green belt and flood plain designations. [62420]

Yvette Cooper *[holding answer 30 March 2006]:* The distribution of new development between local authorities is a matter for the South East England regional assembly to consider in the context of the regional spatial strategy for the south east. In preparing that strategy, the assembly are required to have regard to national planning policies, including those set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 2 (PPG2) on green belts and PPG25 on development and flood risk. They will also have to take full account of the statutory protection provided to both national and international wildlife sites, including Thames Basin Heaths special protection area.

Energy Audits

Keith Vaz: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether his Department plans to give local planning authorities the powers to require that an energy audit should be submitted with major planning applications. [62186]

Yvette Cooper: Local planning authorities have powers under the Town and Country Planning (Applications) Regulations 1988 to require additional information the authority considers necessary for the proper determination of a planning application.

Local planning authorities are encouraged in Planning Policy Statement 1, Delivering Sustainable Development to adopt policies in their development plan documents in respect of energy-saving and the use of renewable energy. Such policies could then be a material consideration when decisions on individual planning applications are being made.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans his Department has to introduce energy use as a factor for local planning authorities to consider when determining planning applications. [62187]

Yvette Cooper: National planning policy set out in Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1) expects the development plans prepared by regional planning bodies and local planning authorities to contribute to global sustainability through policies which reduce energy use, reduce emissions (for example, by encouraging patterns of development which reduce the need to travel by private car, or reduce the impact of moving freight) and promote the development of renewable energy resources. In doing so, planning policies are expected to avoid replicating, cutting across, or detrimentally affecting matters within the scope of other legislative requirements, such as those set out in Building Regulations for energy efficiency.

The Department also intends to draw up a new planning policy statement on climate change.

Euro

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will place in the Library a copy of his Department's Communications plan for the introduction of the euro. [62310]

Jim Fitzpatrick: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 10 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1834W.

The Communications plan to which the hon. Member refers was contained within the Euro Conversion (High Level Plan) made available in the Library of the House by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister on 10 March 2006.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which Minister in his Department is responsible for policy relating to the introduction of the euro. [62311]

Jim Fitzpatrick: I am the Minister responsible for policy relating to the introduction of the euro in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister on how many occasions his Department's working group on the changeover to the euro met in 2005. [62259]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's working group on the changeover to the euro did not meet during 2005.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will place in the Library a copy of the W.S. Atkins report on the compatibility of IT systems in his Department with the introduction of the euro; and how much the report cost. [62267]

Jim Fitzpatrick: A copy of the W.S. Atkins report on compatibility of IT systems within the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has been made available in the Library of the House. The cost of this report was £31,000.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the 30 volunteer local authorities his Department worked with to develop detailed euro changeover plans. [62268]

Jim Fitzpatrick: While the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has worked with some local authorities to develop their euro changeover plans, HM Treasury, who take the lead in co-ordinating appropriate euro preparations across the economy, have worked with a larger number. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister worked with those authorities on a confidential basis.

Fire Service Inspectorate

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many *(a)* inspectors and *(b)* assistant inspectors were employed in Her Majesty's Fire Service Inspectorate to advise upon technical fire safety issues in each year since 1997. [63956]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The following shows the number of Inspectors and Assistant Inspectors employed yearly since 1997. The figures for Assistant Inspectors include Crown Premises Inspection Group personnel.

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
HM Inspectors	10	11	9	8	7	5	5	5	3	1
Assistant Inspectors	23 ('20)	21 ('18)	20 ('17)	18 ('15)	17 ('14)	15 ('12)	18 ('15)	12 ('9)	11 ('9)	9 ('9)

1 Denotes Crown Premises Inspection Group

Home Information Packs

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the estimated cost is of training estate agents, lawyers and lenders in the implementation of home information packs. [63785]

Yvette Cooper: This is a matter for industry. The extent of training required will depend on what role individual advisers and businesses expect to play in the new market from 1 June 2007, and on their current state of readiness.

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the effect on the market of the implementation of home information packs; and if he will make a statement. [63787]

Yvette Cooper: A detailed market study was carried out in January 2005 which revealed a high degree of dissatisfaction with the present system. We are planning to undertake further research in two phases, in June 2006 and then further analysis 18 or 24 months after implementation.

Home Ownership

Ed Balls: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proportion of families in *(a)* the Wakefield district and *(b)* Normanton constituency own their own homes. [62647]

Yvette Cooper: 2001 Census data shows that 65 per cent. of households in the Wakefield district, and 73 per cent. of households in the Normanton constituency own their own homes.

Homelessness

Dr. Cable: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the implications for his Department's work on reducing homelessness of the decision by the Legal Services Commission to withdraw funding for specialised support and advice on housing. [54721]

Yvette Cooper: This is a matter for the Minister of State for the Department for Constitutional Affairs. I understand that the decision to withdraw funding has now been revoked.

Housing

Ed Balls: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many units of shared equity housing there are in *(a)* Wakefield district and *(b)* Normanton constituency; and what share the purchasers receive of these houses. [62645]

Yvette Cooper: Information on the numbers of shared equity units by local authority district is available from Part O of the Regulatory and Statistical Return of the Housing Corporations. This information is published at the following address:

http://www.rsrsurvey.co.uk/index.cfm?task=stats&expandID=122&expandlist=66.

According to this information there were 279 units of shared ownership, leasehold housing for older people and other leasehold homes where the purchaser had not acquired 100 per cent. of the equity, in Wakefield district on 31 March 2005. These data are not published for parliamentary constituencies.

Information on the share the purchasers have of these houses is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what information he has received about plans by owners of sheltered and residential housing schemes to sell off wardens' flats; and if he will make a statement. [57901]

Yvette Cooper: We have received no information about such plans.

Advances in technology mean that some sheltered schemes are ran without resident wardens.

The Housing Corporation has not heard of any wardens' flats being sold off and if schemes were grant funded, the registered social landlord would need the Housing Corporation's consent.

John Hemming: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which local authorities that are subject to an inquiry into affordable housing have approved an affordable housing retirement village to be built in partnership with a registered social landlord and the private sector without Housing Corporation funding. [61546]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not hold information on individual schemes which are being considered by local authorities.

I have asked officials in Government Office West Midlands to investigate with Birmingham city council its approach to the sale of housing land, and the implications of this for the provision of affordable housing and wider neighbourhood regeneration in the City in the long term.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many of the new social rented homes promised in the Spending Review 2004 will be built or acquired as a result of *(a)* the National Affordable Housing Programmes in 2004 to 2006 and 2006 to 2008, *(b)* the private finance initiative and *(c)* Section 106 agreements. [63414]

Yvette Cooper: We estimate around 67,000 social rented homes will be provided through the Housing Corporation's Affordable Housing Programme over the three years, 2005–08. In addition, some 1,200 will be provided through the Private Finance Initiative and 4,000 through Section 106 agreements without grant funding over the same time scale.

Ed Balls: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many units of social housing have been made available in *(a)* Wakefield district and *(b)* Normanton constituency since 1980; and how many are planned for the next five years. [62646]

Yvette Cooper: For the number of social housing units made available I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given on 21 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 279W. Provisionally 35 social rented homes were provided through the Housing Corporation's Approved Development Programme in 2005–06 in Wakefield. The Housing Corporation's Affordable Housing Programme for 2006–08 is currently allocating resources to Wakefield to provide 150 social rented homes. Not all of these will be completed in the two year time frame.

Planned annual housing requirements are developed as part the Regional Spatial Strategies. The Government have set a target of providing 75,000 social rented homes, through a mix of new build and purchase, from 2004–05 to 2007–08. Future delivery of social housing after 2007–08 will be dependent on the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many *(a)* social rented homes and *(b)* shared ownership homes were built with Transitional Local Authority Social Housing Grant in 2004–05; and what his latest estimate is of the number of completions in 2005–06. [63415]

Yvette Cooper: In 2004–05 a total of 3187 homes were provided through Transitional Local Authority Social Housing Grant (TLASHG) for social rent and 508 for shared ownership

Provisional figures indicate that there will be around 2,500 homes provided for social rent and 400 for shared ownership through TLASHG in 2005–06.

Licensing (Carlisle)

Mr. Martlew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many licences for the sale of alcohol over 24 hours have been granted in Carlisle in the last 12 months. [63192]

Mr. Woolas: There have been six 24 hour licences granted in Carlisle in the last 12 months; three to nightclubs, two to superstores and one to a hotel.

Lancashire Fire Service

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average time taken by the Lancashire Fire Service to arrive on the scene of an incident in response to a 999 call has been in each of the last 12 months. [64325]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The available information covers attendance at primary fires only. 2004 is the latest year for which finalised data are published.

The following table shows the average response time to primary fires attended by Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service each month during 2004. This is measured in minutes from time of first call to the fire and rescue service to time of arrival at the scene.

Primary fires attended by Lancashire FRS: Average response times, 2004

	Response time (minutes)
January	6.7
February	6.7
March	6.4
April	6.6
May	6.6
June	6.6
July	6.7
August	6.6
September	6.6
October	6.5
November	6.8
December	6.5
2004	6.6

Note:
Data excludes late calls, heat and smoke damage only incidents.
Source:
Fire and Rescue Service FDR1 returns to ODPM.

Local Authority Staff

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the change in the whole-time equivalent number of staff, including education staff, employed by *(a)* local authorities in England and *(b)* City of York council has been in (i) absolute and (ii) percentage terms since April 2003. [62865]

Mr. Woolas: ODPM does not collect this information. Some overall information may be available from the Local Government Employer's (LGE) organisation, and specific local authority information from the authority in question.

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much was spent by *(a)* local authorities in England and *(b)* City of York council on employing staff, including education staff, in (i) 2002–03 and (ii) the latest year for which figures are available; and what the change in expenditure on staff has been (A) at constant prices and (B) as a percentage of 2002–03 expenditure. [62866]

Mr. Woolas: The requested information is tabled as follows:

Employee expenditure[1]

	2002–03 (£ billion)	*2004–05 (£ billion)*	*Change between 2002–03 and 2004–05*[2]	
			£ billion	*Percentage*
Actual prices				
England	44.345	52.940	8.596	19.4
York	0.106	0.133	0.027	25.5
Constant prices[3]				
England	46.507	52.940	6.433	13.8
York	0.111	0.133	0.022	19.7

[1] Total expenditure on employees as reported by authorities to ODPM on Revenue Outturn (RO) forms. This includes all direct and indirect employee expenses and contributions to employee-related provisions, including national insurance contributions, pensions and employee related expenses.

[2] Comparisons across years may not be valid due to changes in the method of reporting the information. In particular, the outturn data for 2002–03 have been calculated on a non-FRS (financial reporting standard) 17 basis while the outturn data for 2004–05 have been calculated on an FRS 17 basis. Hence, figures for the different years may not be directly comparable.
[3] The 2002–03 prices have been re-valued at 2004–05 prices using the latest ONS/HMT GDP deflators.
Note:
All data are as published in Local Government Financial Statistics or in National Statistics Releases as available from http://www.local.odpm.gov.uk/finance/stats/index.htm.

Local Government Finance

John Hemming: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the adjusted amended national figure is for the formula spending share with resource equalisation for 2005–06; what the adjusted amended central Government grant is for 2005–06; and what the assumed council tax yield is for that year. [63225]

Mr. Woolas: The total adjusted amended formula spending shares with additional resource equalisation for 2005–06 is £40,893,348,986.

The adjusted amended formula grant for 2005–06 is £24,091,464,439.

The assumed national council tax yield is the difference between the adjusted amended formula spending shares excluding additional resource equalisation (£39,713,577,986) and the adjusted amended total of revenue support grant and redistributed business rates (£20,196,455,148) i.e. £19,517,122,838.

John Hemming: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the national figure is for the formula spending share 2006–07; what the central Government grant (excluding the police grant) is for 2006–07; and what the 2006–07 assumed council tax yield is. [63227]

Mr. Woolas: Formula spending shares were not used in the calculation of the 2006–07 formula grant. Nor did we make an assessment of assumed council tax yield.

The amount of formula grant excluding principal formula police grant is £20,878,123,134 for 2006–07.

Local Government Pension Scheme

Mr. Weir: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what discussions he has had with the European Commission on the rule of 85 in the Local Government pension scheme. [63640]

Mr. Woolas: Where appropriate, contacts on matters regarding the Local Government Pension Scheme in England and Wales are maintained through the United Kingdom Permanent Representation to the European Union (UKREP).

Mr. Weir: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what advice he has received from the European Commission on the legality of the rule of 85 in the Local Government pension scheme. [63641]

Mr. Woolas: None. The Government relies on its own legal advice.

Local Government Services

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect of a local government strike on the provision of local services. [62318]

Mr. Woolas: The industrial action which took place on 28 March 2006 is a matter between the trades unions and the employers. Its effects are being assessed as information becomes available.

Local Government Wages

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 9 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1753W, on local government wages, what additional payments central Government has made to local authorities to compensate for their extra costs as a result of the increase in the employer rate of national insurance. [62236]

Mr. Woolas: The Government took into account the pressures on local authorities, including the changes in national insurance contributions, and the extent to which those pressures can be mitigated, in setting its spending plans for local authorities. The Government have provided an increase on Government grant of £2.7 billion (4.5 per cent.) and £3.1 billion (5 per cent.) in 2006–07 and 2007–08 which will enable authorities to continue to provide effective local services without imposing excessive council tax increases.

Parish Precepts

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what measures he has in place to regulate the level of parish precepts on council tax. [62306]

Mr. Woolas: We expect town and parish councils to budget prudently and believe they should take into account the views of local people on how their money should be spent. Under current legislation there is no provision for capping parishes or issuing statutory guidance to them on their budgets. There are no current plans to amend the legislation, but we will keep the situation under review.

Planning

Anne Main: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what guidance his Department issues to local authorities on dealing with multiple planning applications for the same site; and if he will make a statement. [62206]

Yvette Cooper: Local planning authorities' power to turn away repeat planning applications was increased with effect from the 24 August 2005. Until then, a valid application could be turned away only if the applicant had, within the previous two years, had two substantially similar proposals called in and refused, or dismissed at appeal.

Now, authorities can decline to determine an application which is similar to one which has been subject to two previous refusals by the local planning authority in the preceding two years, even where there has been no appeal to the Secretary of State.

Relevant guidance is in ODPM Circular 8 of 2005, Guidance on Changes to the Development Control System, which is on the website www.odpm.gov.uk.

Right To Buy

Mr. Betts: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the *(a)* capital receipts from right to buy sales and *(b)* total value of right to buy discounts was in each Government office region in 2005–06. [63572]

Yvette Cooper: Figures for the right to buy capital receipts and discounts in each year since 1998–99 by local authority area and Government office region can be found on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website: http://www.odpm.gov.uk/pub/383/Table648Excel545Kb_id1156383.xls.

Mr. Betts: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total value was of the right to buy discounts in each Government office region in 2004–05. [63573]

Yvette Cooper: Figures for the right-to-buy discounts in each year since 1998–99 by local authority area and Government office region can be found on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website: http://www.odpm.gov.uk/pub/383/Table648Excel545Kb_id1156383.xls.

Second Homes (Cornwall)

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what research he has commissioned into the effects of second home ownership on rural communities in Cornwall; and if he will make a statement. [63629]

Yvette Cooper: The Government have established the Affordable Rural Housing Commission to consider the evidence and reach a consensus on the relevant issues around affordable housing needs in rural areas, in the context of sustainable rural communities, and to provide recommendations for practical solutions across private, government and voluntary sectors, taking account of existing good practice.

Evidence has been taken by the Commission from partners in Cornwall and across the country and it will report in the spring. The Government will then carefully consider the Commission's recommendations, including any relating to policies on second home ownership.

Sir David Garrard/Mr. Andrew Rosenfeld

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether he has met *(a)* Sir David Garrard and *(b)* Mr. Andrew Rosenfeld in his official capacity during the past 12 months; and if he will make a statement. [63203]

Jim Fitzpatrick: My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister has not met *(a)* Sir David Garrard or *(b)* Mr. Andrew Rosenfeld in his official capacity during the past 12 months.

Social Renting

Mr. Laws: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many houses for social rent including council houses have been built in each of the last five years; what estimate he has made of the number which will be built over the next three years; and if he will make a statement. [63304]

Yvette Cooper: For the number of social housing units made available I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 21 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 279W. Information on the number of social housing units built is more limited.

Planned annual housing requirements are developed as part the Regional Spatial Strategies. The Government have set a target of providing 75,000 social rented homes, through a mix of new build and purchase, from 2004–05 to 2007–08. Of these we estimate around 3,000 will be provided through local authorities and at least 60,000 through Registered Social Landlords. In addition housing will be provided under the Private Finance Initiative and by planning gain.

Tenancy Deposit Scheme

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he expects to implement the Tenancy Deposit Scheme. [63417]

Yvette Cooper: Tenancy deposit protection is scheduled to commence in England and Wales on 1 October 2006. There will be two types of scheme: a single custodial scheme (where deposits are paid into and held in a separate account); and one or more insurance-based schemes (where the landlord or agent retains the deposit and any failure on their part to repay it to the tenant is covered by the scheme's insurance arrangements). Each scheme will offer an alternative dispute resolution service. Both types of scheme will apply only to assured shorthold tenancies where a deposit is taken.

Tenant Empowerment Programmes

John Hemming: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the budget for the *(a)* National Programme of Training for Residents, *(b)* Tenant Empowerment Programme and *(c)* Tenant Empowerment Grant was in each year since 2003–04; how much has been allocated for 2006–07 in each case; and if he will make a statement. [59143]

Yvette Cooper: The budget for *(a)* the National Programme of Training for Residents in 2003–04 was £757,235; for 2004–05 it was £517,260; for 2005–06 it is £399,874 and for 2006–07 £162,368 has been allocated.

The total budget for *(b)* the National Training and Conferences Programme (including the National Programme of Training for Residents) for 2003–04 was £1,611,438; for 2004–05 it was £1,422,584; for 2005–06 it is £939,783 and for 2006–07 the budget is £679,996.

The Tenant Empowerment Grant budget *(c)* for 2003–04 was £4,600,000; for 2004–05 it was £4,100,000; for 2005–06 it is £3,600,000 and for 2006–07, £2,640,000.

A large part of the reduction at the end of the current financial year is being taken up by the completion of the five-year Innovation into Action (IiA) programme the budget for which was £940,000 for 2005–06.

The Office further secures tenant empowerment through mainstream programmes offering tenants the opportunity to become much more involved in making decisions about the management and ownership of their homes, through the decent homes option appraisal

process, and through the implementation of the chosen decent homes option such as arms length management organisations and housing transfer housing associations There is a dedicated programme of £400,000 in the 2006–07 Tenant Empowerment programme to facilitate tenants exploring tenant-led ownership as part of the delivery of decent homes.

Tyler-CLT User Conference

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether representatives from his Department will attend the 2006 Tyler-CLT User Conference in Utah, USA in April. [60191]

Jim Fitzpatrick: No.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Afghanistan

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the administration of humanitarian aid in Afghanistan. [55202]

Hilary Benn: Denmark, Ireland, the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK recently undertook an Evaluation of their Humanitarian and Reconstruction assistance to Afghanistan between 2001 and 2005. The evaluation found that the humanitarian assistance provided, when combined with internal Afghan political stabilisation and economic recovery, had been successful in responding to the humanitarian challenge. The evaluation assesses the main implementing bodies on performance. The UN agencies, who were responsible for a large percentage of the humanitarian assistance provided by the UK, were judged in a positive light. The evaluation did find, however, that this aid had come at a high cost because of security and logistical constraints, and that for the same reasons had been unevenly distributed between the regions and communities of Afghanistan.

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of progress towards the post-conflict reconstruction of Afghanistan. [55325]

Hilary Benn: Despite a legacy of more than 20 years of conflict, Afghanistan has made rapid progress over the last four years. A new constitution has been established, and a democratically President and Parliament has been elected. The Government is strongly committed to working with the international community to achieve development progress. Economic growth has been good, and for 2005–06 is forecast to be over 13 per cent. There are now 60 per cent. more functioning health clinics, nearly two thousand schools have been built or rehabilitated and 60,000 former combatants have been disarmed.

However, while progress is encouraging, Afghanistan is still one of the world's poorest countries. It is off track on all of the Millennium Development Goals. The political consensus is unstable, with continued insurgency in parts of the country. Reconstruction will take quite some time. Limited capacity within Government institutions is a significant challenge, as is the opium economy, which threatens to undermine progress on all fronts, including on development.

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what his assessment is of the effectiveness of policies to control the opium trade in Afghanistan. [55351]

Hilary Benn: The effectiveness of policies to control drug production in Afghanistan will only be shown if Afghanistan can achieve reductions in poppy cultivation which can be sustained over the long-term. The updated Afghan National Drug Control Strategy launched at the London Conference on 31 January/ 1 February 2006, acknowledged that sustainable drug elimination will take many years. The updated strategy sets out the Afghan Government's counter-narcotics policies for the coming three years and highlights priorities where activity is likely to make the greatest impact in the short-term. These are (i) targeting the trafficker and trade; (ii) strengthening and diversifying legal livelihoods; (iii) developing effective counter-narcotics institutions; and (iv) reducing the demand for drugs. DFID believes this is the right approach and is committed to helping the Afghan Government rid Afghanistan of the drugs trade over the long-term through the social and economic development of the country.

Progress has been made, but it is fragile. There was a significant drop in cultivation in 2005, but early indications suggest that the total area under cultivation in 2006 has increased. This demonstrates that eradication will take time, and alternative livelihoods remain a central part of sustainable eradication.

In 2005, the area under cultivation fell 21 per cent. (from 131,000 hectares to 104,000 hectares). There were also more seizures (around 160 tonnes of opiates seized since January 2004) 90 convictions by the Criminal Justice Task Force, 247 more cases under investigation, a new counter- narcotics law passed in December and progress on developing alternative livelihoods.

However, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Opium Rapid Assessment Survey for 2006 carried out over January and February, suggests there may be an increase in the overall levels of opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan in 2006, compared with 2005. Although this is only an estimate—we will not know final cultivation figures until the UNODC produce those figures later in the year 2006—it does give cause for concern; but it does not mean policies are failing. The headline figures produced by the Rapid Assessment Survey mask significant progress, particularly in provinces where we saw significant reductions last year. For the first time since the Taliban ban in 2000, reductions will be sustained in a number of areas, particularly around provincial capitals, where a more effective Afghan state appears to be driving cultivation into the less accessible peripheral areas.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on aid policy to Afghanistan. [63138]

Hilary Benn: The Government of Afghanistan's Interim National Development Strategy provides the foundation for DFID's activity in Afghanistan. Under the 10-year Development Partnership Arrangement the Prime Minister signed with President Karzai at the London Conference, we will provide £330 million of

development assistance over the next 3 years, as part of the overall UK pledge of £500 million, to reduce poverty, improve security and governance, and tackle the opium industry.

DFID Afghanistan's programme concentrates on three areas:

state-building, to address the weaknesses in state institutions and to help ensure that sustainable development can be financed and delivered;

economic management and aid effectiveness, to strengthen the public finance system and support the development and implementation of a National Development Strategy;

alternative livelihoods, to help reduce dependence on the opium economy and to stimulate rural economic growth.

Progress in these three areas is essential to ensuring that long term development can happen.

Aid Expenditure

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what percentage of the UK's gross domestic product was given to foreign aid and development in the 2004–05 financial year; and what the total monetary figure was. [63134]

Hilary Benn: UK Official Development Assistance (ODA) as a proportion of Gross National Income (GNI) is reported annually on a calendar year basis in line with international reporting conventions. The UK's ODA as a proportion of GNI for 2004 was 0.36 per cent. and the provisional figure for 2005 is 0.48 per cent. The UK's total ODA in 2004 was £4,302 million and the provisional figure for 2005 is £5,916 million.

Avian Influenza

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to the answer of 21 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 184W, on avian influenza, what information he has on the availability per capita of anti-viral drugs in *(a)* Nigeria, *(b)* Niger and *(c)* Cameroon. [62636]

Mr. Thomas: In Nigeria, there are 10,000 doses of the anti-viral Tamiflu. DFID has made funds available to the World Health Organisation (WHO) for a further 5,000 doses of Tamiflu. This is the first step in developing a contingency response to the outbreak of avian influenza in Nigeria. DFID's assistance is part of the £550,000 grant that has been given to the World Health Organisation and builds on the 15,000 personal protection kits that we have provided for distribution to front-line workers and those involved in surveillance of the disease.

As stated in my answer of 21 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 184W, DFID does not have major programmes in Niger or Cameroon and our direct access to information on anti-viral drugs is therefore limited. The WHO has reported that it is stockpiling sufficient anti-viral drugs for three million treatment courses, which will be reserved for use in the first areas affected by an emerging pandemic virus.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what contribution the Government have made to *(a)* the World Bank and *(b)* other international efforts to combat the global impact of the H5N1 virus. [63843]

Mr. Thomas: At the International Pledging Conference on Avian and Human Pandemic Influenza, held in Beijing in January, DFID pledged £20 million over the next three years to multilateral organisations. We await clarification from the World Bank of outstanding multilateral priorities in the light of other donor pledges before deciding how the £20 million will be spent.

DFID is also considering support from our bilateral programme for individual countries, while other parts of the UK Government are offering technical support in their areas of expertise.

The UK Government are supporting the work of the UN System Influenza Co-ordinator and international organisations, including the World Bank and European Commission, in promoting and co-ordinating an effective international response that recognises the importance of action in and for the benefit of poorer countries.

Capita Group

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much business his Department has placed with *(a)* Capita Group plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries in each of the last five years; what the total value is of outstanding contracts placed with Capita Group plc and its subsidiaries by his Department; for which current tenders issued by his Department (i) Capita Group plc and (ii) its subsidiaries have been invited to bid; and whether (A) Capita Group plc and (B) its subsidiaries have seconded staff (1) temporarily and (2) on a longer-term basis to (X) his Department and (Y) its agencies. [61071]

Hilary Benn: I refer the hon. Member for Epsom and Ewell to an answer given on 13 February 2003, *Official Report*, column 921W, which provided details of contracts awarded to Capita Group plc and subsidiaries for 2001–02 and 2002–03. These contracts have now ended. The Department for International Development (DFID) and Commonwealth Development Corporation (CDC) have no other contracts with Capita or any of its subsidiaries. There are no current tenders for which they have been invited to bid, and no seconded staff in office.

James Brokenshire: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what the value of contracts held by his Department with *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries was in the last three financial years; [61444]

(2) how many tenders *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries have submitted to his Department in each of the last three years; and how many tenders were successful. [61445]

Hilary Benn: The Department for International Development (DFID) did not have any contracts with or receive any tenders from Capita plc or its subsidiaries during the last three financial years.

James Brokenshire: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many contracts his Department holds with *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries which still have a potential duration of five years or more. [61446]

Hilary Benn: The Department For International Development (DFID) does not have any contracts with Capita plc or its subsidiaries.

Sudan

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what estimate he has made of the number of *(a)* internally displaced people and *(b)* refugees in other countries arising from the situation in Darfur. [62587]

Hilary Benn: The UN Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) currently estimates the number of internally displaced people (IDPs) in Darfur at 1.8 million. Although the first three months of 2005 have seen further displacement, estimated at up to 140,000, ongoing 'headcount and re-registration exercises amongst existing IDPs have reduced previous estimates. The overall figure has therefore stayed reasonably stable.

There are an estimated 200,000 Darfuri refugees in Chad as a result of the conflict in Darfur. Since January 2006, a further 3,600 displaced people have crossed the border from West Darfur into the eastern Chadian.

Departmental Sick Leave (Stress)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many people have been on sick leave suffering from stress in his Department in each of the last three years; and what percentage of the total staff number this represents. [63560]

Mr. Thomas: The number of DFID staff who have been on sick leave suffering from stress in each of the last three years, and the percentage of staff that this represents are in the following table.

	Number of cases	*Percentage of staff*
2003	27	1.38
2004	24	1.21
2005	24	1.28
2006	—	—

The figures given in the table relate to permanent and fixed term Home Civil Service staff and will cover a range of stress induced illnesses, including work related stress.

DFID recognises work related stress as an occupational health and safety issue and is currently putting the Health and Safety Executive's Management Standards for handling work related stress into practice.

A comprehensive risk assessment was carried out in 2004 and we are currently in the process of implementing a Stress Prevention Strategy within the department. A number of measures have been put in place to deal with work related stress, including stress management training; an employee assistance programme; a counselling service; flexible working arrangements and an occupational healthcare scheme.

Departmental Televisions

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many television sets are in operation in the Department *(a)* in total, *(b)* in Ministers' private offices and *(c)* in each building in the Department; and how many television licences are held by the Department. [62805]

Mr. Thomas: DFID has 36 televisions in its three UK offices. Four are in Minister's and associated private offices. There are 22 televisions in total in the main building at 1 Palace street, London (including the four above), a further seven in DFID's office at 20 Victoria street, London, and seven in our East Kilbride office. Each of the three buildings holds its own single television license.

Earthquake Relief (South-east Asia)

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent assessment he has made of international efforts to *(a)* assist the relief of those affected by the October 2005 earthquake in South East Asia and *(b)* help the process of reconstruction; and how much of that effort was provided by the UK. [63844]

Mr. Thomas: DFID has so far committed approximately £53.3 million to the relief effort, making the UK the second largest donor after the US, and has pledged a further £70 million to reconstruction. Overall the international community has committed $1.09 billion to meet relief needs.

DFID is currently conducting a thorough review of the post-earthquake situation in south Asia and the effectiveness of international relief. So far, DFID officials have made three visits to review logistics, health, water and sanitation and shelter; two more will take place later this month to look at the response of the Red Cross Movement and at livelihoods.

With regard to the reconstruction, at present there is no formal process by which the Government of Pakistan (GoP) are consulting donors about GoP/donor preferences for commitment and utilisation of the funds that were pledged to Pakistan at the donors conference on 19 November. There is effective informal co-ordination between the main donors (known locally as the Group of 7) and through this fora, we are working together with the GoP to articulate its demands more clearly, to increase local ownership.

DFID is one of the largest bilateral donors for reconstruction, and is a trusted partner of the Government of Pakistan. We committed £70 million for reconstruction at the Donors' Conference last November. DFID Pakistan has undertaken a programming mission and will be submitting a Programme Memorandum for Ministers' approval this month. DFID funds are likely to be routed through the Government of Pakistan for general reconstruction purposes as well as some more specific technical assistance funds for capacity building and disaster risk reduction.

We have provided technical support to Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA) to draw up a master plan for implementation and

monitoring of the overall reconstruction programme. DFID support to the Government of Pakistan also includes developing a single, comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework, providing the Pakistani authorities and donors with a common framework, ensuring no duplication of effort.

The first £5 million tranche of DFID's support for reconstruction has already been spent. In consultation with international programme partners in Pakistan and the Governments of Pakistani Administered Kashmir and the North West Frontier Province (NWFP), immediate reconstruction purposes were identified and the following critical areas were funded:

£4 million for reconstructing critical bridges in the affected area;

£800,000 to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) for training teachers and administrators, in order to underpin support for rehabilitation of the education sector;

£200,000 for TB prevention services and mental health support services in the earthquake affected areas.

Ethiopia

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make representations to the Prime Minister of Ethiopia on *(a)* the reorganisation of the National Election Board, *(b)* the repeal of parliamentary procedures which preclude opposition members from participating fully in parliamentary proceedings, *(c)* the independence of the judiciary and courts and *(d)* the establishment of an independent media commission. [63410]

Hilary Benn: The UK Government are committed to promoting better governance in Ethiopia and I have raised concerns about all of these issues with Prime Minister Meles Zenawi. Along with a number of donors, we are contributing to Ethiopia's own public sector capacity-building programme, which includes reform of judicial systems. We are also working closely with the Government of Ethiopia, Parliament and other stakeholders on issues such as reform of the National Election Board, best practice in parliamentary procedures, and media legislation. We remain committed to supporting democratisation in Ethiopia.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will take steps to ensure that the European Union cancels all financial aid to Ethiopia until democracy and the independence of the judiciary is restored in that country. [63412]

Hilary Benn: All donors, including the UK and other European Union members, have decided they can no longer provide assistance to Ethiopia through general budget support, which the Government could use for any purpose, in the light of recent political developments. Nevertheless, the UK remains fully committed to supporting the people of Ethiopia in their fight against poverty, and I do not consider it appropriate to cancel all other forms of aid or to encourage others to do so.

DFID is working with the World Bank and the Government of Ethiopia to develop a new, more accountable method of providing funds, through Government channels, for basic services such as education, health and water. Other donors, including the European Commission and some other member states, have expressed an interest in channelling funds through this mechanism.

The international community has repeatedly and publicly made known its concerns about the events surrounding the 2005 elections and human rights abuses.

Grievance Procedures

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many grievance procedures have been initiated in his Department in each of the last three years. [63561]

Mr. Thomas: DFID's grievance procedures are fully compliant with UK legislation and apply to civil servants working in the UK and overseas. We also apply them to our locally appointed staff overseas, who work under local contracts, unless local law dictates otherwise.

DFID did not hold a central record of grievances until October 2004. We have details of two grievances raised in 2003–04.

Since October 2004, there have been a total of 17 grievances raised. This includes civil servants and locally appointed staff overseas. The following table provides a breakdown by year.

	Grievances
2003–04	2 (no central records)
2004–05	10
2005–06	7
Total	19

Harassment Complaints

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many complaints of *(a)* bullying and *(b)* sexual harassment have been investigated in his Department in each of the last three years; and how many complaints have been upheld. [63562]

Mr. Thomas: DFID's Grievance Procedures are fully compliant with UK legislation and apply to civil servants working in the UK and overseas. We also apply them to our locally appointed staff overseas, who work under local contracts, unless local law dictates otherwise. We are currently preparing a Dignity At Work policy, which will provide improved guidance on issues such as bullying and harassment, including sources of advice and support

DFID did not hold a central record of grievances until October 2004. We have details of two cases in 2003–04.

A total of seven complaints of bullying or harassment have been investigated in the last three years. This includes civil servants and locally appointed staff overseas. Due to the small numbers, a breakdown by year, category and outcome is not made public on grounds of confidentiality.

Lesotho

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the total amount of UK aid to Lesotho has been in each of the last 30 years in real terms at current prices. [56197]

Hilary Benn: The UK has provided the following aid to Lesotho in real terms:

£ million

	UK bilateral aid in real terms at 2004 prices	*Estimated UK share of multilateral assistance in real terms as at 2004 prices*
1975	20.7	n/a
1976	9.6	n/a
1977	8.9	n/a
1978	19.2	n/a
1979	20.9	n/a
1980	11.7	n/a
1981	12.7	n/a
1982	8.6	4.8
1983	10.2	3.9
1984	10.8	3.7
1985	4.6	4.7
1986	7.2	2.7
1987	7.0	3.4
1988	8.3	3.9
1989	9.5	5.1
1990	8.5	4.3
1991	9.9	3.6
1992	8.2	5.1
1993	8.5	5.6
1994	6.2	6.7
1995	7.7	3.3
1996	6.2	3.6
1997	5.3	2.9
1998	6.0	2.5
1999	3.0	0.1
2000	3.3	2.3
2001	3.1	2.4
2002	1.2	1.9
2003	3.2	3.8
2004	4.0	n/a

n/a = not available

In addition DFID operates a number of regional programmes, totalling £24 million, from which Lesotho also benefits.

Palestine

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development which independent auditor has been responsible for reviewing the Palestinian Authority's annual financial statements in accordance with the terms of the Reform Trust Fund; and if he will make a statement. [63653]

Hilary Benn: The Palestinian Authority's annual financial statements have been reviewed by Price Waterhouse Coopers Ltd. This company was selected by international competitive tender.

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what representations he has received from the Palestinian Authority regarding its commitment to reform benchmarks agreed with the World Bank; and if he will make a statement. [63654]

Hilary Benn: Progress against reform benchmarks agreed by the Palestinian Authority (PA) were most recently assessed by the World Bank in consultation with the PA, DFID and other donors in February 2006. The World Bank mission report noted that the PA had met eleven out of fourteen of its reform benchmarks and had made progress on the remaining three.

The PA had successfully established internal and external audit functions as well as internal controls on procurement and salary payments. However, work remained on pension reform and on a strategy to improve medium-term fiscal stability.

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what discussions he has had with his Quartet partners regarding the future of the Reform Trust Fund; and if he will make a statement; [63656]

(2) what discussions he has had with his *(a)* EU and *(b)* US counterparts regarding the provision and continuation of humanitarian and development support to the Palestinian people; and if he will make a statement. [63655]

Hilary Benn: On 30 January, the Quartet (the US, the EU, the UN and Russia) stated that aid to the future Palestinian government would be reviewed against the principles of non-violence, recognition of Israel's right to exist and commitment to the peace process. The Quartet noted on 30 March, that the new Government had not committed to these principles and that this would inevitably lead to an effect on direct assistance to that Government.

In these circumstances the UK Government cannot provide direct financial support to the Palestinian cabinet or its ministries through the Reform Trust Fund or by other means. However, we will continue to do all that we can to support the basic needs of the Palestinian people. We are working with other the main donors to establish the most effective mechanisms for this.

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to his answer of 21 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 187–8W, on Palestine, what conclusions have been drawn from the review process on how best to support poverty reduction for the Palestinians in the context of the outcome of the recent Palestinian legislative elections; and if he will make a statement. [63800]

Hilary Benn: On 30 March the Quartet (the US, the EU, the UN and Russia) noted that the new Palestinian Government have not yet complied with the principles of non-violence, recognition of Israel's right to exist and commitment to the peace process. Without progress against the Quartet's conditions, the UK Government cannot provide direct financial support to the Palestinian cabinet or its ministries. Projects with Palestinian Ministries have been suspended or re-oriented to focus on other partners. DFID is also working with other major donors to establish the most effective mechanism to meet the basic needs of the Palestinian people without providing funding through the Palestinian Government.

Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what his Department's employer contribution rates to the Principal Civil

Service pension scheme are; what assumed rate of return underlies those contribution rates; and what the contribution rate would be if the assumed rate of return was in line with current redemption yield on index-linked gilts. [62002]

Mr. Thomas: I refer the hon. Member for Runnymede and Weybridge to the response given by my hon. Friend, the Under-Secretary of State for the Cabinet Office, (Mr. Murphy) on 29 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1030–1031W.

Rwanda

Ed Balls: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the literacy rates are in Rwanda; and how this has changed in the last 10 years. [54805]

Hilary Benn: Estimations of literacy in Rwanda vary considerably. Based on the 2000 national Household Living Conditions Survey (HLCS), which recorded a literacy rate of 52.4 per cent., and the 2002 population census, we estimate the current literacy rate to be between 55–60 per cent. The HLCS records lower literacy rates for women—47.79 per cent. compared to 58.06 per cent. for men. There is very little comparable national data on literacy available for the last 10 years: international statistics suggest that literacy rates may have fallen between 1990 and 1996 from 53.3 per cent. (Global Monitoring Report) to 48 per cent. (UNDP Human Development Report) but they have now surpassed pre-genocide levels. Higher rates of youth literacy (15–24 years) suggest a positive trajectory for the future. The 2006 HLCS, due to report in 2007, should supply more up to date statistics.

Literacy rates—Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2006

	Percentage
Adult literacy rate (15 years and over)	
1990	
Total	53.3
Male	62.9
Female	44.0
2000–04	
Total	69.2
Male	75.3
Female	63.4
Youth literacy rate (15 to 24 years)	
1990	
Total	72.7
Male	78.0
Female	67.4
2000–04	
Total	84.9
Male	86.3
Female	83.6

Tanzania

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what discussions he has had with the United Nations concerning the provision of aid in drought stricken regions of Tanzania. [63133]

Hilary Benn: DFID's response to the drought is based on the Government of Tanzania's requests for assistance to the donor community. In February, the Government of Tanzania requested the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) to co-ordinate an immediate programme of distribution of seed and pesticides to the worst affected parts of the country. DFID Tanzania has provided £700,000 of assistance to this programme. Seeds, pesticides and livestock inoculations are now being purchased and distributed, and are reaching those most in need.

The Government of Tanzania also requested the World Food Programme (WFP) of the United Nations to plan a medium-term Emergency Operation to distribute 34,000 metric tons of free food aid to 565,000 of the most vulnerable people from mid May to September. These figures are now being reviewed by the Government of Tanzania, the WFP and the FAO. DFID and other donors will consider providing further emergency support for drought relief in Tanzania, subject to the recommendations of this review.

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what estimate he has made of the amount of food aid required to prevent famine in Tanzania before the May harvest. [63161]

Hilary Benn: DFID, in line with other donors, has based its assessment of what aid is required on the Government of Tanzania's own figures. In February, following a rapid vulnerability analysis, the Government of Tanzania requested assistance from the international community with the provision of 100,000 metric tonnes of food assistance. Of this, 34,000 tonnes would be distributed as free food aid to 565,000 vulnerable people over a five-month period, beginning in mid May. The Government also requested immediate assistance in the form of seed and pesticides. In response, the UK has provided £700,000 to the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) for a programme of seed distribution, pesticide and livestock inoculation. In the longer term, DFID is helping the Government of Tanzania to address the root causes of poverty and food insecurity for its most vulnerable citizens.

UN Food and Agriculture Organisation

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what funding the Government have committed to provide to the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN in each of the next three years; what funding it provided to the Agency in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [62212]

Mr. Thomas: The United Kingdom has paid the following assessed contributions for the core budget of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) over the last three years:

	£ million
2003	11.23
2004	12.05
2005	11.94

The Government is committed to paying assessed contributions over the next three years as follows:

	£ million
2006	13.75
2007	13.75
2008	[1]

[1] No commitment as FAO's budget for the biennium for 2008–09 has not yet been approved by FAO's governing body. The commitments for 2006 and 2007 are approximate and may vary.

In addition to the assessed contributions, the Government provides funding to and through the FAO for specific activities and programmes. Detailed information on these contributions is not held centrally and to gather it would involve incurring a disproportionate cost.

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the work of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN, with particular reference to meeting the millennium development goals. [62213]

Mr. Thomas: The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) has an important contribution to make to the achievement of the Millennium Developments Goals, especially the target of reducing hunger by half by 2015. Evidence from assessments carried out by DFID and others shows that the FAO does much useful work to a very high professional standard; but it also shows that urgent reforms are needed to improve the FAO's efficiency and effectiveness, to ensure that it focuses its resources on the right priorities and to enable the FAO to play its full part in the wider reform of the United Nations system. The FAO's governing bodies have recently launched a comprehensive Independent External Evaluation (IEE) of the FAO to strengthen the evidence base and to help to generate consensus on what needs to be done to improve the FAO's performance in discharging its mandate and contributing to the Millennium Development Goals. DFID has pledged up to £300,000 towards the costs of the IEE.

Water Access

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps he is taking to improve his Department's performance in providing access to clean water and sanitation in the developing world. [62972]

Hilary Benn: DFID is committed to helping achieve the millennium development goal (MDG) target of halving the proportion of people without access to safe water by 2015. Our programmes are focussed on sub-Saharan Africa and parts of Asia, where achieving the target will be most difficult.

DFID is committed to doubling spending on water in Africa to £95 million by 2008. We are currently actively involved in seven African countries (Ethiopia, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Tanzania and Zambia), up from only two two years ago; and through our funding of other agencies' programmes, we reach many other countries.

We are also committed to creating an international system that works more effectively than it does now. We work closely with the World Bank, which is now more focussed on water, and with UN Water, to improve coordination of the UN agencies operating water and sanitation programmes.

DFID closely monitors progress in water and sanitation and publishes regular updates on the DFID website. The latest update will published later this month.

World Conference on Women

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what definition he uses of reproductive rights as set out in the United Nations Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women 1995; and if he will make a statement. [62699]

Mr. Thomas: The United Nations Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW) in 1995, uses the definition of reproductive rights agreed at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in Cairo in 1994. The definition is contained in paragraph 7.3 of the Cairo Programme of Action and in paragraph 95 of the FWCW Report.

In addition, paragraph 96 of the FWCW Report contains reference to women's human rights, thus providing more support for the definition given in paragraph 95.

Both the ICPD and the FWCW represent international policy standards, providing a basis for understanding and action agreed upon by countries by consensus.

World Health Organisation

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much funding his Department provided to the World Health Organisation for the publication Safe Abortion: Technical and Policy Guidance for Health Systems; and if he will make a statement. [62700]

Mr. Thomas: DFID did not provide any funding to the World Health Organisation (WHO) directly for the publication of the technical and policy guidance on safe abortion.

In September 2000, the World Health Organisation did convene a technical consultation on safe abortion as part of the process of preparing the technical and policy guidance. The technical consultation brought together international experts, including developing country health policy makers, to review the evidence and make recommendations on what the guidance should cover.

DFID provided £50,000 to support the technical consultation, to help ensure the participation of developing country experts.

Since 2003, we have provided an annual contribution to the WHO's core budget (currently £12.5 million), for the WHO to allocate against its approved Programme and Budget.

World Heritage Sites

David Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development which Minister in his Department has responsibility for issues relating to world heritage sites. [63479]

Mr. Thomas: Lead responsibility for policy on world heritage sites rests with the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport works closely with relevant Government Departments on all issues affecting world heritage sites. Within the Department for International Development, both myself and my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for International Development have responsibility for issues concerning world heritage sites which fall within the geographical areas on which they lead and which are within this Department's policy remit.

CABINET OFFICE

Office of Personnel Management

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will assess the relevance for the UK of the work of the Office of Personnel Management in the United States on encouraging working from home by Government employees. [63325]

Mr. Jim Murphy: Departments and Agencies have authority to put in place any working pattern, including home working, they consider suitable and are committed to opening up more flexible working opportunities, particularly at senior levels. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) encourages federal Government agencies to offer a varied choice of flexible working options to their employees, similar to that in the UK civil service. OPM pro-actively encourages home working as an option. The civil service is committed to keeping abreast of international initiatives and incorporating good practice into our own policies.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Ascension Island

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 27 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 665W, on Ascension Island, for what reasons the 27 people without a work contract with one of the main users are permitted to stay on the Island. [63675]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Of the 27 people on Ascension Island who do not have a work contract with one of the main users, 23 are employed with businesses considered to be essential services such as food outlets, small shops, the petrol station, hotel and bakery.

Of the remaining four people, three are adult dependent children whose permission to remain has been brought into line with that of their parents.

The status of the remaining individual is currently under review by the Attorney General.

Grievance Procedures

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many grievance procedures have been initiated in his Department in each of the last three years. [63557]

Ian Pearson: Grievances are dealt with informally through the complainant's line manager in the first instance and figures are not held centrally for such cases. Only if the issue cannot be resolved through the informal route are they officially recorded and dealt with formally. Formal grievance procedures were initiated as follows:

	Number
2003	8
2004	4
2005	4

Gibraltar

Sir John Stanley: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what proposals the British Government has put to the Spanish Government, and on what dates, to resolve the dispute over the operation by the authorities in Gibraltar of the Hague Convention of 1996 on the International Protection of Children once ratified by EU member states; and if he will make a statement. [62846]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The ratification of the Hague Convention of 1996 on the International Protection of Children is being blocked because Spain has questioned the arrangements under this convention for communications with competent authorities in Gibraltar.

A number of attempts have been made to resolve the issue. In late 2003 there were discussions at ministerial and official level. In October 2004 my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary wrote to the Spanish Minister for Foreign Affairs urging him to take a fresh look at the issue. There have been continued attempts to resolve the problem at official level and the broader issue of postboxing (whereby formal communications between Gibraltar competent authorities and their EU/ European Economic Area/European Free Trade Association counterparts under EU instruments take place via the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in London) is one of the subjects under discussion in the ongoing trilateral dialogue between Spain, Gibraltar and the UK.

Harassment Complaints

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many complaints of *(a)* bullying and *(b)* sexual harassment have been investigated in his Department in each of the last three years; and how many complaints have been upheld. [63539]

Ian Pearson: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office does not keep a breakdown of grievance types into separate categories as asked in this question. Our experience has been that grievances are often complex and can arise from a number of different issues so that it is often not feasible to categorise in this way.

Over the last three years, grievances have been investigated and upheld as follows:

	Number investigated	Number upheld
2003	8	2
2004	4	1
2005	7	[1]

[1] None upheld.

Israel

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his answer of 10 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1912W on Israel, whether he has asked UN Special Co-Ordinator de Soto what the outcome was of his raising with the Israeli authorities the issue of the Israeli air force operating low-flying aircraft over the Gaza strip. [59110]

Dr. Howells: Our Permanent Mission to the UN has asked UN Special Co-ordinator de Soto about his meetings. Mr. de Soto confirmed that he raised this matter with the Israelis but was unable to provide further details due to the confidential nature of the exchange.

Our embassy in Tel Aviv last raised this with the Israeli air force on 22 March.

Dr. Blackman-Woods: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the Government continues to regard the Green Line as the border of Israel under international law. [64027]

Dr. Howells: The territory beyond the Green Line which Israel occupied in June 1967 is occupied territory. UN Security Council Resolution 242 (1967) which the UK supported calls for the withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict and the termination of all claims of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every state in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognised boundaries free from threats or acts of force.

We continue to believe that final status issues, such as the final determination of borders, should be resolved through negotiations and agreement between the parties themselves. We share the quartet's goal of a two-state solution with Israel secure within her borders and Palestine established as a viable, contiguous state. We shall continue to work to this end.

Palestine

Dr. Blackman-Woods: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps he is taking to persuade Israel to stop taking more Palestinian land for illegal settlements, roads and the Wall in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. [64025]

Dr. Howells: We continue to raise both the barrier and settlements with the Israeli Government. Our ambassador in Tel Aviv last raised both of these issues on 2 March with the Israeli Prime Minister's Special Adviser.

Settlements are illegal under international law and settlement construction is an obstacle to peace. The Roadmap is clear that Israel should freeze all settlement construction including the "natural growth" of existing settlements and dismantle all outposts built since 2001.

The barrier's route should be on or behind the Green Line and not on occupied territory. Construction of the barrier on Palestinian land is illegal. The route is particularly damaging around East Jerusalem, as it risks cutting the city off from the West Bank and dividing the West Bank in two.

We will continue to raise our concerns over the settlements and the barrier with the Israeli Government at all levels.

Dr. Blackman-Woods: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the Government recognises the right of return to their homes and land of Palestinian refugees. [64026]

Dr. Howells: The return of refugees is a final status issue. Final status issues should be resolved through negotiations and agreement between the parties themselves. We continue to urge both the Israeli Government and the Palestinian Authority to implement their commitments as the best way to get to a negotiated settlement.

Uganda

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the ability of President Museveni to deal effectively with *(a)* corruption, *(b)* rural poverty and *(c)* HIV/AIDS in Uganda; and if he will make a statement. [62664]

Hilary Benn: I have been asked to reply.

Uganda has made significant progress in reducing poverty since President Museveni came to power in 1986. The percentage of the total population living below the poverty line has fallen from 56 per cent. in the early 1990s to 38 per cent. at the time of the last National Household survey in 2002–03. The third phase of the Government's Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) which commenced in 2004–05 sets out how the Government intend to further reduce poverty over the next three years.

Corruption is a serious problem that needs to be addressed. We welcome the progress that has been made in establishing anti-corruption institutions and legislation including the Government's 2005 National Strategy to Fight Corruption. Strong political commitment is now required to use this framework effectively. Transparency, accountability and the elimination of corruption are identified as key priorities in the PEAP.

Following economic liberalisation in the agriculture sector, the proportion of the population living below the poverty line in rural areas has declined significantly from 60 per cent. in the early 1990s to 42 per cent. in

2002–03. Studies have also shown major improvements in non-income measures of poverty in rural Uganda including the quality of housing and access to education and health care. The Government's plan for the modernisation of agriculture is an important part of the PEAP.

Uganda has been a leader in the fight against HIV/AIDS and the percentage of the adult population with HIV has fallen from 18 per cent. to 6 per cent. since the early 1990s. A cause for concern, however, is that the rate of new infections still remains relatively high. Strong political commitment and concerted efforts by both the Government of Uganda and its development partners are required to address this problem. This is also a priority identified in the PEAP.

TREASURY

Anti-Terrorism

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what total amount of money was made available in the 2006 Budget for anti-terrorism purposes; and how much was allocated to each element making up this total. [63400]

Mr. Des Browne: The Budget announced the allocation of £42.5 milion to the Home Office from the counter-terrorism pool to help meet emerging counter-terrorism pressures. This follows the allocation in the pre-Budget report of an additional £85 million to bring forward the planned expansion of Security and Intelligence Agencies and the extension of the availability of the counter-terrorism pool beyond 2005–06.

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to paragraph 6.68 of the 2006 Budget report, how much of the planned funding for anti-terrorism will be allocated in *(a)* 2006–07 and *(b)* 2007–08. [63441]

Mr. Des Browne: The allocation of £42.5 million from the counter-terrorism pool announced in the Budget is broken down as £22.5 million in 2006–07 and £20 million in 2007–08.

Average Earnings

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average earnings of full-time employees in the constituency of Kingston upon Hull North were in April of each year since 2000. [62861]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 18 April 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question to ask what the average earnings of full-time employees in the Kingston upon Hull North constituency were in April in each year since 2000. (62861)

Average earnings are estimated from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), and are provided for full time employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey period was not affected by absence. This is the standard definition used for ASHE. The ASHE does not collect data on the self employed and people who do unpaid work.

I attach tables showing Average Gross Weekly Earnings by parliamentary constituency for the years 2000 to 2005 for Full Time Employees on Adult Rates. These statistics are already published on the National Statistics website at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=13101

The ASHE, carried out in April of each year, is the most comprehensive source of earnings information in the United Kingdom. It is a one per cent sample of all employees who are members of pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) schemes.

Gross weekly pay for full-time employee jobs[1] by place of work

		£
Kingston upon Hull North	*Median*	*Mean*
2000	*352	387
2001	*338	389
2002	*355	393
2003	*361	398
2004	*381	428
2004[2]	*381	421
2005	*390	426

[1] Employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey pay-period was not affected by absence.

[2] Includes supplementary survey data.

Guide to quality:

The Coefficient of Variation (CV) indicates the quality of a figure, the smaller the CV value the higher the quality.

The true value is likely to lie within +/- twice the CV e.g. for an average of 200 with a CV of 5 per cent., we would expect the population average to be within the range 180 to 220.

Key:

CV < = 5 per cent.

*CV > 5 per cent. and < = 10 per cent.

**CV > 10 per cent. and < = 20 per cent.

Note:

The median replaces the mean as the headline statistic. The weighted mean is the sum of the weighted values divided by the sum of the weights. The median is the value below which 50 per cent. of employees fall. It is preferred over the mean for earnings data as it is influenced less by extreme values and because of the skewed distribution of earnings data.

Source:

Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, Office for National Statistics.

Gross weekly pay for full-time employee jobs[1] by place of residence

		£
Kingston upon Hull North	*Median*	*Mean*
2000	..	..
2001	..	..
2002	*365	389
2003	*360	393
2004	*389	404
2004[2]	*375	413
2005	*380	422

.. Denotes data not collected before 2002.

[1] Employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey pay-period was not affected by absence.

[2] Includes Supplementary survey data.

Guide to quality:

The Coefficient of Variation (CV) indicates the quality of a figure, the smaller the CV value the higher the quality.

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Source:
Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, Office for National Statistics.

Child Poverty

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his estimate is of the increases in *(a)* child tax credit and *(b)* child benefit which would be necessary to lift one million more children out of relative poverty; and if he will make a statement. [63256]

Dawn Primarolo: Between the mid 1970s and mid 1990s, relative child poverty more than doubled. This Government have committed to halve child poverty by 2010–11 and to eradicate it by 2020. In 2004–05 there were 700,000 children fewer children in relative poverty than in 1998–99.

It is possible to model the immediate effects of changes to the rates of Child Benefit or Child Tax Credit on the level of children in poverty but this will always involve considerable uncertainty and is sensitive to factors such as the precise definition of household income, income equivalisation scales and other modelling choices. Furthermore, future projections involve even greater uncertainties, including future income growth, changes in the income distribution and individual changes in behaviour in response to policy changes. However, an increase of £15 per week in all rates of Child Benefit would have lifted around 1 million children before housing costs (BHC), or 1.4 million children after housing costs (AHC), out of poverty in 2005–06. On the same basis, an increase of £14 per week in the child element of the Child Tax Credit would have lifted around 1 million children (BHC), or 1.4 million children (AHC), out of poverty. The increase in Child Benefit would have cost around £10 billion in 2005–06, while the increase in the Child Tax Credit would have cost around £5 billion.

The Government will continue to take forward a multi-faceted strategy to tackle child poverty, as set out in the "Child Poverty Review". This is based on financial support for families, work for those who can, tackling material deprivation and improving life chances for poor children.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his latest estimate is of *(a)* the cost of raising child benefit to £20 for each child aged under five years and *(b)* how many children would be lifted out of poverty as a result; and if he will make a statement. [63313]

Dawn Primarolo: The cost of raising Child Benefit (CB) to £20 per week for each child under five years would be approximately £1 billion for 2006–07.

It is estimated that this increased rate of CB for children under five would lift between 100 and 200 thousand children out of relative income poverty. Such estimates are sensitive to the precise definition of household income, income equalisation scale and other modelling choices.

Child Trust Funds

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his latest estimate is of the cost of the Child Trust Fund in each year from 2005–06 to 2015–16; and if he will make a statement. [63311]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The AME accruals cost to the Exchequer of the Child Trust Fund is forecast at £240 million each year, rising to £480 million each year once further payments into Child Trust Fund accounts at age 7 are fully on stream by 2011–12.

Climate Change Levy

Gregory Barker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of reductions in carbon dioxide planned by the Government to meet the 2010 target the Climate Change Levy was intended to deliver. [62580]

John Healey: Independent evaluation by Cambridge Econometrics estimates that the Climate Change Levy will deliver annual savings of over 3.5 million tonnes of carbon (MtC) by 2010—well above the 2 MtC a year figure forecast at the time of its introduction.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what representations he has received on the Government's plans to use the Climate Change Levy to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. [62581]

John Healey: The Government receive many representations as part of the budget process and consider these carefully in that context. The Budget announced that rates of CCL will increase in line with current inflation. The inflation increase will be introduced on 1 April 2007.

Paul Flynn: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the arrangements to return the revenue from the increase in the climate change levy directly to business will result in any loss of revenue to the National Insurance Fund. [63344]

John Healey: The Government are committed to returning CCL revenue to business. The 0.3 percentage point reduction in national insurance contributions (NICs), brought in when CCL was introduced, will continue and the Government will discuss with business the most effective way of supporting investment in energy efficiency.

Community Projects

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to his announcement in the Budget of a new venture between police, football clubs and community groups, what funds he is making available in Wales for that purpose. [62703]

Mr. Des Browne: The Welsh Assembly Government received Barnett formula consequentials of the public spending measures announced in the Chancellor's Budget Statement in the normal way. The Welsh Assembly Government is funded on a block budget basis and it is for the Welsh Assembly to decide how to allocate its block budget.

Correspondence

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he will provide a substantive reply to question 58890 tabled by the hon. Member for the Isle of Wight on 13 March 2006 on tax credits. [62649]

Dawn Primarolo: Question 58890 was answered on 30 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1117W.

Credit Overpayments

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he will publish the figures for credit overpayments in 2004–05; and if he will make a statement. [63039]

Dawn Primarolo: Estimates of the numbers and levels of overpayments for 2004–05 tax credit awards will be published on 31 May 2006.

Defence Spending

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the level of defence spending was for *(a)* the UK and *(b)* each of the other members of the EU in each of the last two years for which figures are available; and what those figures represent as a percentage of gross domestic product. [63061]

Mr. Des Browne: Expenditure on Defence, both in total and as a percentage of Gross domestic product, is published in Public Expenditure Statistical Analysis 2005.

The Treasury does not compile data on the defence expenditure of other EU member countries

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the defence spending of the UK and other EU member states is discussed at meetings of EU finance ministers. [63254]

Mr. Des Browne: Defence Spending, as an exclusive competence of the member states, is not discussed at meetings of the ECOFIN Council.

Departmental Equipment

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Chipping Barnet (Mrs. Villiers) of 16 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1157W, on departmental equipment (1) when his Department last made an assessment of value for money for the procurement of its mobile telephones and associated services; what figures were used in the assessment as an indicator of the cost to the Department of these services; and if he will make a statement; [57189]

(2) how his Department ensures compliance with best value practice for the procurement of mobile telephones and associated services; and if he will make a statement. [57190]

John Healey: The Treasury subscribes to a framework contract managed by OGC buying solutions for its mobile telephones and associated services. OGC buying solutions provide a dedicated procurement service that establishes such contracts and makes them available to central Government and the wider public sector.

Using the OGC buying solutions contract for mobile telephones and associated services allows the Treasury to minimise its own management costs, benefit from aggregated purchasing, and ensure that it is achieving value for money consistent with other Government Departments.

Departmental Leave (Stress)

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people have been on sick leave suffering from stress in his Department in each of the last three years; and what percentage of the total staff number this represents. [63524]

John Healey: The number of staff taking sickness absence relating to stress like symptoms as a percentage of staff in post were:

	Number of employees	*% of total workforce*
2003	33	2.5
2004	29	2.1
2005	27	2.0

Departmental Recruitment

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many job advertisements were placed by his Department *(a)* in total, *(b)* in print newspapers and magazines and *(c)* on a recruitment website in each year since 1997; and at what (i) total and (ii) average cost in each case. [50755]

John Healey: The information is given in the table:

	Advertising cost (£)
2002–03	126,000
2003–04	210,000
2004–05	151,000

Prior to 2005, recruitment advertising was predominantly in the print media. During the year 2005–06 we have begun to use web-based recruitment. Print media remains the dominant advertising route. No breakdown of costs between web-based and print media advertising is available.

Details for the period 1997 to 2002 are not available.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many and what proportion of *(a)* staff and *(b)* new staff employed in (i) his Department and (ii) each of the agencies for which he has responsibility were registered as disabled in each of the last three years for which data is available. [61384]

John Healey: The Cabinet Office collects and publishes annually statistical information on the Civil Service by Department. http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management/statistics/publications/xls/disability_apr04_4nov04.xls. These include data on the

number of staff in departments who have declared a disability. Declaration of a disability is voluntary, which has a significant impact on the data held, and means they cannot be taken as conclusive figures on staff with disabilities in the Departments. Details on new staff who are registered disabled is given in the following table:

Department	2003		2004		2005	
	Percentage	Number of people	Percentage	Number of people	Percentage	Number of people
HM Treasury	4.2	11	3.0	4	0.8	1
Royal Mint	0.1	1	0.1	1	0.1	1
DMO	0	0	0	0	0	0
HMRC	1.79	175	2.22	401	1.36	146
OGC	0	0	0	0	3.3	0
OGC Buying Solutions	0	0	0	0	0	0
Savings & Investments	0.07	1	0.07	1	0.07	1
ONS	1.1	3	1.5	6	0.8	2
Valuation office	2.68	31	3.46	42	5.4	20
GAD	0	0	0.01	1	0.01	1
Total		222		678		172

Departmental Televisions

Jo Swinson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many television sets are in operation in the Department *(a)* in total, *(b)* in Ministers' private offices and *(c)* in each building in the Department; and how many television licences are held by the Department. [62807]

John Healey: The Treasury has 45 television sets in operation across all sites, including 11 in use in Ministers' private offices.

At the main Treasury building (1 Horse Guards Road) the department has a single "multi-access" system for distributing television programs around the building. The television programs can then be viewed using conventional television sets, plasma/led displays or personal computers.

The Treasury has one television licence that covers Treasury usage.

Economic Cycle

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the merits of further altering his assessment of the economic cycle for the purposes of calculating compliance with the golden rule. [64138]

Mr. Des Browne: The latest assessment of the economic cycle is presented in Budget 2006 (HC 968).

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what account he takes of productivity growth figures from the years 2002–03 onwards when comparing this economic cycle with productivity growth figures in previous economic cycles. [64139]

Mr. Des Browne: Table B2 of Budget 2006 (HC 968) presents the Government's latest estimates of trend productivity growth over the recent past together with projections for future productivity growth.

Economic Growth (Emissions)

Lynne Jones: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the percentage economic growth was in each year since 1990; what the associated change was in *(a)* total greenhouse gas emissions and *(b)* carbon dioxide emissions; what assessment he has made of the association between the three; and if he will make a statement. [63217]

John Healey: Data on economic growth are given in the financial statement and Budget report, published on 22 March 2006. Data on greenhouse gas emissions and carbon dioxide emissions were published in the Climate Change Programme, published on 28 March 2006. This document sets out the Government's policies and priorities for action in tackling climate change.

Employment (Full and Part-time)

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many *(a)* males over 65 and *(b)* females over 60 years of age were in (i) full-time employment and (ii) part-time employment in each region in each of the last five years. [63522]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the national statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated 18 April 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about people over state pension age in employment. I am replying in her absence. (63522)

The attached table gives the number of men aged 65 and over and women aged 60 and over who were working in full-time or part-time employment, for the three months ending November each year from 2001 to 2005, for each country and region of the United Kingdom.

Estimates are taken from the Office for National Statistics's Labour Force Survey (LFS). As with any sample survey, estimates from the LFS are subject to a margin of uncertainty.

People over state pension age[1] in employment by whether working full or part-time, gender and region of residence, not seasonally adjusted

Thousand

Three months ending November each year	All persons			Men			Women		
	All[2]	Full-time	Part-time	All[2]	Full-time	Part-time	All[2]	Full-time	Part-time
2001									
United Kingdom	869	237	632	288	96	192	581	141	440
North East	21	5	16	5	1	4	16	4	12
North West	70	23	46	22	9	13	48	14	34
Merseyside	15	4	11	4	1	3	11	3	8

People over state pension age[1] in employment by whether working full or part-time, gender and region of residence, not seasonally adjusted

Thousand

Three months ending November each year	All persons All[2]	All persons Full-time	All persons Part-time	Men All[2]	Men Full-time	Men Part-time	Women All[2]	Women Full-time	Women Part-time
Yorkshire and Humberside	58	14	44	17	6	11	41	9	33
East Midlands	56	15	42	22	7	16	34	8	26
West Midlands	78	20	57	27	9	18	50	11	39
Eastern	92	23	70	29	11	19	63	12	51
London	102	38	64	33	14	19	69	24	45
South East	160	35	124	61	16	44	100	20	80
South West	98	18	80	31	8	23	67	10	56
Wales	41	15	27	11	4	7	30	10	20
Scotland	58	20	38	18	8	10	40	13	28
Northern Ireland	19	6	12	7	3	4	12	4	8
2002									
United kingdom	895	251	644	309	110	199	586	141	445
North East	21	7	14	7	3	4	14	4	10
North West	70	22	47	23	12	11	47	11	36
Merseyside	14	4	11	3	1	2	12	3	9
Yorkshire and Humberside	62	12	49	18	5	13	44	8	37
East Midlands	63	13	50	22	4	18	41	9	32
West Midlands	78	23	55	27	9	18	51	13	38
Eastern	101	27	75	36	14	22	65	13	52
London	100	33	67	35	13	23	65	21	44
South East	170	47	122	61	22	39	109	25	83
South West	96	23	73	34	9	24	62	14	48
Wales	39	17	22	16	8	8	23	8	15
Scotland	54	12	42	15	3	12	39	8	30
Northern Ireland	27	10	17	13	7	6	14	3	10
2003									
United Kingdom	966	277	688	328	115	213	638	163	475
North East	25	7	18	6	2	4	19	5	14
North West	78	25	53	24	10	14	54	15	39
Merseyside	17	3	14	5	2	4	11	1	10
Yorkshire and Humberside	66	19	46	18	6	12	48	13	35
East Midlands	69	18	50	24	9	16	44	9	35
West Midlands	77	20	57	27	9	19	50	11	39
Eastern	109	31	79	40	14	26	70	17	53
London	106	35	71	30	12	19	76	24	52
South East	167	46	121	58	19	39	109	27	82
South West	106	25	81	47	13	34	59	12	47
Wales	49	17	32	17	6	10	33	11	22
Scotland	75	22	53	23	8	15	52	14	38
Northern Ireland	20	9	12	7	5	2	13	4	9
2004									
United Kingdom	987	300	685	338	125	212	650	175	473
North East	22	9	13	8	4	4	14	5	9
North West	81	24	57	23	8	15	58	16	42
Merseyside	20	4	17	7	2	5	14	2	12
Yorkshire and Humberside	71	17	54	19	6	13	52	11	41
East Midlands	67	22	45	25	11	14	42	11	31
West Midlands	77	20	57	24	7	17	53	13	40
Eastern	113	33	80	44	16	27	69	16	53
London	110	41	67	36	14	21	74	27	46
South East	172	52	120	63	23	40	109	29	79
South West	108	31	77	41	16	25	67	15	52
Wales	49	16	33	14	6	8	35	10	24
Scotland	78	24	54	26	8	17	52	15	37
Northern Ireland	20	8	12	8	4	4	12	4	8
2005									
United Kingdom	1,095	346	747	378	137	239	718	209	508
North East	27	10	18	8	3	6	19	7	12
North West	86	23	62	28	9	19	58	15	43
Merseyside	19	6	13	5	3	3	14	3	10
Yorkshire and Humberside	70	19	51	20	7	13	50	12	38
East Midlands	82	21	61	26	9	17	56	12	44
West Midlands	108	33	74	38	17	21	70	17	53
Eastern	125	40	85	45	17	28	80	23	56
London	122	50	72	40	17	23	82	33	49
South East	195	59	136	71	20	50	124	39	85

People over state pension age[1] in employment by whether working full or part-time, gender and region of residence, not seasonally adjusted

Thousand

Three months ending November each year	All persons All[2]	Full-time	Part-time	Men All[2]	Full-time	Part-time	Women All[2]	Full-time	Part-time
South West	117	32	85	43	13	29	74	19	56
Wales	50	20	30	17	8	9	33	12	20
Scotland	70	24	47	26	10	16	45	14	31
Northern Ireland	24	9	15	11	6	5	13	3	10

[1] 65 and over for men, and 60 and over for women.
[2] Includes those who did not state whether they worked full or part-time.
[3] Estimate not shown in order to protect respondents' confidentiality.
Source:
ONS labour Force Survey.

Energy Prices

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent assessment he has made of the effects of energy prices on *(a)* the purchasing power of households and *(b)* consumer spending. [63969]

John Healey: Chapter B of the Financial Statement and Budget Report 2006 (HC 968), published on 22 March, included an assessment of the effects of energy prices on both household's purchasing power and consumer spending growth.

Financial Services Authority

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what plans he has to improve the accountability of the Financial Services Authority to his Department; [63616]

(2) if he will bring forward proposals to divide the responsibilities of the Financial Services Authority between new regulatory bodies related to specific sectors of the market. [63617]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The effectiveness of the regulatory regime for financial services was considered by the Treasury's two-year review of Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (FSMA), the outcome of which was announced on 2 December 2004. The review concluded that the framework established by FSMA is a resounding success and that existing accounting arrangements should remain unchanged.

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will carry out a review of the fees levied by the Financial Services Authority. [63618]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Financial Services Authority (FSA) is operationally independent of Government including in relation to the setting of fees. The FSA consults annually on its proposed regulatory fees. The FSA consultation for 2006–07 was announced on 1 February 2006 and is available at http://www.fsa.gov.uk/pubs/cp/cp06_02.pdf.

Grievance Procedures

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many grievance procedures have been initiated in his Department in each of the last three years; [63525]

(2) how many complaints of *(a)* bullying and *(b)* sexual harassment have been investigated in his Department in each of the last three years; and how many complaints have been upheld. [63526]

John Healey: Prior to 2005, the Treasury only kept records on grievances that were upheld. Information on grievances that were raised but not upheld is not available. In 2003, fewer than five[1] grievances were raised and upheld. None were raised and upheld in 2004.

Since 2005, records have been kept of all grievances. In 2005, five grievances were raised.

[1] numbers fewer than five are not released on grounds of confidentiality.

Income Tax

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many workers living in *(a)* Kingston upon Hull, North constituency and *(b)* Kingston upon Hull pay income tax at (i) the basic rate and (ii) the higher rate. [62860]

Dawn Primarolo: Information on the number of taxpayers by marginal tax rate in the constituency of Kingston upon Hull, North and the unitary authority of Kingston upon Hull is not available.

However, the latest information on the estimated number of income taxpayers and their mean and median total income by constituency is shown in table 3.15 "Total income by parliamentary constituency" on the HM Revenue and Customs internet website; http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/income_distribution/table-3–15.xls.

Similar information, by unitary authority area, is shown in table 3.14 "Total income by borough and district or unitary authority" on the HM Revenue and Customs internet website; http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/income_distribution/3_14_nov05.xls

The income tax information is based upon the 2003–04 Survey of Personal Incomes (SPI).

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the impact on general practitioners of advancing income tax payments for the self employed by one year. [63937]

Dawn Primarolo: There are no plans to advance income tax payments for the self employed.

David Mundell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his most recent estimate is of the *(a)* initial set up costs and *(b)* annual administration costs to (i) HM Revenue and Customs, (ii) other Government departments and agencies and (iii) businesses if the Scottish Parliament varied the basic rate of income tax under section 73 of the Scotland Act 1998. [62927]

Dawn Primarolo: The White Paper of 24 July 1997 "Scotland's Parliament" indicated that costs of introducing a Scottish variable rate would be in the order of £10 million with annual costs of £8 million. As both administrations of the Scottish Parliament have indicated that they will not take imminent advantage of the Scottish variable rate, the cost estimates have not been uprated. Doing so before a decision was made to introduce a Scottish variable rate would not produce a meaningful estimate of any change.

Informal Economy

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the size of the informal economy in *(a)* the UK and *(b)* the North East. [63281]

Dawn Primarolo: There is no reliable estimate of the size of the informal economy in *(a)* the UK or *(b)* the North East.

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps his Department is taking to reduce the size of the informal economy in the North-East. [63280]

Dawn Primarolo: HMRC continues to detect and deter non- compliance in the informal economy as well as developing initiatives providing help and support to businesses and individuals who wish to formalise their tax affairs.

A direct taxes Hotline has been launched, with national publicity encouraging members of the public to report people operating in the informal economy.

Nationally HM Revenue and Customs' Business Support Teams and Right Track teams aim to move economic activities into the formal economy, where they are supported to continue operating in fair competition with other legitimate businesses. Those individuals and businesses who wilfully operate in the informal economy are targeted by HMRC, on the basis of risk with criminal investigation and prosecution considered in more serious cases.

Inheritance Tax/Stamp Duty

Mr. Carswell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what estimate his Department has made of the amount of revenue which will be raised from inheritance tax in 2005–06; [63884]

(2) what estimate he has made of the annual cost to public funds in terms of revenue foregone of abolishing inheritance tax. [63965]

Dawn Primarolo: An estimate of inheritance tax receipts in 2005–06 is given in table C8 of the Budget 2006 "Red Book".

Abolition of inheritance tax would result in the direct loss of this yield, and there may also be indirect effects on other taxes. These have not been quantified.

Mr. Carswell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the cost of collection of inheritance tax was as a percentage of the total revenue from inheritance tax in each of the last five years. [63968]

Dawn Primarolo: The cost of collecting inheritance tax as a percentage of receipts is given, for each year from 2000–01 to 2004–05, in Table 1, Annex F of the HM Revenue and Customs Annual Report 2004–05.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total tax revenue from *(a)* inheritance tax and *(b)* stamp duty was in the last year for which information is available, (i) broken down by the smallest geographical areas for which information is collected and (ii) per head in each area. [62277]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 29 March 2006]:* Regional estimates of stamp duty revenues on residential property transactions for 2004–05, the latest year for which information is available, are available at:

http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/stamp_duty/table15_2_october04.xls.

Estimates of average stamp duty paid for residential property purchases by Government Office Region were provided in response to a previous Parliamentary Question on 15 June 2005, *Official Report,* column 394W.

A breakdown of inheritance tax receipts in 2004–05 for Scotland and Northern Ireland, as well as England and Wales combined, is shown in the following table:

Country	*Inheritance tax net receipts 2004–05 (£ million)*
England and Wales	2,729
Scotland	167
Northern Ireland	26
United Kingdom	2,922

Figures on the number of deaths by country are available from:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_population/Table1DeathRegistrations02–04.xls (England & Wales);

http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/files/death-tab1–2006.xls (Scotland,);

http://www.nisranew.nisra.gov.uk/Uploads/publications/births_and_deaths_2005.pdf (Northern Ireland).

Madagascar

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many British tourists have visited Madagascar in the last 12 months. [62359]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 18 April 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question concerning how many British tourists have visited Madagascar in the last 12 months.

Visits made abroad by UK residents are estimated from data collected on the International Passenger Survey (IPS). The survey is conducted at all major airports, and on major sea and tunnel routes. The data collected are weighted up to national estimates provided by CAA and BAA, Department for Transport, Eurotunnel and Eurostar.

Because of the small number of interviews carried out with UK residents visiting Madagascar, the IPS is unable to provide reliable information for UK residents visits to Madagascar.

Manufacturing Industry

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of the work force was employed in manufacturing in each region in each of the last five years. [63523]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the national statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 18 April 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about employment in manufacturing. (63523)

The attached table shows the percentage of employee jobs in manufacturing in each region, for December of each year from 2001 to 2005.

These estimates are from the Employee Jobs series, which is mainly based on surveys of employers. As with any sample survey, the results are subject to a margin of uncertainty.

Employee jobs in manufacturing, by region[1, 2] United Kingdom, December of each year, 2001 to 2005, not seasonally adjusted

Government office region	2001	2002	2003	2004	Percentage 2005
North East	16.2	15.7	14.4	13.5	13.1
North West	16.1	15.0	14.5	13.8	13.4
Yorkshire and the Humber	17.5	16.4	15.6	14.6	14.1
East Midlands	20.3	19.5	18.3	17.4	16.9
West Midlands	20.0	19.1	17.9	16.6	15.5
East	14.4	13.6	12.8	12.1	11.7
London	6.5	5.9	5.7	5.4	5.2
South East	11.1	10.6	9.9	9.4	9.1
South West	14.4	13.5	12.6	11.8	11.5
Wales	17.3	16.8	15.9	15.3	14.7
Scotland	12.4	11.6	10.5	10.1	9.8
Northern Ireland	14.9	14.2	13.3	12.7	12.4
United Kingdom	14.1	13.3	12.6	11.9	11.5

[1] Employee jobs in manufacturing as a percentage of all employee jobs.
[2] Employee jobs are a measure of jobs rather than people. If a person holds two or more jobs, each job will be counted in the employee jobs figures. The employee jobs figures are derived from surveys of employers, and from administrative sources.
Source:
Employee Jobs series.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps his Department has taken to increase the competitiveness of the UK manufacturing industry within Europe. [63970]

John Healey: The Government wants a successful, dynamic manufacturing sector producing value-added products and highly-skilled jobs. Raising productivity across the UK economy—including in the manufacturing sector—is a key driver of long-term performance, and the Government are putting in place a series of interlinked policies designed to strengthen productivity. Within Europe, the UK is pursuing a programme of structural reform to strengthen growth, productivity and employment.

Medical Research Council Merger

Mr. Willis: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the expected cost is of merging the Medical Research Council and the NHS Health and Research Delivery Group. [62955]

Mr. Des Browne: The Chancellor announced in the Budget a review, led by Sir David Cocksey, to consider the best model and institutional arrangements for publicly-funded health research in the UK, based on a single, ring-fenced fund.

Minimum Hourly Pay

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the hourly rate of pay needed to lift a full-time employee over the poverty line if he or she is in a *(a)* single adult household, *(b)* dual adult household with no other worker and *(c)* dual adult household with two children and no other worker. [59336]

Dawn Primarolo: Latest estimates of the poverty line for a range of family types in Great Britain are published in Table 2.3 of 'Households Below Average Income', available on the DWP website at:

http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/hbai/hbai2005/contents.asp

Assessments of hourly rates of pay for a household with one full-time employee required to meet these thresholds depend on a number of assumptions including hours of employment, housing tenure, key outlays such as council tax, and access to other sources of income.

For example, for single full-time (35 hours per week) earner LA tenant households in 2004–05 facing average council tax bills, with no sources of income other than their employment income, benefits and tax credits, the required wage rates would have been around:

(a) £3 per hour for single adult households; and

(b) £8 per hour for dual adult households (with and without children).

The figures take account only of earnings, child benefit, tax credits, income support, housing and council tax benefits, less income tax, employee national insurance contributions and gross council tax liabilities; other components of net income before housing costs underpinning the DWP poverty line estimates have been omitted.

Mortality Rates

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the mortality rates for *(a)* chronic lung disease, *(b)* cancer and *(c)* coronary heart disease were in (i) Cleethorpes constituency, (ii) Grimsby constituency, (iii) Scunthorpe constituency and (iv) Brigg and Goole constituency in (A) 1997 and (B) 2004. [62655]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 18 April 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent question concerning what the mortality rates for *(a)* chronic lung disease, *(b)* cancer and *(c)* coronary heart disease were in (i) Cleethorpes constituency, (ii) Grimsby constituency, (iii) Scunthorpe constituency and (iv) Brigg and Goole constituency in (A) 1997 and (B) 2004. (62655)

Mortality rates for parliamentary constituencies cannot be provided for the years requested because population estimates are not available for these areas. Figures in the table below are provided for the local authorities which make up the requested constituencies. The figures for 1997 have been adjusted to take account of revisions to the International Classification of Diseases where appropriate.

Death rates[1] from chronic lung disease, cancer and coronary heart disease[2] for the East Riding of Yorkshire, North East Lincolnshire and North Lincolnshire local authorities,[3] 1997 and 2004.[4]

Deaths per 100,000 population

	East Riding of Yorkshire		*North East Lincolnshire*		*North Lincolnshire*	
	1997	*2004*	*1997*	*2004*	*1997*	*2004*
Chronic lung disease	34.6	25.6	23.0	19.8	21.4	16.1
Cancer	193.8	170.0	232.1	183.4	220.2	176.9
Coronary heart disease	153.7	107.9	200.4	115.4	173.5	99.4

[1] Rates per 100,000 population standardised to the European Standard Population.

[2] The causes of death for 2004 were defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10):
Chronic lung disease (Chronic lower respiratory disease)—ICD-10 J40-J47
Cancer (malignant neoplasms)—ICD-10 COO-C97
Coronary heart disease—ICD-10120–125
Deaths were selected using the original underlying cause.
The causes of death for 1997 were defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9).
The following codes were used:
Chronic lung disease (Chronic lower respiratory disease)—ICD-9 490–494, 496
Cancer (malignant neoplasms)—ICD-9 140–208
Coronary heart disease—ICD-9 410–414
The introduction of ICD-10 for coding cause of death in England and Wales in 2001 means that data for chronic lung disease and cancer are not completely comparable with data for years before this date. The effect of the change in classification in 2001 on deaths from these causes is described in a report published in May 2002:
Office for National Statistics. Results of the ICD-10 bridge coding study, England and Wales, 1999. Health Statistics Quarterly 14 (2002), 75–83.
For chronic lung disease (chronic lower respiratory disease) and cancer (malignant neoplasms) the introduction of ICD-10 caused an increase of 3.2 per cent. and 2.3 per cent. respectively in the number of deaths coded to these conditions in England and Wales. Deaths in 1997 from these causes have been adjusted to provide rates which are comparable with those for 2004.

[3] Usual residents of these areas.
The local authority of the East Riding of Yorkshire comprises part of the Brigg and Goole constituency as well as parts of the constituencies of Beverley and Holderness, East Yorkshire, Haltemprice and Howden, and Kingston upon Hull West and Hessle.
The local authority of North East Lincolnshire comprises part of the constituency of Cleethorpes and the whole of Great Grimsby constituency.
The local authority of North Lincolnshire comprises the whole of Scunthorpe constituency and parts of the constituencies of Brigg and Goole and Cleethorpes.
Deaths were assigned to these areas using the November 2005 All Fields Postcode Directory.

[4] Deaths registered in each calendar year.

National Institute for Health Research

Mr. Wilis: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what total resources will be allocated to the National Institute for Health Research in each of the first three years after it is established. [62954]

Mr. Des Browne: The Chancellor announced in the Budget a review to consider the best model and institutional arrangements for publicly-funded health research in the UK. Decisions on future spending on health research, like other spending decisions, will be made as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review.

National Insurance

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will exempt people from class 4 national insurance contributions when they reach pensionable age part way through the tax year on a proportionate basis; and if he will make a statement. [63777]

Dawn Primarolo: The proposal would require the calculation of income tax and national insurance contributions on different profits on the part of the self-employed, which would add complexity to the system.

Mr. Swire: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent representations he has received from orchestras on national insurance contributions; and if he will make a statement. [63988]

Dawn Primarolo: I have received correspondence from a number of MPs and met with various persons regarding this matter. HM Revenue and Customs are currently working with the Arts Council and their legal advisers to establish whether national insurance contributions are due in respect of musicians engaged by orchestras. On the basis of the contracts reviewed, HMRC have recently advised the Arts Council that soloists and conductors engaged under similar contracts

are not liable for class 1 national insurance contributions. HM Revenue and Customs are still looking at the contracts for other types of musicians.

Non-Domestic Rates

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what expenditure on non-domestic rates was as a percentage of *(a)* turnover, *(b)* overheads and *(c)* profit of (i) all businesses in England and (ii) all businesses in England broken down by annual turnover of (A) less than £50,000, (B) £50,000 to £99,000, (C) £100,000 to £499,999, (D) £500,000 to £1,999,999, (E) £2,000,000 to £9,999,999, (F) £10,000,000 to £49,999,999, (G) £50,000,000 to £999,999,999 and (H) £1,000,000,000 or more in the last year for which figures are available. [63808]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 18 April 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking for expenditure on national non-domestic rates by businesses in England, by turnover band, as percentages of turnover, overheads and profit. (63808)

Our annual structural business inquiry, which covers most of the economy but excludes some sectors such as finance, collects data. on non-domestic rates. The latest figures available for England alone relate to 2003. Figures for turnover are collected, but not for overheads or profit. The table below shows non-domestic rates as a percentage of turnover. Corresponding figures for purchases (as the largest cost element most businesses face) and gross value added (which includes profit but also other items such as labour costs) are also included.

Turnover band	*Non-domestic rates as a percentage of turnover*	*Non-domestic rates as a percentage of purchases*	*Non-domestic rates as a percentage of gross value added*
Less than 50,000	1.5	2.1	4.3
50,000 to 99,999	1.1	2.1	2.2
100,000 to 499,999	1.1	1.9	2.8
500,000 to 1,999,999	1.1	1.7	3.0
2,000,000 to 9,999,999	0.9	1.4	2.6
10,000,000 to 49,999,999	0.7	1.1	2.3
50,000,000 to 999,999,999	0.5	0.7	1.8
1,000,000,000 or more	0.1	0.1	0.7

Further details of the coverage of the annual business inquiry are given at:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/methods_quality/sic/structure_sectiona_b.asp#sectiona; definitions of the variables at:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/abi/variable_info.asp and methodology at:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/abi/backgrouhd_info.asp.

The annual structural business inquiry is a sample survey so the figures are subject to sampling error. This is likely to be greater for the figures relating to small businesses than for businesses in the larger turnover bands.

Part-time Workers

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer which 25 constituencies had the highest percentage of part-time workers at the latest date for which figures are available, listed in descending order; and how many part-time workers there were in each of those constituencies. [62654]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 18 April 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about percentages of part time workers by parliamentary constituency. (62654)

The attached table shows the twenty-five parliamentary constituencies with the highest percentages of part-time workers, these percentages and the number of part time workers in these constituencies. The data are from the Annual Population Survey, and cover the period January to December 2004.

These estimates, as with any from sample surveys, are subject to a margin of uncertainty.

Table 1: Numbers of part-time workers in the 25 parliamentary constituencies with the highest percentages of part-time workers—January to December 2004

Constituency	*Percentage of part-time workers*	*Numbers of part-time workers (thousands)*
Sheffield, Hallam	39.1	13
Totnes	37.5	15
Swansea West	37.3	13
Lewes	36.8	15
St. Ives	36.0	15
North Devon	35.6	16
East Devon	35.6	14
Leeds North West	35.3	14
Arundel and South Downs	35.2	17
Teignbridge	34.3	19
Bridgwater	34.3	15
South West Devon	34.2	17
Isle of Wight	34.1	20
West Dorset	33.7	14
East Hampshire	33.6	18
Wealden	33.4	17
Torbay	33.4	14
Suffolk Coastal	33.3	15
Hexham	33.2	11
Romsey	33.1	17
Lancaster and Wyre	32.9	14
Westmorland and Lonsdale	32.9	14
Bexhill and Battle	32.8	13
Great Yarmouth	32.7	13
Worthing West	32.7	12

Notes:

1. Estimates are subject to sampling variability.

2. Constituencies are listed in descending order of percentage of part-time workers.

Source:

Annual Population Survey

Pay Statistics (Wirral, West)

Stephen Hesford: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average earnings were of full-time employees in Wirral, West constituency in April of each year since 1997. [62357]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Jim Matheson, dated 18 April 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question to ask what the average earnings of full-time employees in Wirral West constituency were in April in each year since 1997. I am replying in her absence.

Average earnings are estimated from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), and are provided for full-time employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey period was not affected by absence. This is the standard definition used for ASHE. The ASHE does not collect data on the self-employed and people who do unpaid work.

I attach tables showing Average Gross Weekly Earnings by parliamentary constituency for the years 1997 to 2005 for full-time Employees on Adult Rates. These statistics are also available on the National Statistics website at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=13101.

The ASHE, carried out in April of each year, is the most comprehensive source of earnings information in the United Kingdom. It is a one per. cent sample of all employees who are members of pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) schemes.

Gross weekly pay for full-time employee jobs[1] by place of work

Wirral West	*Median*	*£ Mean*
1997	**287	**367
1998	**300	**377
1999	**351	**420
2000	**295	**373
2001	**330	*414
2002	**349	*410
2003	**395	**479
2004	**355	*435
2004[1]	**312	*432
2005	**424	*527

[1] Employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey pay-period was not affected by absence.

[2] Includes supplementary survey details.

Guide to quality:

The coefficient of variation (CV) indicates the quality of a figure, the smaller the CV value the higher the quality.

The true value is likely to lie within + /- twice the CV e.g. for an average of 200 with a CV of 5%, we would expect a population average to be within range 180–220.

Key:

CV < = 5%

* CV > 5% and < = 10%

** CV > 10% and < = 20%

Notes:

The median replaces the mean as the headline statistic. The weighted mean is the sum of the weighted values divided by the sum of weights. The median is the value below which 50 per. cent of employees fall. It is preferred over the mean for earnings data as it is influenced less by extreme values and because of the skewed distribution of earnings data.

Source:

Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, Office for National Statistics

Gross weekly pay for full-time employee jobs[1] by place of residence

Wirral West	*Median*	*£ Mean*
1997	n/a	n/a
1998	n/a	n/a
1999	n/a	n/a
2000	n/a	n/a
2001	n/a	n/a
2002	**438	**503
2003	*438	*512
2004	*436	*523
2004[2]	*438	*524
2005	*468	*586

n/a. Data not collected before 2002

[1] Employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey pay-period was not affected by absence.

[2] Includes supplementary survey details

Guide to quality:

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The true value is likely to lie within + /- twice the CV e.g. for an average of 200 with a CV of 5%, we would expect a population average to be within range 180–220.

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Source:

Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, Office for National Statistics

PAYE Coding

Justine Greening: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many separate pay as you earn coding notices were sent to taxpayers in *(a)* 2003–04, *(b)* 2004–05 and *(c)* 2005–06; and if he will make a statement. [64400]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: HMRC estimates the numbers of PAYE coding notices sent to taxpayers to be:

	Number of coding notices sent (million)
2003–04	21.6
2004–05	21.8
2005–06	23.4

Personal Debt

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average levels of personal debt of those aged 25 to 35 were in each of the last two years for which figures are available. [62681]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I have been asked to reply.

Official statistics on levels of personal debt are not collected in a way that would enable debt of those aged between 25 and 35 to be calculated. Statistics on total borrowing levels within the UK are available in a quarterly over-indebtedness monitoring paper published on the DTI website (http://www.dti.gov.uk/

ccp/topics1/overindebtedness.htm).Total borrowing by individuals stood at £1.2 trillion in February 2006, compared with £1.1 trillion in February 2005.

Survey work provides some information regarding the distribution of problem debt between age groups. The most relevant and recent survey work in this area is the Over-Indebtedness in Britain survey undertaken by MORI Financial Services in 2004, which found those in the age group of 25–34 were more likely to be more than three months in arrears on borrowing than other age groups. The full survey results are available on the DTI website (http://www.dti. gov.uk/ccp/topicsl/pdf1/dcbtd tionmori.pdf).

The upcoming Wealth and Assets Survey, which has been jointly commissioned by a number of Government Departments, will provide extensive information on the financial position of individuals. This survey will aim to track the financial position of individuals over time, and would enable such analysis to be undertaken. This survey is currently in the pilot stage, with the first results expected in 2007.

Population

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what estimate he has made of the population of each ward in Kingston upon Hull North constituency based on *(a)* the 2001 Census, *(b)* electoral rolls and *(c)* health service users; and what projections he has made for the next five years; [62862]

(2) what assessment he has made of the accuracy of census figures for Kingston upon Hull North constituency in each of the last two censuses; and if he will make a statement. [62863]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 18 April 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your questions concerning the current population of each ward in the Kingston upon Hull North constituency based on *(a)* the 2001 Census, *(b)* electoral rolls and *(c)* health service users; and projections for the next five years and also the accuracy of census figures for Kingston upon Hull North constituency in each of the last two censuses. (62862, 62863)

The attached table provides the information requested in the first question. The most recent ward population estimates for Kingston upon Hull North constituency are for mid-2002. The closest available geography to current electoral wards, for which population estimates are available, is Census Area Statistics (CAS) wards. This geography was created for outputs from the 2001 Census and is based mainly on 2003 electoral wards. The CAS ward level population estimates have been published with the status of "experimental statistics". Therefore, the estimates should be treated with some care.

The latest available ward electorate counts are for December 2004. The ward electorate counts are for parliamentary electors, including attainers. Local government electorate counts are not available at ward level.

It should be noted that the number of people eligible to vote is not the same as the resident population aged 18 and over. There are numerous reasons for this. For example not everyone who is usually resident is entitled to vote (foreign citizens from outside of the EU and Commonwealth, prisoners, etc. are not eligible), some people do not register to vote and people who have more than one address may register in more than one place. Further, there is inevitably some double counting of the registered electorate as electoral registration officers vary in how quickly they remove people from the registers after they have moved away from an area or after they have died. These factors have a differential impact from area to area.

The latest available ward patient register counts are for July 2004. It should be noted that patient register counts differ from estimates of the usually resident population for a number of reasons. Patient registers include people who are in the country for at least three months, whereas population estimates are based on a usual residence definition requiring a stay of 12 months or more. The patient registers exclude individuals who are ineligible to be registered with a GP.

People may be on a patient register after having left the country and not deregistered with their GP; similarly people may have moved to another area and not re-registered. Some patients may have more than one NHS number e.g. they may have been issued a temporary number for a short period. Again, these factors have a differential impact from place to place. The ONS does not produce projections of population at ward level.

Official assessments of the quality of the 1991 Census were published in the 1991 Census General Report (ISBN 0–11–691616–8) and User Guide 58 (Undercoverage in Great Britain). These were carried out at national level and no assessment of quality was made for individual Local Authorities. The General Report is held in the House of Commons Library and User Guide 58 may be obtained from Census Customer Services at: census.customerservices@ons.gov.uk

The 1991 Census Validation Survey assessed the coverage of the Census and the quality of the Census information recorded about those people who were successfully enumerated. The 1991 Census Validation Survey: Quality Report (ISBN 0–11–691688–5) and 1991 Census Validation Survey: Coverage Report (ISBN 0–11–691591–9) are held in the, House of Commons Library.

Following the 2001 Census for England and Wales, ONS undertook an extensive programme of work to investigate the reasons for the difference between the 2001 Census and the mid-year population estimates (MYEs) at both national and local levels. This research included a series of Local Authority studies carried out in 2004 which were designed to improve the MYEs in the areas that proved hardest to count in the Census. An extensive review was carried out for 32 local authorities to assess whether there was evidence that the population might have been under- or over-estimated. Included in this review was the Local Authority of Kingston upon Hull.

The results of the 2004 Local Authority studies showed that for the great majority of areas, the 2001 Census-based population estimate remains the best estimate of the population. However, the 2004 Local Authority studies also concluded that better estimates of the population could be made in 15 local authority areas and an adjustment was made to the MYEs in these areas. Kingston upon Hull was one of these areas and an adjustment to the population of just under 6,600 persons was made in September 2004. A full report on these Local Authority Studies can be found at: www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_population/LAStudy_FullReport.pdf

The detailed report for Kingston upon Hull can be found at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_population/LAStudy_Kingston_upon_Hull.pdf

The Census 2001 Quality report for England and Wales provides information about all aspects of quality relating to the 2001 Census. It provides an overview of the quality issues and the studies and analyses that have been carried out to improve the quality of census data. The Quality report is held in the House of Commons Library or can be downloaded from: www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001/proj_qr.asp

Additional information about the quality of results from the 2001 Census for local areas can be found at: www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001/stat_methods_qual.asp

Wards in Kingston upon Hull North constituency: population estimates, electorate counts (December 2004), and patient register counts (July 2004)

Ward name	Population estimate mid-2002	Parliamentary electors December 2004	Patient register July 2004
Avenue	12,500	9,140	13,577
Beverley	8,600	6,731	8,620
Bransholme East	10,100	6,017	10,050
Bransholme West[1]	8,700	5,948	8,893
Bricknell	8,200	6,372	8,486
Holderness[1]	13,600	10,150	13,628
Kings Park	6,800	6,023	7,589
Newland	10,000	5,610	10,445
Orchard Park and Greenwood	14,000	9,193	14,762
Sutton[1]	13,100	9,589	13,274
University	9,800	5,896	11,385

[1] These wards also fall within a neighbouring constituency, data for the whole ward are shown.

Notes:

1. The mid-2002 ward population estimates are consistent with the published mid-2002 local authority estimates (September 2004 revisions) and have been rounded to the nearest 100.
2. Parliamentary electors are those people who are entitled to vote in parliamentary elections at Westminster and who meet the residence qualification. Those include overseas voters but exclude Peers and European citizens.

Source:

Office for National Statistics.

Population Estimates

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he plans to ask the Office of National Statistics to review its methodology in respect of population estimates in order to take into account immigration to the United Kingdom from European Union accession countries since May 2004; and if he will make a statement. [63568]

John Healey: The National Statistics Centre for Demography within the Office for National Statistics (ONS) is already actively monitoring the estimates of international migration used in the population estimates to ensure that they continue to reflect migration from the Accession countries.

Through the National Statistics Quality Review (NSQR) of international migration and the Improving Migration and Population Statistics project, ONS are researching ways to improve their international migration estimates at both the national and local level. As well as Home Office data on asylum seekers and visitor switchers, ONS are also currently investigating how data from the WRS might be used to inform estimates of immigration from EU accession countries. The latest progress report on the NSQR can be found at:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/data/methodology/quality/reviews/population.asp.

Full details of the calculation of international migration and population estimates in general are published in our methodology guide 'Making a Population Estimate in England and Wales':

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=575.

Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what proportion of members of the Principal Civil Service pension scheme in his Department joined the scheme before the age of *(a)* 20, *(b)* 25, *(c)* 30, *(d)* 35, *(e)* 40, *(f)* 45 and *(g)* over 45 years old. [61903]

John Healey: The information requested can be obtained only at a disproportionate cost.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the current employer contribution rates to the Principal Civil Service pension scheme are; what assumed rate of return underlies those contribution rates; and what the contribution rate would be if the assumed rate of return was in line with current redemption yield on index-linked gilts. [61904]

Mr. Des Browne: Employer contributions from 1 April 2006 for members of the PCSPS classic, classic plus and premium schemes are:

	Salary band	Percentage rate of charge
Band 1	£18,500 and under	17.1
Band 2	£18,501 to £38,000	19.5
Band 3	£38,001 to £65,000	23.2
Band 4	£65,001 and over	25.5

For the PCSPS Partnership the rates are:

Employees age at start of tax year	Percentage of pensionable earnings
Under 21	3.0
21–25	4.5
26–30	6.5
31–35	8.0
36–40	10.0
41–45	11.5
46 and over	12.5

The assumed rate of return is 3.5 per cent. in real terms.

For the last part of the question the information can be obtained only at a disproportionate cost.

Private Contractors (Employees)

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the proportion of people paid less than £6.50 per hour who are working for private sector companies contracted to work for the public sector; and if he will make a statement. [63300]

Mr. Des Browne: It is not possible from available survey data to identify those employed indirectly in the public sector (including employees of private sector companies contracted to work for the public sector). Government policy on public sector pay is devolved to individual Departments who each hold administrative records in respect of their directly employed staff, and any records in respect of contracts with private sector service providers.

Public Sector Employees

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many employees who work for the public sector were being paid less than £6.50 per hour in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [63301]

Mr. Des Browne: The best source for this information is the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) collected by the Office for National Statistics. The ASHE, however, is unable to provide estimates of the number of people earning below these thresholds on a statistically reliable basis. Only proportions of people are available, for which the figures are as follows:

	Percentage of public sector employees who earn less than £6.50 per hour
2001	26
2002	24
2003	20
2004	17
2005	13

Notes:

Figures based on gross hourly earnings excluding overtime for all employees on adult rate of pay whose pay for the survey period was not affected by absence. Figures relate to the UK.

Tax Credits

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many cases of overpayment for *(a)* child and *(b)* working tax credit there have been in Coventry to date. [62405]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to the hon. Member for Mid-Bedfordshire (Mrs. Dorries) on 10 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 322W.

Estimates for 2004–05 of the numbers of in-work families with tax credits awards, including information on overpayments and underpayments by constituency, based on final family circumstances and incomes for 2004–05 are due to be published in May 2006.

We do not produce statistics separately for overpayments of child and working tax credits.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what mechanism his Department has in place to allow tax credit claimants to end their claims if they no longer wish to receive tax credits, despite a continuing entitlement to them; [63184]

(2) how many tax credit claimants requested to end their tax credit claim despite being entitled to the award in *(a)* 2003–04, *(b)* 2004–05 and *(c)* 2005–06. [63185]

Dawn Primarolo: Tax credit claimants can amend or withdraw their claims at any time before HMRC have made a decision whether to make an award. Once a decision is made to award tax credits, that support remains in place until either the claim is renewed after the end of the tax year or comes to an end in-year, for example where there is a change in the number of adults in the household or someone getting working tax credit becomes unemployed.

Information is not available on the number of claimants who have asked to withdraw their claim.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many staff have been working on compliance in the tax credits system in each month since April 2003; how many have been allocated for the next 12 months; and if he will make a statement. [63396]

Dawn Primarolo: It is not our policy to disclose the details of the numbers of staff engaged in tackling serious and organised criminality as to do so could provide assistance to those engaged in criminal activity.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many disabled adults have claimed tax credits in each month since April 2003. [63578]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 31 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 414W.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the results of the 2005 Northern Ireland tax credits Living Together pilot; and if he will make a statement. [62031]

Dawn Primarolo: HMRC run various pilots intended to identify better ways of working. The findings are used to determine whether better internal procedures can be introduced. It would be inappropriate to disclose detailed information about any new processes designed to tackle compliance risk.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the number of staff who will be employed administering tax credits at HM Revenue and Customs for each year from 2003–04 to 2007–08. [62033]

Dawn Primarolo: Approximate figures for staff allocated to tax credits work in 2003–04 and 2004–05 are published in the Standard Report accompanying the Inland Revenue Annual Accounts for 2004–05.

Figures for HM Revenue and Customs for 2005–06 to 2007–08 are not available.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many claims for tax credits for severely disabled adults were made in each month from January 2004 to February 2006; and if he will make a statement. [62790]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 31 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 414W.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many joint claims for tax credits have been terminated and replaced by two single claims in each quarter since April 2003; and if he will make a statement. [62791]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested is not available.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many outstanding cases of tax credit overpayment his Department is pursuing; and if he will make a statement. [62971]

Dawn Primarolo: There were around 726,000 direct recovery overpayment cases outstanding at the end of March 2006.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his latest estimate is of the number of staff at the *(a)* Department of Work and Pensions and its agencies and *(b)* his Department and its agencies who have had their identities used in tax credit fraud since 1 January 2004; and if he will make a statement. [63041]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member for Yeovil to the statement I made to the house on 18 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1357W.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his latest estimate is of the cost of tax credit fraud in *(a)* 2003–04, *(b)* 2004–05, *(c)* 2005–06 to date and *(d)* 6 April 2005 to 30 March 2006; and if he will make a statement. [63042]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the reply I gave to him on 24 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 2049W.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his estimate is of the value of overpaid tax credits written off in each month from October 2005 to February 2006; and if he will make a statement. [63043]

Dawn Primarolo: For the value of tax credit overpayments written off by HM Revenue and Customs in October and November 2005, I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Wycombe (Mr. Goodman) on 26 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 2249–50W.

The value of tax credit overpayments written off from December 2005 to February 2006 were around:

Month 2005–06	*Amount written off (£000)*
December 2005	1,400
January 2006	2,200
February 2006	1,900

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many letters were received by HM Revenue and Customs between April 2003 and February 2006 on tax credits; and if he will make a statement. [63045]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested is not available.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when staff of HM Revenue and Customs first raised with ministers the possibility of closing the tax credits e-portal; and if he will make a statement. [63391]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Gentlemen to the reply I gave to him on 10 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 550W.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent assessment he has made of the scale of fraud in the tax credits system. [63390]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer to the reply I gave to the hon. Member on 24 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 2049W.

Tax Relief

Chris Huhne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the total amount of *(a)* tax relief given to top rate income tax payers in (i) 2005–06 and (ii) 2006–07 and *(b)* the reduction in tax expenditure were such tax relief available as a maximum only at the basic rate of income tax in each year. [63859]

Dawn Primarolo: The information is not readily available.

Tax Returns

Mr. Dunne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether HM Revenue and Customs is entitled to refuse to issue a receipt to an agent submitting a tax return on behalf of a client. [63437]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him in respect of question 58409 on 14 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 2134W.

Telephone Numbers

Anne Milton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the *(a)* 0845, *(b)* 0800 and *(c)* 0870 telephone numbers for the public administered by (i) his Department and (ii) agencies which report to him. [56545]

John Healey: I refer the hon. Member to the answers I gave to the hon. Member for Twickenham (Dr. Cable) on 22 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1902W and 15 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2260W.

(a) It is estimated that over 500 individual 0845 numbers—available for public use—are administered by, or on behalf of, the Chancellor's Departments and agencies. A comprehensive list of all numbers involved is not readily available and could be compiled only at disproportionate cost.

(b) 0800 numbers are listed in the following table:

Number	*Description*	*Administered by*
0800 788 887	Anti-Fraud (Business) Helpline	HMRC
0800 595 000	Customs Confidential	HMRC
0800 056 0585	Special Needs Line (National Savings and Investments)	National Savings
0800 376 9232	Computershare (to obtain brochure "investing in gilts—a private investors guide"	DMO
0800 298 5313	Public Enquiry Line	ONS
0800 092 3446	Labour Force Survey	ONS

Number	Description	Administered by
0800 092 3447	Labour Force Survey	ONS
0800 092 3448	Labour Force Survey	ONS
0800 015 1101	Labour Force Survey	ONS

(c) 0870 numbers are listed in the following table:

Number	Description	Administered by
0870 010 0523	IR35 International Number	HMRC
0870 155 5445	International SA Helpline/Orderline	HMRC
0870 155 5664	SA International Orderline	HMRC
0870 155 5778	CTSA/CIS International Orderline Fax	HMRC
0870 156 6371	Tax Credits (Overseas)	HMRC
0870 156 6372	Tax Credits (Overseas)	HMRC
0870 156 6374	Tax Credits (Overseas)	HMRC
0870 240 6298	CSL—Help for Borrowers	HMRC
0870 240 6406	Employers Orderline Fax	HMRC
0870 300 0551	CTSA/CIS International Orderline	HMRC
0870 702 0003	Computershare (General Enquiries)	DMO
0870 703 0143	Computershare (Gilts Helpline)	DMO

There are no 0845, 0800 or 0870 telephone numbers for the public that are administered by HM Treasury.

Unemployment

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the unemployment rate for *(a)* men and *(b)* women in (i) England, (ii) the North East, (iii) the Tees Valley and (iv) Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland constituency was in each year since 1997. [62836]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 18 April 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about unemployment. (62836)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment for local areas from the annual local area Labour Force Survey (LFS) and Annual Population Survey (APS) following International Labour Organisation definitions. Official unemployment estimates for countries and Government Office Regions are available from the quarterly Labour Force Survey but, on this occasion, the annual LFS and APS data for England and the North East are presented in order to be directly comparable with the estimates for the smaller areas.

Table 1 shows unemployment rates for England, the North East, the Tees Valley (here defined as comprising the unitary authorities Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland, Stockton on Tees and Darlington) and the Middlesbrough, South and East Cleveland parliamentary constituency. The estimates shown are for each 12 months ending February 1998 to February 2004, from the annual LFS, and for the 12 months to March 2005 from the APS.

These estimates, as with any from sample surveys, are subject to a margin of uncertainty. Changes in the estimates from year-to-year should be treated with particular caution.

ONS also compiles statistics for local areas of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA). Table 2 shows the annual average number of JSA claimants as proportions of the resident working age population, for England, the North East, the Tees Valley and Middlesbrough, South and East Cleveland parliamentary constituency, for the calendar years 1997 to 2005.

Table 1: Unemployment rates (percentages) for men and women in England, the North East, the Tees Valley and Middlesbrough, South and East Cleveland parliamentary constituency

	England		North East		Tees Valley		Middlesbrough, South and East Cleveland	
12 months ending:	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
February 1998	7.3	5.7	10.9	7.0	11.2	7.8	7.6	4.6
February 1999	6.5	5.1	9.7	6.3	10.9	6.1	9.8	7.1
February 2000	6.1	5.2	10.5	8.0	14.0	8.5	10.8	3.6
February 2001	5.5	4.5	9.1	6.3	10.5	7.3	8.4	6.0
February 2002	5.2	4.3	8.7	5.7	9.6	6.4	9.5	6.1
February 2003	5.4	4.4	8.0	5.1	9.3	5.9	9.6	6.7
February 2004	5.2	4.4	7.9	5.3	8.5	6.0	6.9	5.3
March 2005	4.9	4.2	6.6	5.1	7.3	4.5	7.5	4.4

Source:
Annual local area Labour Force Survey/Annual Population Survey

Table 2: Numbers of claimants of jobseeker's allowance as percentages of the working age population for men and women in England, the North East, the Tees Valley and Middlesbrough, South and East Cleveland parliamentary constituency

	England		North East		Tees Valley		Middlesbrough, South and East Cleveland	
Calendar year	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
1997	6.4	2.2	9.3	2.5	11.2	3.0	9.1	2.6
1998	5.4	1.8	8.4	2.3	10.3	2.7	8.2	2.3
1999	5.0	1.7	8.0	2.2	9.8	2.6	7.7	2.2
2000	4.3	1.5	7.3	2.0	9.0	2.3	7.4	2.0

Table 2: Numbers of claimants of jobseeker's allowance as percentages of the working age population for men and women in England, the North East, the Tees Valley and Middlesbrough, South and East Cleveland parliamentary constituency

Calendar year	England		North East		Tees Valley		Middlesbrough, South and East Cleveland	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
2001	3.8	1.3	6.4	1.7	7.7	2.0	6.4	1.8
2002	3.6	1.3	5.8	1.6	7.1	1.9	5.9	1.7
2003	3.6	1.3	5.2	1.6	6.4	1.8	5.4	1.5
2004	3.2	1.2	4.5	1.4	5.6	1.6	4.5	1.4
2005	3.3	1.3	4.4	1.4	5.3	1.6	4.3	1.3

Source:
Jobcentre Plus administrative system

Valuation Office Agency

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) has paid to EDS in each year since 1997; and what role EDS plays in providing services to the VOA. [62297]

Dawn Primarolo: The Valuation Office Agency no longer holds data in a readily accessible form for the financial years prior to 1999. In the financial years from 1999–2000 to 2004–05 the Agency paid to EDS the following amounts:

	£ million
1999–2000	11.3
2000–01	9.9
2001–02	8.0
2002–03	9.1
2003–04	13.8
2004–05 (to June 2004 only)	4.0

Value Added Tax

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whom he consulted before reducing value added tax on emergency contraception; and if he will make a statement. [62872]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer to hon. Member to the regulatory impact assessment on the reduced rate of VAT for contraceptive products, published in 'Budget 2006 regulatory impact assessments', and available from the House of Commons Library or www.hm-treasury.gov.uk./media/1E6/1B/bud06_rias_896.pdf

John Penrose: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he plans to change the rules under which *(a)* goods which have been repaired abroad and reimported bear no VAT and *(b)* goods which have been replaced as faulty abroad and reimported bear full VAT. [63273]

Dawn Primarolo: The Chancellor of the Exchequer has no plans to change the current treatment for import VAT purposes of goods exported for repair that are replaced. Any goods imported as replacements for those previously exported for repair are treated as new imports as they cannot fulfil the conditions of Section 126 of the VAT Regulations 1995. Therefore, for replacement goods, import VAT is payable on the full import value in accordance with the normal valuation rules.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the cost to his Department has been of *(a)* all VAT fraud and *(b)* missing trader VAT fraud in each year from 2001–02 to 2005–06; and if he will make a statement. [63201]

Dawn Primarolo: Estimates of total VAT revenue losses—the "VAT gap" and missing trader VAT fraud, between 2001–02 and 2004–05, are available in the paper "Measuring Indirect Tax Losses", published in December 2005. HMRC do not produce forecasts of VAT fraud, so an estimate for 2005–06 is not available.

VED (Low Emission Vehicles)

John Penrose: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what criteria he used in deciding that cars with carbon dioxide emissions below 100g/km, and motorcycles with carbon dioxide emissions below 100g/km would attract a different rate of vehicle excise duty. [63427]

John Healey: The Chancellor considers all relevant environmental, social and economic factors when setting VED rates. Car VED bands are currently structured by CO^2 emissions with six VED bands for cars registered after March 2001 (Band A-F) and seven VED bands for cars registered after March 2006 (Band A-G). Motorcycle VED rates are set according to the engine size. CO^2 emissions data is currently not available for motorcycles at first registration.

Wildlife Souvenirs

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many wildlife souvenirs have been seized by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs in each year since 2000, broken down by (i) item, (ii) species from which the item was derived and (iii) country of origin. [63592]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Stoke-on-Trent, North (Joan Walley) on 28 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 978W.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Academic Staff (Earnings)

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average annual earnings of full-time members of the academic staff of *(a)* universities in England, *(b)* the University of York and *(c)* the University College of York St. John was in (i) cash and (ii) real terms in (A) 1997 and (B) the latest year for which figures are available. [54836]

Bill Rammell: The latest information, showing the changes between 1997/98 and 2002/03, is given in the following table. Significant changes were made to the content, structure, coverage and definitions of the source data in 2003/04 which means that the figures for 2004/05 are not directly comparable with those for earlier years.

Average salary[1] of full-time higher education academic staff with teaching responsibilities

	1997/98	2002/03	Percentage change 1997/98 to 2002/03 Cash terms	Real terms[2]	2004/05
All HE institutions in England					
Professors	46,400	56,300	+21	+9	59,100
Senior Lecturers	35,600	40,800	+15	+3	41,500
Lecturers	26,400	31,700	+20	+7	33,000
University of York					
Professors	42,000	52,200	+24	+11	56,700
Senior Lecturers	33,500	39,500	+18	+6	41,800
Lecturers	25,200	30,000	+19	+7	32,500
University College of York St. John					
Professors	n/a	n/a	—	—	43,600
Senior lecturers	30,100	37,800	+25	+12	40,700
Lecturers	24,700	31,600	+28	+14	33,700

[1] The HESA Staff Record changed markedly in structure, coverage and content in 2003/04. In addition, the definition of salary changed. This means that average salaries for 2003/04 and later years are not directly comparable with those for earlier years. For the years up to 2002/03, salary represented the monies received in respect of institutional duties actually being paid on the date of the HESA staff count (31 July) or for those who have left during the year, the salary on leaving, including any regular payments for additional duties, responsibility allowances or honoraria regardless of their source. In 2003/04, the salary represented the gross basic salary per annum, in pounds sterling as stated in the contract at the reference date of HESA's staff count or at the end date of the contract if earlier, excluding any regular payments for additional duties, responsibility allowances or honoraria, regardless of their source. Figures have been rounded to the nearest 100.

[2] The real terms change has been derived by uprating the 1997/98 actual salary to 2002/03 values (by using the Retail Price Index (RPI), excluding mortgage interest payments, for September 2002), and then comparing this with the actual salaries in 2002/03.

Source:
The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)'s Staff Record.

Age Weighted Pupil Unit

Natascha Engel: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the most recent level was of the Age Weighted Pupil Unit for three and four year olds funded by her Department to schools. [63420]

Bill Rammell: The Department does not set an Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) for three and four year olds. Within the formula for School Formula Spending Shares for 2005–06, the basic unit of funding for each full time equivalent three or four year old was £2,892. There is no separate unit of funding for children under five within the formula used to allocate Dedicated Schools Grant for 2006–07 and 2007–08—all pupils in a local authority attract the same unit of funding. It is for local authorities to decide, in consultation with their Schools Forums, how to allocate funding for three and four year olds from their Schools Budget—in doing so, the Government encourages them to fund all providers fairly, transparently and equitably. Where three and four year olds are in nursery provision in maintained schools, local authorities will fund them through their schools funding formula, and will therefore set an AWPU for them.

Autistic Spectrum Disorders

David Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she is taking to ensure a sufficient supply of teachers specially trained to support pupils with autistic spectrum disorders. [64172]

Bill Rammell: The Department projects the overall demand for new teachers using the Teacher Supply Model which takes into account a wide range of factors such as projected pupil numbers, teacher wastage, retirements and new curriculum pressures. The number of places for initial teacher training (ITT) made available each year is informed by this model. The number of places allocated for 2006/07 is 32,800 and 31,300 for 2007/08. In addition, we expect that recruitment to employment based routes will be in approximately 7,000. The Department also provides a number of financial incentives to encourage more graduates to enter the teaching profession.

In order to be awarded Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), all trainee teachers must demonstrate that they understand their responsibilities under the statutory Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice, know how to seek advice from specialists where necessary, and can differentiate their teaching to meet the needs of pupils, including those with SEN.

The National Standards for QTS and for the Induction Programme for Newly Qualified Teachers both cover SEN, which would include Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASDs). NQTs are required to demonstrate that they can plan effectively to meet the needs of pupils in their class with SEN, with or without a statement, and in consultation with the school's SEN Co-ordinator, contribute to the preparation and implementation of individual pupils' education plans or the equivalent.

The Department is working with the Training and Development Agency for Schools to take forward a range of specific initiatives designed to improve the skills and confidence of trainee, newly qualified, and established teachers in supporting pupils with SEN and disabilities. In addition, all schools have a School Development Grant that they can use, among other things, for the purposes of supporting the continuing

professional development of teachers in relation to their understanding and knowledge of SEN and disability issues. A wide variety of courses are available covering SEN, including ASDs, ranging from awareness-raising through to in-depth studies leading to specific qualifications. It is, however, a matter for individual teachers and their schools to determine their own particular training and development needs.

In 2002 we issued, in partnership with the Department of Health, Autistic Spectrum Disorders Good Practice Guidance, which offered a series of pointers to good practice aimed at schools, teachers and SENCOs.

Child Care

Mrs. Maria Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many child care places *(a)* became available and *(b)* were lost in each year since 1997, broken down by (i) source of place and (ii) cause of loss. [63948]

Bill Rammell: The following tables show the number and types of child care places that have opened and closed each year in England since 1998. Data prior to 1998 are not available. Data on the causes of closure are not available.

The data provided are drawn from two data sets. From 1998 to 2003 data are derived from local authority returns covering both registered and unregistered provision. From March 2003 data have been provided by Ofsted. The two sets of data are not on a consistent basis as Ofsted data cover registered provision only.

Ofsted data on closures include registered places in settings which are transferring ownership, and in settings which move from one Ofsted category to another, not just in those which are ceasing trading. For example, if a full daycare provider moved to offering sessional provision, this would be recorded as a 'closed' full daycare setting and an 'opened' sessional daycare setting. The Ofsted data therefore exaggerates the true extent of turnover.

Table 1: Data provided by local authorities

	1998/99	*1999/2000*	*2000/01*	*2001/02*	*2002/03*
Opened	66,210	133,028	168,226	139,753	185,394
Child minders	n/a	39,961	47,159	44,446	56,284
Full Daycare	19,222	29,089	33,997	29,310	35,716
Out of school	46,988	63,978	87,070	65,997	93,394
Closed	13,242	65,230	81,229	56,974	98,074
Child minders	n/a	43,826	51,010	36,451	62,071
Full Daycare	3,844	11,830	12,608	7,556	12,130
Out of school	9,398	9,574	17,611	12,967	23,873
Net Change	52,968	67,798	86,997	82,779	87,320

Table 2 : Data provided by Ofsted

	2003/04	*2004/05*	*March 2005/December 2005*
Opened	238,596	254,126	160,970
Child minders	62,781	53,028	36,997
Full Daycare	98,632	117,614	66,629
Out of school	77,183	83,484	57,344
Closed	128,350	200,770	107,119
Child minders	50,401	62,972	33,122
Full Daycare	38,502	65,577	36,095
Out of school	39,447	72,221	37,902
Net Steady State Changes[1]	+24,618	+19,238	+6,603
Child minders	+6,425	+6,344	+1,249
Full Daycare	+14,617	+9,642	+4,571
Out of school	+3,576	+3,252	+783
Net change	+134,864	+72,594	+60,454

[1] The Net Steady State change refers to existing registered providers who change the number of places for which they are registered, either through opening or closing. Ofsted only provides the Department with the net outcome of these Steady State changes We are therefore unable to say how many places opened and closed to produce the net outcome figure.

Class Sizes

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average class size was in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in the East Riding of Yorkshire in each year since 1997; and if she will make a statement. [63507]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Data on class sizes in primary and secondary schools at national, local authority and parliamentary constituency level can also be found at the following link:

Schools and Pupils in England: January 2005 (Final) in the "additional information" sections 4, 6 and 7.

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average class size was in *(a)* primary schools and *(b)* secondary schools in (i)

England, (ii) Kingston upon Hull and (iii) Hull, North constituency in the last year for which figures are available. [64102]

Bill Rammell: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Data on class sizes in primary and secondary schools at national, local authority and parliamentary constituency level can also be found at the following link: Schools and Pupils in England: January 2005 (Final) in the "additional information" sections 4, 6 and 7.

Connexions

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much her Department has provided to Connexions in each year since its inception. [64199]

Bill Rammell: Connexions was introduced in a staged way from April 2001 and the budgets for each year since its inception are as follows:

£ million

	Connexions budget	*Careers service budget*
2001–02	151	173
2002–03	378	52
2003–04	455	—
2004–05	470	—
2005–06	475	—
2006–07	476	—

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which schools in *(a)* Southend, *(b)* Essex, *(c)* the Metropolitan Police area of London, and *(d)* Hertfordshire have (i) a partnership agreement and (ii) another arrangement with Connexions. [64201]

Bill Rammell: The Department for Education and Skills does not hold central information on Connexions partnership agreements. It is a matter for the local Connexions partnership to ensure that partnership agreements with schools are in place.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which Catholic schools in England have *(a)* a partnership agreement and *(b)* another arrangement with Connexions; whether a Connexions personal adviser is working in each such school; and whether special guidelines have been issued about keeping advice given to pupils in line with Catholic teaching. [64250]

Bill Rammell: The Department for Education and Skills does not hold central information on Connexions partnership agreements. It is a matter for the local Connexions partnership to ensure that partnership agreements with schools are in place. The requirements and guidance for the Connexions Service states that materials that the Partnership makes available in faith schools and colleges must reflect the ethos of those institutions.

Contracts (Voluntary Sector)

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many contracts are let by her Department to voluntary sector organisations; how many of those are let on an annual basis; and how many of those had received finalised contracts for 2006–07 by 31 March. [63209]

Bill Rammell: This information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Finance

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 27 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 645–46W, on departmental finance, if she will place in the Library the annual departmental returns to the Treasury from which the figures were extracted. [63407]

Bill Rammell: A summary of the departmental returns on fraud to Treasury for the period 2002–03 to 2004–05 giving more detail that the original answer has been placed in the library. Treasury only require returns to be retained for three years so information is not available for 2001–02. The summary also includes cases that did not incur a financial loss which were excluded from the original figures.

DfES Fraud and Theft Reported to HM Treasury In 2002/03,2003/04 and 2004/05

Internal Cases

Type of fraud	*Number of cases*	*2002–03 Value (£)*	*Number of cases*	*2003–04 Value (£)*	*Number of cases*	*2004–05 Value (£)*
Travelling, subsistence and allowances	1	4,400	—	—	—	—
Pay-related frauds	1	0	2	0	—	—
Theft of assets and information	2	0	—	—	—	—
Exploiting assets and information	1	0	—	—	—	—
Procurement fraud	1	0	1	0	1	0
Personnel management related fraud	3	0	—	—	—	—
Fraud related to payment processes	—	—	—	—	—	—
Income related fraud	—	—	—	—	—	—
Other	1	—0	—	—	—	—

External—Public

Type of fraud	*Number of cases*	*2002–03 Value (£)*	*Number of cases*	*2003–04 Value (£)*	*Number of cases*	*2004–05 Value (£)*
Travelling, subsistence and allowances	—	—	—	—	—	—
Pay-related frauds	—	—	—	—	1	18,400
Theft of assets and information	—	—	—	—	—	—
Exploiting assets and information	—	—	—	—	—	—
Procurement fraud	—	—	—	—	—	—

External—Public

Type of fraud	Number of cases	2002–03 Value (£)	Number of cases	2003–04 Value (£)	Number of cases	2004–05 Value (£)
Personnel management related fraud	—	—	—	—	—	—
Fraud related to payment processes	—	—	—	—	1	45,647
Income related fraud	—	—	—	—	—	—
Other	9	156,0880	7	189,527	—	—

External—Contractor

Type of fraud	Number of cases	2002–03 Value (£)	Number of cases	2003–04 Value (£)	Number of cases	2004–05 Value (£)
Travelling, subsistence and allowances	—	—	—	—	—	—
Pay-related frauds	—	—	—	—	1	0
Theft of assets and information	—	—	—	—	1	308
Exploiting assets and information	—	—	—	—	—	—
Procurement fraud	4	65,413	3	0	1	66,000
Personnel management related fraud	—	—	—	—	—	—
Fraud related to payment processes	—	—	—	—	—	—
Income related fraud	—	—	—	—	—	—
Other	—	—	—	—	—	—

Unknown (assumed to be internal)

Type of fraud	Number of cases	2002–03 Value (£)	Number of cases	2003–04 Value (£)	Number of cases	2004–05 Value (£)
Travelling, subsistence and allowances	—	—	—	—	—	—
Pay-related frauds	—	—	—	—	—	—
Theft of assets and information	—	—	—	—	—	—
Exploiting assets and information	—	—	—	—	—	—
Procurement fraud	—	—	—	—	—	—
Personnel management related fraud	—	—	—	—	—	—
Fraud related to payment processes	—	—	—	—	—	—
Income related fraud	—	—	—	—	—	—
Other	—	—	—	—	—	—

Education Act 1996

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many directions have been issued under sections *(a)* 497 (general default powers) and *(b)* 497A (power to secure proper performance of local education authority's functions) of the Education Act 1996 in each year since 1996; and how many of these had to be enforced by order of mandamus. [59326]

Bill Rammell: The number of directions issued under section 497A in every year since 1996 are as follows:

	Number of directions issued under section 497A
1996	0
1997	0
1998	0
1999	1
2000	1
2001	6
2002	3
2003	1
2004	1
2005	2
2006	0

No directions under section 497A were enforced by order of mandamus.

The Department has issued directions under section 497 in two areas: school admissions and special educational needs, but keeps no central aggregate record of numbers. As far as the Department's records indicate, none have required enforcement by a court order of mandamus.

Education and Training

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of 17-year-olds were in *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time education and training in each local authority in England in each of the last five years. [63162]

Bill Rammell: Participation rates for those aged 16 and 17, in schools, FE colleges, LSC funded work-based learning and part-time education are available for local education authorities (LEAs) in England. The latest available figures are for 2004 and these were published in the Statistical First Release "Participation in education and training by 16 and 17-year-olds in each local area in England"—SFR13/2006 on 30 March 2006.

The publication is accessible on the DfES website via the link, httD://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000645/index.shtml

LEA detail is available through the link: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000645/Addition3_lea.xls

Education Finance

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much the Government spent per pupil in England on the *(a)* 4 to 7 years, *(b)* 7 to 11 years and *(c)* 11 to 16 years age groups in each year since 2004. [64137]

Bill Rammell: Total funding per pupil aged 3–10 and 11–15 for England in 2004–05 and 2005–06 is set out as follows. We cannot show the figures for the ages requested.

The figures are in cash terms and include the pensions transfer to EFS and the LSC.

Cash terms, including pensions transfer to EFS and LSC

	3 to 10-year-olds	*11 to 15-year-olds*
2004–05	3,560	4,460
2005–06	3,840	4,730

Notes:

1. Price Base: Cash
2. Figures reflect relevant sub-blocks of Education Formula Spending (EFS) settlements. Figures from 2004–05 include the pensions transfer to EFS, the figures prior to 2003–04 have not been adjusted.
3. Total funding also includes all revenue grants in DfES Departmental Expenditure Limits relevant to pupils aged 11–15 and exclude Education Maintenance Allowances (EMAs) and grants not allocated at LEA level.
4. The pupil numbers used to convert m figures to per pupil are those underlying the EFS settlement calculations.
5. Figures are rounded to the nearest £10.
6. Figures are provisional as some grants have not yet been finalised/audited.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average funding per pupil was for 2005–06 in West Lancashire. [64225]

Bill Rammell: The total funding per pupil aged 3–19 (cash terms) in Lancashire for 2005–06 was £4,080. Figures are not available at constituency level.

The above figure includes funding via Education Formula Spending and education grants allocated at a local authority level. It includes the pensions transfer to EFS and the Learning and Skills Council, and is in cash terms.

Notes:

1. Price Base: Cash
2. Figures reflect relevant sub-blocks of Education Formula Spending (EFS) settlements and include the pensions transfer to EFS and the Learning and Skills Council.
3. Total funding also includes all revenue grants in DfES Departmental Expenditure Limits relevant to pupils aged 3–19 and exclude Education Maintenance Allowances (EMAs) and grants not allocated at LEA level.
4. The pupil numbers used to convert m figures to per pupil are those underlying the EFS settlement calculations.
5. Figures are rounded to the nearest £10.
6. 2005–06 figures are provisional as some grants have not yet been finalised/audited.

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the funding per pupil was in *(a)* Taunton constituency and *(b)* England in each year since 1997. [64348]

Bill Rammell: Total funding per pupil aged 3–19 for Somerset and England between 1997–98 and 2005–06 is set out in the following table. Figures are not available at constituency level. The figures are in real terms and exclude the pensions transfer to EPS and the LSC from 2003–04.

£

	Somerset total	*England total*
1997–98	2,750	2,940
1998–99	2,810	3,000
1999–2000	2,940	3,140
2000–01	3,170	3,390
2001–02	3,300	3,550
2002–03	3,370	3,650
2003–04	3,490	3,790
2004–05	3,640	3,950
2005–06	3,780	4,130
Change since 1997–98	1,030	1,180

Notes:

1. Price Base: Real terms at 2004–05 prices, based on GDP deflators as at 23 December 2005.
2. Figures reflect relevant sub-blocks of Standard Spending Assessment/Education Formula Spending (EFS) settlements and exclude the pensions transfer to EFS and LSC from 2003–04.
3. Total funding also includes all revenue grants in DfES departmental expenditure limits relevant to pupils aged 3–19 and exclude education maintenance allowances (EMAs) and grants not allocated at LEA level.
4. The pupil numbers used to convert £ million figures to £ per pupil are those underlying the SSA/EFS settlement calculations plus PLASC three-year-old maintained pupils and estimated three to four-year-olds funded through state support in maintained and other educational institutions where these are not included in the SSA pupil numbers.
5. Figures are rounded to the nearest £10.
6. 2003–04 to 2005–06 figures are provisional as some grants have not yet been finalised/audited.

Educational Underachievement

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps the Department is taking to address under-achievement in schools by British Muslims. [63404]

Bill Rammell: In 2003 the Government launched the Aiming High strategy to raise the attainment of black and minority ethnic pupils. Within the Aiming High strategy, the Minority Ethnic Achievement Project was established in 2004, and is running in 52 maintained schools in 12 local authorities. It focuses on raising the achievement of pupils from Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Turkish and Somali backgrounds at Key Stage 3. We are building on the Aiming High Strategy and are doubling the number of schools which offer extra support for Pakistani and Bangladeshi pupils.

The attainment of Pakistani and Bangladeshi pupils at GCSE has improved faster than the national average since 2003. In 2005, Pakistani and Bangladeshi pupils also improved their five A* to C GCSE results compared to 2004. In 2005, 48.4 per cent. of Pakistani pupils gained five A* to C GCSEs (an increase of 3.2 percentage points from 45.2 per cent. in 2004), as did 52.7 per cent. of Bangladeshi pupils (an increase of 4.3 percentage points from 48.4 per cent. in 2004). This was against a national average for all pupils in maintained schools in 2005 of 54.9 per cent., up 3.0 percentage points from 51.9 per cent. in 2004.

Enterprise Summer School Pathfinders

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what the curriculum of the enterprise summer school pathfinders will be in summer 2006; on what basis participating schools will be selected; and if she will make a statement. [63812]

(2) what the *(a)* objectives, *(b)* costs and *(c)* performance measurement criteria for the 23 enterprise summer school pathfinders will be. [63813]

Bill Rammell: Following the Chancellor's November announcement, and subsequent budget announcement that Young Enterprise (YE) will run Enterprise Summer School Pathfinders in 2006, the DfES has been given responsibility for the delivery of the Pathfinders. Two million pounds has been made available, and while we have had early discussions with YE, we are not yet at a stage to finalise details.

Mobile Telephones

Stephen Hesford: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils in *(a)* Wirral West, *(b)* Wirral Local Education Authority and *(c)* England have been caught using a mobile telephone to cheat in an examination in each of the last three academic years; and if she will make a statement. [64314]

Bill Rammell: Any candidate who takes a mobile phone into an examination is guilty of malpractice under the general qualifications regulations, regardless of whether or not they planned to use it to cheat. In summer 2005, around 1,100 candidates were penalised for bringing mobile phones into examinations set by the three England-based awarding bodies, according to a report recently published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA).

A geographical breakdown of these figures is not available centrally.

The QCA is working with the awarding bodies which provide public examinations and with everyone in the system to ensure that they understand the penalties of malpractice.

GCSEs

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people have left school in *(a)* Ribble Valley and *(b)* Lancashire with less than the equivalent of five GCSEs at grades A to C in each year since 1997. [63196]

Bill Rammell: The figures requested are shown in the following table.

Proportion of 15-year-olds[1] not achieving five or more A to C grades at GCSE and equivalent[2] in Ribble Valley constituency, maintained schools only*

	Number of 15-year-old pupils in Ribble Valley constituency[3]	Number not achieving 5+A*-C	Percentage not achieving 5+A*-C
1997	1,258	519	41.3
1998	1,293	501	38.7
1999	1,307	523	40.0
2000	1,299	476	36.6
2001	1,342	493	36.7
2002	1,336	451	33.8
2003	1,373	486	35.4
2004	1,590	605	38.1
2005	1,595	556	34.9

[1] Age at the start of the academic year (i.e. 31 August).
[2] From 1997 includes GNVQ equivalences and from 2004 other equivalences approved for use pre-16.
[3] Pupils attending schools located in Ribble Valley constituency

Proportion of 15-year-olds[1] not achieving five or more A to C grades at GCSE and equivalent[2] in Lancashire local authority, maintained schools only*

	Number of 15-year-pupils in Lancashire local authority	Number not achieving 5+A*-C	Percentage not achieving 5+A*-C
1997	16,288	9,153	56.2
1998	13,071	6,931	53.0
1999	13,216	6,870	52.0
2000	13,480	6,795	50.4
2001	13,602	6,788	49.9
2002	13,841	6,686	48.3
2003	14,056	6,556	46.6
2004	14,717	6,796	46.2
2005	14,798	6,785	45.9

[1] Age at the start of the academic year (i.e. 31 August).
[2] From 1997 includes GNVQ equivalences and from 2004 other equivalences approved for use pre-16.

The proportion of 15-year-olds in England achieving five A*-C grades at GCSE and equivalent has improved by 11 percentage points from 45.1 per cent. in 1997 to 56.3 per cent. in 2005. The proportion of pupils in Ribble Valley achieving this standard is well above the national average and the average for Lancashire as a whole.

LEA Boundaries

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of pupils being educated in the East Riding of Yorkshire live inside the Kingston-upon-Hull local education authority boundary; and if she will make a statement. [62356]

Bill Rammell: The information requested has been provided in the following table.

Percentage of pupils[1] educated within the East Riding of Yorkshire residing within the Kingston-Upon-Hull local authority (LA) boundary

	Number of pupils in schools maintained by the East Riding of Yorkshire LA	Number of pupils in residence in Kingston-upon-Hull LA attending schools maintained by the East Riding of Yorkshire LA	Percentage of pupils in residence in Kingston-upon-Hull LA attending schools maintained by the East Riding of Yorkshire LA
Primary[2]	22,071	766	3.5
Secondary[3]	20,344	1,474	7.2
Special[4]	115	3	2.6
Total	42,530	2,243	5.3

[1] Includes pupils aged five to 15 years, solely registered or main registration of dually registered pupils, excludes boarders.
[2] Includes middle deemed primary.
[3] Includes secondary and middle deemed secondary.
[4] Includes special and non-maintained special.
Source:
Annual Schools Census 2005

Level 3 Education

John Penrose: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans she has for changing the *(a)* funding and *(b)* charging arrangements for level 3 education for people over 25 years once level 3 education becomes free for people under 25 years. [63365]

Beverley Hughes: The White Paper on Further Education: Raising Skills, Improving Life Chances reaffirmed that, while there is more funding going into the sector, there is a need to focus more on the key priorities of raising participation and achievement amongst young people and providing adults with the basic platform of skills and qualifications needed for employability and further learning. It also reaffirmed the principle that adults and employers should contribute to the costs of learning in line with the benefits they receive. Consistent with that principle the national fee assumption for adult learners not covered by national entitlements, including adults over the age of 25 studying for a level 3 qualification, will rise and will reach 37.5 per cent. in 2007/08 compared to the current figure of 27.5 per cent. There will still be concessions for people on means-tested benefits, the pension (guarantee) credit, and higher rates of the working tax credit.

The entitlement to free tuition for 19 to 25-year-olds studying for their first full level 3 qualification, which is intended to help young adults seeking to complete their initial education and who may not have had the opportunity to do so satisfactorily by age 19, will be introduced in August 2007. It will be supported by £25 million of additional funding on top of existing planned funding for adult learning and will therefore not change the funding or charging arrangements for older adults, who will continue to benefit from the 48 per cent. real increase in funding that this Government has made in further education since 1997. Additionally, adults of all ages, including those aged over 25, will benefit from the introduction of the Train to Gain service for employers and Learning Accounts for level 3 qualifications.

Parliamentary Questions

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when she will reply to Questions *(a)* 54835 and *(b)* 54836 tabled by the hon. Member for City of York on 24 February 2006, on university staff. [64446]

Bill Rammell: I replied to my hon. Friend on 18 April 2006.

Primary Schools

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the number of post-graduate certificate in education places for primary school teachers that will be provided by institutions in England for the 2006/07 academic year; and what percentage change that represents from 2005/06. [63648]

Bill Rammell: The Department sets the recruitment target for new entrants to initial teacher training (ITT) separately for primary and secondary courses. For 2006/07, the overall recruitment target for new entrants to primary school ITT is 15,300. The Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) is responsible for allocating the 15,300 places between postgraduate and undergraduate primary courses.

In 2006/07, 8,791 places have been allocated for the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) for primary school teachers provided by institutions in England. This represents a 3.4 per cent. reduction in the number of places (9,100) allocated in 2005/06. The remaining places are allocated for undergraduate and employment based routes.

Private Finance Initiative

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the *(a)* names and *(b)* locations of the schools (i) built and (ii) renewed under the Private Finance Initiative scheme. [64255]

Bill Rammell: The Department for Education and Skills does not itself undertake private finance initiative (PFI) projects. PFI projects for the provision of schools are delivered through contracts between local authorities and private sector contractors.

There are currently 99 such projects with signed contracts covering over 800 schools. The names, locations and other details of these schools can be accessed at:
www.teachernet.gov.uk/pfi.

School Hours

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which schools in Southend provide extended school hours; and if she will make a statement. [64[illegible]0]

Bill Rammell: Nine schools in the Southend Local Authority area are working towards delivering a core offer of extended services by September 2006. The Government wants all schools to provide access to the core offer by 2010, with half of primary schools and a third of secondary schools doing so by 2008. We want to see at least 2,500 schools providing access to the core offer by September 2006. Good progress is being made nationally, with over 6,000 schools thus far indicating their willingness to work on developing a core offer of extended services.

The core offer, which should be available to all parents and pupils of the school, comprises access to:

high quality childcare 8am to 6pm year round;

a varied menu of study support activities;

parenting support programmes;

swift and easy referral to a wide range of specialised support services;

wider community access.

It will be for individual local authorities, in discussion with all schools in their area, to take a strategic approach to developing access to the core offer in each year.

School IT Systems

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much her Department allocated for school information technology systems in *(a)* Kingston upon Hull and *(b)* Hull North in each year since 1997. [64106]

Bill Rammell: The Department does not hold information on specific allocation figures for school information technology systems in *(a)* Kingston upon Hull and *(b)* Hull North. Funding for school information systems is included within the overall ICT funding allocation figure for the local authority.

Hull North is in Kingston upon Hull and allocations for this authority, from 1998–2005, are detailed in 'Funding for ICT in Schools in England' which is available in the House Library. The ICT funding allocation for Kingston upon Hull in 2005–06 was £2,755,007.

School Meals

Steve McCabe: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what provision will be made for schools committed to long-term contractual arrangements with vending machine suppliers if the proposed ban on junk food sales contained in the draft guidelines from the School Food Trust is implemented. [63398]

Bill Rammell: There is currently no intention to make provision available at a national level to schools committed to long-term arrangements. Such arrangements are made at local level and we would normally expect schools to seek expert advice from their local authority on contractual issues. Last year the Department produced a draft guide for schools and local authorities on 'School Meals Procurement', which sets out some of the key issues that governors and head teachers should consider when reviewing their current school meals service and deciding on changes. Alongside this guide, which is currently being updated, we are also producing additional guidance on contract variation which is aimed at helping schools tied into long term contracts. Both sets of guidance should be available in May.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many school children in each school in Southend, West constituency *(a)* receive school meals and *(b)* pay for school meals. [64221]

Bill Rammell: The table shows information on free school meals taken as well as pupils known to be eligible for free schools meals.

Two sets of figures relating to the number and proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals are given here. The first includes all pupils in the school, regardless of their age. The second includes full time pupils aged up to (and including) 15 and part time pupils aged 5 to 15 (inclusive). This second coverage is as used in the Pupil Achievement Tracker and Ofsted's PANDA reports and provides consistent school level comparisons.

Information on the number of pupils who pay for school meals is not collected centrally.

Maintained primary and secondary schools: school meal arrangements—January 2005
Southend, West parliamentary constituency

					All pupils[1]			
URN	*LEA No.*	*Estab. No.*	*School name*	*Number on roll*	*Number of pupils taking free school meals*[2]	*Percentage of pupils taking free school meals*	*Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals*	*Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals*
114718	882	2019	Chalkwell Hall Junior School	416	37	8.9	40	9.6
114719	882	2022	Chalkwell Hall Infant School	312	25	8.0	31	9.9
114720	882	2023	Earls Hall Junior School	354	34	9.6	42	11.9
114725	882	2031	Earls Hall Infant School	267	20	7.5	28	10.5
114773	882	2095	Leigh North Street Junior School	354	25	7.1	37	10.5
114774	882	2096	Leigh Infant School	264	17	6.4	22	8.3
114779	882	2108	West Leigh Junior School	513	9	1.8	13	2.5
114780	882	2109	West Leigh Infant School	360	3	0.8	4	1.1
114781	882	2111	Edwards Hall Junior School	275	13	4.7	14	5.1
114782	882	2115	Edwards Hall Infant School	182	10	5.5	11	6.0
114789	882	2126	Heycroft Primary School	424	8	1.9	11	2.6
114790	882	2127	Darlinghurst Primary and Nursery School	389	66	17.0	96	24.7
114837	882	2387	Blenheim Primary School	458	96	21.4	134	29.3
114841	882	2407	Fairways Primary School	406	25	6.2	33	8.1
115148	882	3328	Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School	423	14	3.3	16	3.8
115234	882	4492	Prittlewell Technology College	917	175	19.1	227	24.8
115246	882	5206	The Westborough Primary School and Nursery	704	104	14.8	169	24.0
115270	882	5230	Eastwood Infant and Nursery Foundation School	181	28	15.5	38	21.0
115271	682	5231	Eastwood Junior School	226	32	14.2	41	18.1
115308	882	5268	Prince Avenue Primary Foundation School and Nursery	382	49	12.8	75	19.6

Maintained primary and secondary schools: school meal arrangements—January 2005
Southend, West parliamentary constituency

URN	LEA No.	Estab. No.	School name	Number on roll	All pupils[1] Number of pupils taking free school meals[3]	Percentage of pupils taking free school meals	Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals
115317	882	5401	Westcliff High School for Boys	985	17	1.7	17	1.7
115330	882	5414	The Eastwood School (11–18)	922	57	6.2	64	6.9
115339	882	5423	Westcliff High School for Girls	1,032	5	0.5	12	1.2
115350	882	5434	Belfairs High School	1244	180	14.5	249	20.0
115362	882	5446	Southend High School for Boys	914	18	2.0	27	3.0
115363	882	5447	St. Thomas More High School for Boys	941	37	3.9	57	6.1

URN	LEA No.	Estab. No.	School name	Pupil achievement tracker[2] Number of pupils	Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals
114718	882	2019	Chalkwell Hall Junior School	416	40	9.6
114719	882	2022	Chalkwell Hall Infant School	312	31	9.9
114720	882	2023	Earls Hall Junior School	354	42	11.9
114725	882	2031	Earls Hall Infant School	244	28	11.5
114773	882	2095	Leigh North Street Junior School	354	37	10.5
114774	882	2096	Leigh Infant School	264	22	8.3
114779	882	2108	West Leigh Junior School	513	13	2.5
114780	882	2109	West Leigh Infant School	360	4	1.1
114781	882	2111	Edwards Hall Junior School	275	14	5.1
114782	882	2115	Edwards Hall Infant School	182	11	6.0
114789	882	2126	Heycroft Primary School	424	11	2.6
114790	882	2127	Darlinghurst Primary and Nursery School	352	91	25.9
114837	882	2387	Blenheim Primary School	422	134	31.8
114841	882	2407	Fairways Primary School	406	33	8.1
115148	882	3328	Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School	423	16	3.8
115234	882	4492	Prittlewell Technology College	917	227	24.8
115246	882	5206	The Westborough Primary School and Nursery	628	167	26.6
115270	882	5230	Eastwood Infant and Nursery Foundation School	140	38	27.1
115271	682	5231	Eastwood Junior School	226	41	18.1
115308	882	5268	Prince Avenue Primary Foundation School and Nursery	344	75	21.8
115317	882	5401	Westcliff High School for Boys	759	16	
115330	882	5414	The Eastwood School (11–18)	828	62	7.5
115339	882	5423	Westcliff High School for Girls	763	8	1.0
115350	882	5434	Belfairs High School	1081	232	21.5
115362	882	5446	Southend High School for Boys	694	22	3.2
115363	882	5447	St. Thomas More High School for Boys	755	49	6.5

[1] Includes pupils with sole and dual registration of all ages.
[2] Includes pupils with sole and dual registration who are full time and aged 0 to 15 (inclusive) and those who are part time and aged 5 to 15 (inclusive)
[3] Number of pupils who took a free school meal on the day of the census in January.
less than 3 or a rate based on less than 3

School Sports Facilities

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funding her Department has made available for improvement to school sports facilities in *(a)* Kingston upon Hull and *(b)* Hull, North in each year since 1997. [64103]

Bill Rammell: The Department for Education and Skills allocates capital funding on a local authority basis. It then relies on the local authority to spend its allocation on improving school sport facilities and other school assets in accordance with priorities set out in the local asset management plan. Accordingly, records held centrally detail allocations at a local authority level.

Capital allocations to the City of Kingston upon Hull and schools in its area have increased significantly in the period 1997–98 to 2005–06, and are set out in the table as follows:

	£ million
1997–98	5.4
1998–99	2.6
1999–2000	6.3
2000–01	9.5
2001–02	14.4
2002–03	13.6
2003–04	10.7
2004–05	10.9
2005–06	8.4

The four year period 2001–02 to 2004–05 includes the following Targeted Capital Funding allocations, in date order; £3.9 million, £4.4 million, £0.6 million, £1.0 million.

Schools Enterprise Education Network

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the *(a)* objectives, *(b)* costs and *(c)* performance measurement criteria will be for the Schools Enterprise Education Network. [63811]

Bill Rammell: The overriding objective of the Schools Enterprise Education Network (SEEN) is to use its experience and expertise to help other schools deliver enterprise education. During the initial start up phase, we have asked the network to establish an effective working relationship with their partner schools, and have provided £1.3 million to enable this to happen.

Services Education

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 2 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 686W, on services education, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that local education authorities use their funding flexibly to help with the specific problems faced by service schools; what assessment she has made of the assistance available from local authorities for service children; and how many local education authorities make specific provision for mobility in their funding formulae for schools. [64079]

Bill Rammell: Each local authority is responsible for setting its own local funding formula which is used for delegating resources to schools. Under the school finance regulations, authorities have both the freedom and the flexibility to build factors into their local formulae which can take account of mobility issues as they affect schools with high numbers of children from services' families. Local authorities are best placed to know the needs and circumstances of their individual schools, and so they are responsible for devising formulae which can take such local matters into account.

Skills Training

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much her Department allocated for key skills training in secondary schools in *(a)* Kingston upon Hull and *(b)* Hull North constituency in each year since 1997. [64107]

Bill Rammell: Training for key skills teachers is provided through the Key Skills Support Programme (KSSP) which focuses on post-16 learners in schools, colleges and work-based training. The amounts allocated nationally for schools and colleges since the start of the KSSP are set out in the following table.

Financial year	*Allocation (£)*
1999–00	4,000,000
2000–01	4,000,000
2001–02	4,000,000
2002–03	4,000,000
2003–04	4,000,000
2004–05	3,115,000
2005–06	3,525,000

The KSSP is a national programme and the figures in the table represent the total allocations across England for both secondary schools and colleges. More detailed breakdowns, whether by region or by type of institution, are not available.

Student/Staff Ratios

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the student/staff ratio was in *(a)* universities in England, *(b)* the University of York and *(c)* the University College of York St. John in (i) 1997 and (ii) the latest year for which figures are available. [54835]

Bill Rammell: The Department does not calculate student staff ratios for individual higher education institutions, partly because the amount of time staff spend teaching further education (as opposed to higher education) courses, and the number of students who are taught at other institutions under franchising arrangements, differ between institutions and therefore complicate the calculation of SSRs on a consistent basis for every institution. The latest available information showing student and staff numbers for these institutions, and the comparable figures for all institutions in England, are given in the table.

Higher education students and staff in higher education institutions

	1997/98		*2004/05*	
	Students[1]	*Staff*	*Students*[1]	*Staff*
England	1,496,890	104,470	1,895,825	134,330
University of York	8,030	950	12,625	1,195
University College of York St. John	4,015	185	5,720	235

[1] Postgraduate and undergraduate, students from UK and overseas. Figures are based on a snapshot count as at 1 December.
[2] All full-time and part-time academic staff.
Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

An SSR for all HE institutions in England as a whole, which takes account of time spent on FE teaching and students taught via franchising, is published annually by the Department. The latest figures show that the SSR was 17.6:1 in 1997/98 and 18.2:1 in 2003/04.

Teacher Pensions

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of members of the teachers' pension scheme joined the scheme *(a)* before the age of (i) 20, (ii) 25, (iii) 30, (iv) 35, (v) 40 and (vi) 45 and *(b)* when they were over 45 years. [61393]

Jacqui Smith: The numbers and proportions in the following table are shown against the age at the date of first entry[1] of full-time teachers still in service at March 2004, in maintained, FE and independent sectors, England and Wales.

[1] Date of first entry is the first date of recorded service of any type. This will include entry to non-pensionable but recorded service.

Age at date of entry	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Cumulative percentage*
Under 20	4,500	1	1
20–24	301,900	56	57
25–29	99,400	18	75
30–34	48,600	9	84

Age at date of entry	Number	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
35–39	39,100	7	92
40–44	26,500	5	97
45 and over	18,200	3	—
Total	538,300	100	100

Note:
Figures are rounded to the nearest 100.
Source:
Database of Teachers' Records (DTR)

Teacher Training

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills on what date a decision was taken to reduce the number of initial teacher training places allocated to the North West of England; and on what date that decision was communicated to bodies responsible for delivering that training. [63650]

Bill Rammell: The Board for the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) approved the methodology for allocating new entrant initial teacher training (ITT) places at its meeting on 14 December 2005 and gave TDA officers the authority to make allocations to individual ITT providers.

The TDA wrote to all ITT providers on 21 December 2005 advising them of their new entrant ITT place allocations for 2006/07 and 2007/08.

Truancy

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils played truant in secondary schools in *(a)* England and *(b)* Beverley and Holderness in each year since 1997; and if she will make a statement. [63512]

Beverley Hughes: The Department does not hold data on the levels of truancy. However, the figures for the number of pupils missing at least one half day due to unauthorised absence (of which truancy forms a part) in maintained mainstream schools can be found in the following table.

Number of pupils in maintained secondary schools missing at least one half day due to unauthorised absence

	1997/98	1998/99	1999/2000	2000/01
Beverley and Holderness				
Number of pupils	6,190	7,293	6,388	6,484
Number missing	1,263	1,842	1,386	844
Percentage missing	20.4	25.3	21.7	13.0
England				
Number of pupils	2,786,943	2,872,670	2,917,639	2,956,915
Number missing	452,949	489,914	510,046	541,968
Percentage missing	16.3	17.1	17.5	18.3

	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05
Beverley and Holderness				
Number of pupils	6,538	7,600	7,501	7,275
Number missing	951	1,764	1,481	1,425
Percentage missing	14.5	23.2	19.7	19.6
England				
Number of pupils	3,003,469	3,033,226	3,060,464	3,037,013
Number missing	566,644	629,126	696,600	774,347
Percentage missing	18.9	20.7	22.8	25.5

University Staff (Lancashire)

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average annual earnings of full-time members of academic staff of universities in Lancashire were in the last year for which figures are available. [59613]

Bill Rammell: The latest available figures are shown in the following table:

Average salary[1] of full-time HE academic staff with teaching responsibilities higher education institutions in (a) Lancashire[2] and (b) England in 2004/05

	Average salary (£)	
Grade	Lancashire	England
Professors	56,000	59,100
Senior lecturers and researchers	31,500	41,500
Lecturers	30,600	33,000

[1] Average salary is derived from the gross basic salary per annum, in pounds sterling as stated in the contract at the reference date of HESA's staff count (31 July) or at the end date of the contract if earlier. It does not include any regular payments for additional duties, responsibility allowances or honoraria, regardless of their source. Figures have been rounded to the nearest 100.
[2] Includes Edge Hill college of HE, St. Martin's college, university of Bolton, university of Central Lancashire and university of Lancaster.
Source:
HESA staff record 2004/05

World Heritage Sites

David Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which Minister in her Department has responsibility for issues relating to world heritage sites. [63475]

Beverley Hughes: Lead responsibility for policy on world heritage sites rests with the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport works closely with relevant Government Departments on all issues affecting world heritage sites. Within the Department for Education and Skills, Bill Rammell is Minister, with responsibility for issues concerning world heritage sites which fall within this Department's policy remit.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Arms Exports

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 27 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 636W, on arms exports, when the goods in question were sent; and when they arrived in Iraq. [62563]

Malcolm Wicks: An export licence was issued on 15 June 2004. The goods were exported under the licence in July 2004. The Joint Contracting Command-Iraq provided a delivery verification certificate confirming that the goods had been delivered and accepted by them on 18 April 2005 or earlier in Baghdad, Iraq.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 27 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 636W, on arms exports, when the goods in question were sent; and when they arrived in Iraq. [62599]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 30 March 2006]:* I refer the hon. Member to the reply given to his question number 62563 answered today.

Bankruptcies

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many people in *(a)* England, *(b)* each English region and *(c)* the Tees Valley under the age of 25 have declared themselves bankrupt in each year since 1997. [62840]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The areas in the regional insolvency tables are based around Official Receivers offices and are not directly comparable with standard geographies such as Government Office regions. The insolvency "regions" are areas assigned to groups of Official Receivers and are based around the location of county courts where the cases are heard and of courts having jurisdiction over these. As such, the Tees Valley area is best matched to the Stockton Official Receivers office, but it should not be considered a precise measure of bankruptcies in the Tees Valley for the reasons given above. The county courts covered by Stockton OR are Darlington, Durham, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough and Northallerton.

These figures are not analysed by age, and to provide them for the under 25-age group would involve disproportionate cost. However the Insolvency Service has recently published the report "Characteristics of a bankrupt" which includes some information by region and age group for financial years 2001–02 to 2004–05 and which is available here (it should be noted that the nearest age band presented in the report is for those aged 18–29): http://www.insolvency.gov.uk/insolvencyprofessionandlegislation/policychange/cob.pdf

The following table records the numbers of individual bankruptcy orders in England and Wales (for all ages). It also contains figures for Stockton OR separately and for the regions of E&W classified according to Official Receivers' Office from 1997 to 2005. It should be noted that over the years there have been changes to the composition of the insolvency service regions, including, notably, Croydon being recorded in the London region from April 2004 whereas previously it came under the south east region. It should also be noted that to provide figures for England separately would require splitting the south west regional figures and would not provide precise figures.

Numbers of bankruptcies recorded in Official Receivers offices, 1997 to 2005

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Stockton	356	366	411	452	559	564	574	717	873
Northern regions	4,145	4,385	6,435	7,478	8,336	8,343	8,449	10,359	12,841
North East	n/a	n/a	n/a	3,838	4,228	4,227	4,581	5,614	7,019
North West	n/a	n/a	n/a	3,640	4,108	4,116	3,868	4,745	5,822
Midland Region	4,155	4,260	3,544	3,187	3,409	3,501	4,191	4,812	6,122
Anglia Region	3,105	3,180	3,408	3,144	3,521	3,527	4,191	5,193	7,132
South East Region	3,175	2,831	2,931	2,730	2,755	3,052	4,618	5,616	7,328
South West Region	3,848	3,617	4,002	3,720	4,023	4,401	4,627	5,672	7,791
London	1,464	1,374	1,291	1,291	1,433	1,468	1,945	4,246	6,073
E&W National total	19,892	19,647	21,611	21,550	23,477	24,292	28,021	35,898	47,287

British Energy

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent estimate he has made of the market value of the Government's stake in British Energy. [62542]

Barry Gardiner *[holding answer 30 March 2006]:* The Nuclear Liabilities Fund holds £265 million British Energy bonds as well as a right to approximately 65 per cent. of British Energy's annual adjusted free cash flow (the 'cash sweep'), a right that is convertible into British Energy shares. The Department applies a proxy valuation to the cash sweep based on the prevailing British Energy share price.

Based on a market valuation, at the close of play on 24 March 2005, the British Energy bonds were valued at about £284 million and the 'cash sweep' was estimated to be around £6.6 billion based on converting the 65 per cent. stake at current share prices.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the likely effect on the market value of the Government's stake in British Energy of the Energy Review's possible conclusions on whether the UK *(a)* should and *(b)* should not build new nuclear power stations. [62547]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 30 March 2006]*: No decisions have been taken on the Energy Review. City analysts have said the appropriate approach to assess the value of shares in British Energy is to assess the discounted value of the expected cashflow to shareholders. The primary determinants of this value are expectations about realised prices for electricity, the expected life of the stations, investment costs in maintaining the fleet and the appropriate discount rate for a company like British Energy.

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he has taken to limit the scale of the liability to be borne by the public purse in respect of British Energy's nuclear liabilities. [60634]

Barry Gardiner: Through the restructuring agreements, the Department has put in place measures to ensure British Energy's liabilities are minimised. These measures will be overseen by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority on behalf of the Department. For example, the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority will be responsible for reviewing and approving all of British Energy's decommissioning plans, identifying synergies and cost savings where possible, and approving all payments out of the decommissioning fund to discharge British Energy's liabilities.

British Nuclear Group

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much money HM Treasury estimates it will receive from the sale of British Nuclear Group; and if he will make a statement. [63767]

Barry Gardiner: It is too early to say how much the sale is likely to yield. The emphasis will be on getting value for the taxpayer by improving the effectiveness of UK clean-up.

Budget Statement

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the Budget Statement of 22 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 300, what are the other energy assets referred to; and what estimate he has made of their value. [62619]

Barry Gardiner *[holding answer 30 March 2006]:* Through BNFL, the Government own a number of energy related businesses. Other than Westinghouse (which is in the process of being sold to Toshiba for $5.4 billion), BNFL also owns British Nuclear Group (which includes Project Services and BIL Solutions Ltd), Nexia and a 33 per cent. stake in Urenco. The Government also own the UK Atomic Energy Authority.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State announced to the House earlier today that he has given his formal agreement to the sale of British Nuclear Group. The Government have not commissioned any assessment of the value of any of these businesses.

Business Links

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what requirements there are on development agencies allocating contracts for Business Links brokerage models to ensure that they conform to the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 in their *(a)* recruitment, *(b)* subcontracting, *(c)* membership of boards and *(d)* customer service. [63106]

Alun Michael: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave him on 22 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 385W.

Capita Group

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what meetings *(a)* he and *(b)* Ministers in his Department have held with directors and senior executives of (i) Capita Group plc and (ii) its subsidiaries since 1 January 2004; and whether (A) Capita Group plc and (B) its subsidiaries have provided input (1) in writing and (2) in person to policy discussions in his Department since 1 January 2004. [61066]

Alan Johnson: The Minister for Trade, my hon. Friend the Member for Dudley, South (Ian Pearson) met Veredus, a subsidiary of Capital Group Plc on 17 October 2005. Veredus did not provide input either in writing or in person to policy discussions in this Department.

Civil Service

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he is taking to achieve equal pay for equal work in the civil service. [63167]

Meg Munn: The Government is committed to promoting equal pay for equal value of work both in the civil service and the private sector. Although the gender pay gap in the civil service is 25 per cent., this does not take account of the different responsibility levels across the civil service and therefore does not compare equal work. When the gender gap is compared by responsibility level the pay gap is around 5 per cent.

Every Department and agency in the civil service produced an equal pay action plan in 2003 as part of the Government's commitment to address the gender pay gap. All implemented specific measures to rectify identified problems—and these are lowering the gender pay gap further in Departments. The findings from the reviews were generally encouraging and there is no evidence of any deliberate gender discrimination. Departments and agencies are taking prompt action to address gender pay gaps and are aiming to resolve any unjustifiable gaps in the shortest possible time. The indications are that the work being undertaken by Departments and agencies is having the desired impact of reducing the gender pay gap.

Cabinet office continues to offer advice and guidance and spread good practice. Key to this is encouraging the use of the 'Guidance on Equal Pay for Government Departments and Agencies' (issued January 2002), which provides a practical working set of guidelines for undertaking an equal pay review and an ongoing checklist for monitoring reward systems against all forms of discrimination.

Climate Change Levy

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans the North West Development Agency has to assist businesses to cope with the climate change levy, with particular reference to the textile industry. [63035]

Alun Michael: The NWDA is co-ordinating DEFRA's Business Resource Efficiency and Waste (BREW) programme in the North West. BREW provides support to businesses to improve their resource efficiency, working together with national organisations such as the Carbon Trust and regional partners such as ENWORKS and the Manufacturing Advisory Service. This practical support helps businesses in the North West textile and other manufacturing sectors to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and therefore incur lower charges under the climate change levy.

Copyright

Mark Fisher: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what assessment he has made of the economic implications of inability to trace the owners of copyright in orphan art works; [61638]

(2) if he will establish a code of conduct for the use of orphan art works and their copyright. [61639]

Barry Gardiner: I am not aware of any economic assessments in this area in the UK. The issue of 'orphan works' is currently under consideration by Andrew Gowers in his independent review of the IP framework. The Government look forward to receiving his recommendations on this and other IP issues in due course.

Cyber Crime

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the cost of cyber crime to UK business. [62319]

Alun Michael: I understand that the Serious and Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) will have a significantly stronger cyber crime function than that of its precursor agencies. Officials in the Department work closely with their colleges in the Home Office, as well as in SOCA precursor units, on action to prevent cyber crime, and Ministers at DTI will discuss such issues with Home Office colleagues as appropriate.

Electricity

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much electricity has been *(a)* generated and *(b)* consumed in the North East in each year since 1997. [62830]

Malcolm Wicks: Data on the generation of electricity are not available on a region by region basis. Data on the sales of electricity in each Government office region have been produced on an experimental basis for 2003 and 2004 based on electricity metering points. The data therefore exclude consumption of electricity by businesses that generate their own electricity. In 2003 sales of electricity to consumers in the North East region were 12,222 GWh and in 2004, 12,708 GWh, although quality improvements to these experimental statistics may account for some of the change between the two years.

Prior to 2003 the only available data were for the volume of electricity distributed in the North East distribution network operator area as shown in the following table. The North East DNO area covers a larger area than the North East Government office region.

Electricity distributed in the North East DNO area

	GWh
1997	15,739
1998	15,872
1999	16,012
2000	16,297
2001	16,926
2002	16,760
2003	16,690

Source:
Digests of UK Energy Statistics 1998 to 2004.

EU Tariffs

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list EU tariff charges which were agreed in *(a)* 2003–04, *(b)* 2004–05 and *(c)* 2005–06. [60809]

Ian Pearson: This information can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Export and Custom Powers (Defence) Act 1939

Rob Marris: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on what dates the Export and Custom Powers (Defence) Act 1939 has been used since it was amended in 1990; and for which imports. [62112]

Malcolm Wicks: The powers in the Import, Export and Customs Powers (Defence) Act 1939, as amended by the Import and Export Control Act 1990, have been exercised on a continual basis since 1990. The powers under the Act are implemented through the Open General Import Licence which allows all goods to be freely imported unless they are listed in the licence.

Since 1990, the Open General Import Licence has been amended on 177 occasions. A summary list of the amendments is set out in the following table.

Amendments to the Open General Import Licence since December 1990

Date of change	Subject
31 January 1991	Revision to free circulation and surveillance licensing
5 February 1991	Removal of surveillance licensing for textile originating in Malta
7 March 1991	Introduction of surveillance licensing for fertilizer
13 March 1991	Removal of UN sanctions against Kuwait
28 March 1991	Revision to iron and steel surveillance licensing
29 March 1991	Introduction of outward processing for textiles in Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Romania
21 May 1991	Imposition of import embargo of American Pit Bull terrier fighting dogs
26 June 1991	Revision to licensing for textiles originating in Romania
2 August 1991	Extending embargo of fighting dogs to other breeds
16 August 1991	Revision to licensing for textiles originating in the Soviet Union
20 September 1991	Imposition of quotas for textile category 3 originating in India and Pakistan
3 October 1991	Removal of import licensing requirements for goods subject to inward processing arrangements
23 November 1991	Imposition of quota for textile category 36 originating in South Korea
10 January 1992	Removal of fertilizer surveillance licensing
9 January 1992	Removal of free circulation licensing for textile category 13 originating in China and Pakistan
17 January 1992	Removal of some textile quotas against Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland
31 January 1992	Revision to surveillance licensing for iron and steel
7 February 1992	Removal of certain UN sanctions against South Africa
14 February 1992	Imposition of quota for textile category 1 originating in Thailand
9 March 1992	Revision to the coverage of the State Trading Area
3 April 1992	Revision to State Trading Area textile licensing
1 May 1992	Introduction of surveillance licensing for unwrought aluminium
31 May 1992	Imposition of UN sanctions against the Former Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY)
14 August 1992	Imposition of quota for textile category 1 originating in Indonesia
21 August 1992	Introduction of surveillance licensing for slippers and other indoor footwear originating in China
9 October 1992	Imposition of quota for textile category 9 originating in India
23 October 1992	Imposition of quota for textile categories 6 and 18 originating in Pakistan
6 November 1992	Imposition of quota for textile category 97 against Thailand and 21 originating in Indonesia

Amendments to the Open General Import Licence since December 1990

Date of change	*Subject*
26 November 1992	Imposition of quota for textile category 35 originating in Indonesia
1 December 1992	Introduction of surveillance textile licensing against Bangladesh
4 December 1992	Suspension of surveillance textile licensing against Bangladesh
1 January 1993	Revisions necessary due to the Weapons Directive
1 January 1993	Removal of embargo against fighting dogs
15 January 1993	Revisions to textile quotas and surveillance licensing
20 January 1993	Revisions to iron and steel surveillance licensing
22 January 1993	Imposition of quota for textile categories 21 and 35 originating in Indonesia
22 January 1993	Removal of quota for textile category 10 originating in Pakistan
5 February 1993	Re-introduction of surveillance textile licensing against Bangladesh
5 February 1993	Revisions to textile licensing against Vietnam
5 February 1993	Extension of coverage of outward processing for textiles
10.2.1993	Removal of surveillance licensing for slippers and other indoor footwear originating in China
19 February 1993	Removal of Mongolian textile licensing
5 March 1993	Removal of licensing against nuclear materials from rest of European Community
27 February 1993	Revisions to iron and steel quotas against Former Soviet Union, Bulgaria and Romania
2 April 1993	Imposition of quota for textile category 20 originating in Thailand
26 April 1993	Revisions to the UN sanctions against the Former Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY)
1 May 1993	Revisions to textile licensing against Belarus, Romania, Thailand and Vietnam
7 May 1993	Removal of textile quotas against Romania and changes to UN sanctions against FRY
21 May 1993	Removal of Romania from the State Trading area
4 June 1993	Imposition of licensing regime against textiles originating in the Ukraine
1 July 1993	Revisions to licensing of firearms and ammunition
1 July 1993	Removal of licensing arrangements for bananas
10 August 1993	Introduction of surveillance licensing for unwrought aluminium originating in the former Soviet Union
17 September 1993	Adding Namibia to the ACP list of countries and Eritrea to the Residual Textile Area in the OGIL
5 November 1993	Removal of textile licensing requirements against Cambodia and Laos
19 November 1993	Removal of textile licensing against FRY
19 November 1993	Imposition of quota for textile category 163 originating in China
14 January 1994	Revisions to Former Soviet Union textile licensing
27 January 1994	Revisions to surveillance licensing for iron and steel
3 March 1994	Removal of surveillance licensing for unwrought aluminium originating in the former Soviet Union
13 March 1994	Revisions to textile licensing as a result of the Single Market
14 March 1994	Revisions to Chinese non-textile licensing as a result of the Single Market
15 March 1994	Imposition of quota for textile category 97 originating in China
22 April 1994	Imposition of quota for textile category 33 originating in Indonesia
3 May 1994	Imposition of quota for textile category 28 and 68 originating in China
22 May 1994	Imposition of UN sanctions against Haiti
27 May 1994	Imposition of quota for textile category 28 originating in Pakistan
17 October 1994	Removal of UN sanctions against Haiti
25 November 1994	Imposition of quota on additional textile categories against China, India and Indonesia
1 January 1995	Revision to iron and steel surveillance licensing
1 January 1995	Changes due to EU enlargement
27 January 1995	Imposition of quota for textile category 29 originating in China
26 January 1995	Revision to iron and steel surveillance licensing
17 March 1995	Revisions to the quotas for Chinese leather gloves and footwear
24 March 1995	Revisions to FSU (Estonia) textile licensing
4 April 1995	Acceptance of common textile import licence
24 May 1995	Introduction of common rules for economic outward processing
2 June 1995	Revisions to Chinese non-Mfa textile licensing
13 July 1995	Revised licensing arrangements for iron and steel originating in Belarus, Soviet Union, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and North Korea
27 October 1995	Revised licensing arrangements for textiles originating in Morocco
24 November 1995	Introduction of surveillance licensing on textiles originating in United Arab Emirates
23 November 1995	Removal of UN sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro
22 December 1995	Revised licensing arrangements for textiles originating in Turkey, Poland, Hungary and Romania
12 January 1996	Revised licensing arrangements for textiles originating in Vietnam
23 February 1996	Revised licensing arrangements for iron and steel
28 February 1996	Amendments to economic outward processing for textiles in Vietnam, Ukraine and China
28 February 1996	Removal of UN sanctions against Bosnian Serbs
26 March 1996	Amendments to economic outward processing for textiles and iron and steel regulations
2 April 1996	Revised licensing arrangements for textiles originating in Serbia and Montenegro
3 April 1996	Revised licensing arrangements for non-textiles originating in China
14 May 1996	Revised licensing arrangements for iron and steel originating in Czech Republic
7 June 1996	Introduction of surveillance licensing on certain textiles originating in United Arab Emirates
04 July 1996	Revised licensing arrangements for non-textiles originating in China
30 July 1996	Revised arrangements for economic outward processing for certain textiles in China
7 October 1996	Revised licensing arrangements for non-textiles originating in China
1 January 1997	Revised licensing arrangements for textiles originating in Russian Federation and amendments to certain entries relating to iron and steel
31 January 1997	Revised licensing arrangements for iron and steel originating in Bulgaria, Romania, Czech Republic and Slovak Republic
29 April 1997	Prohibition of toxic chemicals or precursors to chemical weapons

Amendments to the Open General Import Licence since December 1990

Date of change	*Subject*
2 May 1997	Revised licensing arrangements for non-textiles originating in China
30 June 1997	Prohibition of importation of air weapons powered by compressed carbon dioxide
8 August 1997	Revised licensing arrangements on textiles originating in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
29 August 1997	Revised licensing arrangements for iron and steel
17 October 1997	Revised licensing arrangements for iron and steel
21 November 1997	Revised licensing arrangements for iron and steel originating in Russian Federation
1 January 1998	Revised licensing arrangements for textiles originating in various countries
16 January 1998	Revised licensing arrangements for iron and steel originating in Kazakhstan and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
30 January 1998	Revised licensing arrangements for iron and steel originating in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Romania and Slovak Republic
2 February 1998	Removal of licensing arrangements on certain textiles originating in Latvia and Lithuania
17 April 1998	Revised licensing arrangements for iron and steel
1 May 1998	Suspension of restrictions on textiles originating in Russian Federation
3 June 1998	Revised licensing arrangements on toys originating in China
22 July 1998	Introduction of surveillance licensing on certain textiles originating in Russian Federation
4 August 1998	Imposition of restrictions on imports of diamonds from Angola
1 December 1998	Introduction of surveillance licensing on textiles originating in Laos
18 January 1999	Removal of licensing restrictions on iron and steel originating in Turkey
18 February 1999	Amendment to iron and steel regulations
24 February 1999	Imposition of restrictions on the importation of anti-personnel mines
23 April 1999	Imposition of restrictions on the importation of bras and briefs
7 June 1999	Revision to Vietnamese textile licensing
16 August 1999	Revision to Cambodian textile licensing
1 January 2000	Revision to licensing on textiles originating in the former Soviet Union and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
7 January 2000	Introduction of surveillance licensing on Vietnamese footwear
1 March 2000	Revision to Nepalese textile licensing
26 April 2000	Revised restrictions on the importation of precursors to chemical weapons
17 July 2000	Imposition of restrictions on imports of diamonds from Sierra Leone
17 August 2000	Revision to restrictions on imports of diamonds from Sierra Leone
20 November 2000	Revision to restrictions on imports of diamonds from Sierra Leone and precursors to chemical weapons
1 January 2001	Removal of restrictions on textiles originating in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and revision to licensing arrangements for textiles originating in Croatia
3 January 2001	Amendments to iron and steel commodity codes for 2001
20 February 2001	Revised licensing arrangements for iron and steel originating in Czech Republic
9 March 2001	Revised licensing arrangements for textiles originating in Bosnia and Herzegovina and introduction of surveillance licensing on textiles originating in Sri Lanka
26 March 2001	Revised licensing arrangements for textiles originating in Ukraine and iron and steel originating in Poland
2 May 2001	Imposition of restrictions on imports of diamonds originating in Liberia
25 May 2001	Revised licensing arrangements for category 1 textiles originating in Syria
11 December 2001	Revised licensing arrangements on textiles originating in China
1 January 2002	Revised licensing arrangements on textiles originating in various countries
2 January 2002	Revised licensing arrangements on textiles originating in China, Hong Kong, the Republic of Korea, Macao, Pakistan and Taiwan
4 February 2002	Amendments to iron and steel commodity codes for 2002
1 April 2002	Revised licensing arrangements on textiles originating in Ukraine
2 August 2002	Imposition of restrictions on certain textiles originating in North Korea
12 August 2002	Amendments to commodity codes and regulations for iron and steel for 2002
6 September 2002	Revised licensing arrangements for iron and steel originating in Romania
23 September 2002	Amendment correcting errors in previous amendment
13 November 2002	Revision to licensing arrangements for textiles originating in Brazil
1 January 2003	Revision to euro rate, inward processing for firearms and nuclear materials
1 January 2003	Removal of surveillance licensing arrangements for footwear originating in Vietnam
9 January 2003	Revision to iron and steel surveillance
1 February 2003	Removal of UN restrictions on imports of diamonds from Angola
27 February 2003	Revised licensing arrangements for textiles originating in Ukraine
10 March 2003	Removal of surveillance licensing on non-textiles originating in China
28 May 2003	Removal of UN sanctions against Iraq
3 June 2003	Imposition of UN restrictions on illegally removed Iraqi cultural property
6 June 2003	Removal of restrictions on diamonds from Sierra Leone
17 June 2003	Removal of UN restrictions on illegally removed Iraqi cultural property
7 July 2003	Impositions of restrictions on certain wooden articles from Liberia
11 July 2003	Revised licensing arrangements on iron and steel originating in Slovak Republic
1 August 2003	Revised licensing arrangements for footwear originating in Vietnam
29 August 2003	Revised licensing arrangements for iron and steel originating in Romania
12 September 2003	Revised licensing arrangements for iron and steel originating in Russian Federation
5 January 2004	Removal of licensing arrangements on textiles category 2 originating in Uzbekistan
19 January 2004	Removal of licensing arrangements on textiles originating in Egypt and Macedonia
23 January 2004	Prohibition on importation of air weapons using a self-contained gas cartridge system
13 February 2004	Amendments to iron and steel commodity codes for 2004
1 May 2004	Amendment to incorporate the enlargement of the European Community
29 October 2004	Imposition of surveillance licensing on Moldovan iron and steel

Amendments to the Open General Import Licence since December 1990

Date of change	*Subject*
1 January 2005	Revised licensing arrangements on textiles from various countries and amendments to commodity codes for iron and steel
1 February 2005	Introduction of surveillance licensing on footwear from China
1 April 2005	Revised licensing arrangements on textiles from various countries
4 April 2005	Revised licensing arrangements on textiles originating in Vietnam
12 April 2005	Revised licensing arrangements on textiles originating in Vietnam
1 June 2005	Revised licensing arrangements on textiles originating in Vietnam
July 2005	Removal of licensing arrangements on textiles originating in Serbia
ugust 2005	Re-imposition of quotas on certain textiles originating in China
nuary 2006	Removal of surveillance licensing on textiles originating in China
16 January 2006	Introduction of outward processing for textiles in China and amendment to iron and steel regulations
1 February 2006	Removal of licensing arrangements on footwear originating in China
30 March 2006	Amendments to iron and steel commodity codes for 2006

Export Credits Guarantee Department

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the five clients and companies involved in the highest volume of trade supported by the Export Credits Guarantee Department in *(a)* 2003–04 and *(b)* 2004–05. [61489]

Ian Pearson: The Export Credits Guarantee Department's top five customers in terms of value of guarantees supported in the financial years 2003–04 and 2004–05 were:

2003–04

BAE Systems Limited

Airbus S.A.S.

Bombardier Incorporated

Snamprogetti Limited

Siemens Industrial Turbomachinery Limited.

2004–05

BAE Systems Limited

Airbus S.A.S.

MAN Limited

VAI Industries (UK) Limited

Motorola Limited.

ECGD support for Airbus aircraft frequently encompasses support for Rolls-Royce aero engines.

Financial Advice (Estate Agents)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will outlaw practices whereby estate agents will not bring forward a property for sale unless a customer uses a financial adviser recommended by that estate agent. [63338]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Discriminatory conduct by an estate agent against prospective purchasers who do not accept additional services, from which the estate agent would derive financial benefit, is classified as an undesirable practice by the Estate Agents (Undesirable Practices) (No 2) Order 1991. Under the Order an undesirable practice includes any 'discrimination against a prospective purchaser by an estate agent on the grounds that that purchaser will not be, or is unlikely to be, accepting services'. The Office of Fair Trading can issue warning orders against persons who engage in an undesirable practice and ultimately prohibit those persons from doing estate agency work.

Foreign Direct Investment

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the amount of foreign direct investment has been into the UK in each year since 1997 *(a)* including and *(b)* excluding mergers and acquisitions. [62244]

Alan Johnson: Information on the total value of foreign direct investment into the UK is given in the following table. Information on foreign direct investment into the UK excluding mergers and acquisitions is not available.

Total foreign direct investment into the UK 1997–2005

	£ billion—current prices	
	Flows	*Stocks*
1997	22.9	173.7
1998	45.1	213.6
1999	55.1	250.3
2000	80.6	310.4
2001	37.3	363.6
2002	16.8	339.8
2003	12.8	356.7
2004	42.4	383.9
2005	90.5	474.3

Source:
Office for National Statistics, United Kingdom balance of payments

Gas Prices

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the impact of gas price rises on *(a)* elderly and *(b)* vulnerable people in rural areas. [62564]

Malcolm Wicks: Recent increases in gas prices will have had a negative impact on the affordability of energy for vulnerable groups, including the elderly. Government are addressing this issue through tackling fuel poverty. A household is said to be fuel poor if it needs to spend more than 10 per cent. of its income on all fuel use and to heat the home to an adequate standard of warmth.

Fuel poverty is devolved to the Scottish Executive, and falls within the portfolio of the Minister for Communities. The Fuel Poverty in Scotland Report was published in April 2004. It provides a detailed analysis of the information available on fuel poverty using the 2002 Scottish House Condition Survey. This shows that the number of households in fuel poverty in Scotland in

2002 was 296,000 (13 per cent.). Analysis of fuel poverty data for England suggests that energy price rises will have significantly increased the level of fuel poverty in the UK between 2002 and 2006.

Work on the best way to tackle fuel poverty in the light of rising energy prices is being taken forward in the context of the Energy Review.

Geothermal Energy

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the policy of the Government is on the production of energy from geothermal sources. [62829]

Malcolm Wicks: Between 1976 and the early 1990's the UK carried out a major Geothermal Research Programme at a cost in excess of £50 million. The key conclusions from the programme were that the UK is unlikely to see major developments based upon geothermal aquifers or the hot dry rock (HDR) method due to a limited resource, poor economics and limited scope for their application.

Unless the technical, practical and economic constraints identified under the previous Geothermal Programme can be addressed, the prospects for geothermal power in the UK would appear to be limited.

More recently interest has been growing in the use of Ground Source Heat Pumps. This technology can be applied to buildings of virtually any scale including domestic dwellings. It relies on heat exchange with the ground immediately beneath or close to buildings. There are at least 15 installations connected to commercial or public buildings in the UK, including the recently opened Welsh Assembly building.

Both Defra and the DTI, in collaboration with the Heat Pump Association, have helped establish a UK Heat Pump Network to develop a partnership between manufacturers, specialist advisers, and user groups. This network will ensure that independent and authoritative advice is available on the application and use of heat pumps.

Gwynt y Mor Offshore Wind Farm

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the proximity is in metres of the proposed Gwynt y Mor offshore wind farm to the nearest shipping lane. [62924]

Malcolm Wicks: I refer the hon. Member to the environmental statement prepared by the developer for this project. This includes information on traffic data showing vessel tracks across the proposed wind farm site and the developer's proposal for a traffic routeing measure to address some of the navigation safety concerns.

Home Computing Initiative

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the cost was to the Department of offering its staff participation in the Home Computing Initiative. [62454]

Alan Johnson *[holding answer 30 March 2006]:* The Home Computer Initiative was offered to DTI, and Insolvency Service staff as part of a wider Salary Sacrifice Scheme covering childcare vouchers and bikes for commuting to work. The costs to the Department of the contract for provision of all three elements of the salary sacrifice scheme should be fully met by the savings in employers' national insurance contributions that results from the salary sacrifices made. A total of £43,000 was spent by the Department and Insolvency Service on payroll testing and in respect of legal fees for setting up the contract for provision of this service.

India

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on the UK's trading relationship with India. [60842]

Ian Pearson: UK Exports to India show a 27.4 per cent. increase to November 2005 compared to the same period in 2004. UK imports from India increased by 20.1 per cent. during the same period.

The UK is the 5th biggest investor in India with UK companies involved in 9.8 per cent. of all new FDI into India since 1991. Indian investment into the UK is growing rapidly when measured in terms of investment projects and jobs created. Up to the 31 December 2005 UKTI had assisted 33 Indian companies invest in the UK, up 22 per cent. on 2004.

As the Indian economy continues to grow, it is vital that businesses in UK seize the opportunities on offer. The Government will increase its effort to support British business to access the Indian market.

Low Carbon Buildings Programme

Andrew Stunell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will extend the Low Carbon Buildings Programme to a six year programme as set out in his Department's June 2005 Low Carbon Buildings Programme consultation document; and if he will make a statement. [61679]

Malcolm Wicks: The Low Carbon Buildings Programme will run for three years. Our longer-term commitment to this sector is demonstrated through our Microgeneration Strategy which was launched on 29 March 2006.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what is the budget for *(a)* community and *(b)* domestic installations under his Department's Low Carbon Buildings Programme for 2006. [61804]

Malcolm Wicks: Under the original £30 million budget allocation and following an informal consultation with industry the amounts that will be available for community and domestic installations for 2006 are:

(a) £1.5 million

(b) £3 million

On 23 March the Budget 2006 announced an additional £50 million for the programme. The Department will be considering urgently with Treasury colleagues how this money should be allocated.

The new programme will be launched on 3 April 2006. www.lowcarbonbuildings.org.uk.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when his Department will announce the launch date for the low carbon buildings programme. [62121]

Malcolm Wicks: The launch of the new programme was announced at the climate change programme review event on 28 March. The website will be launched on 3 April 2006 with details of the how to apply for grants.

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps his Department is taking to ensure that the Low Carbon Buildings Programme will meet the demand for household renewable energy grants. [62197]

Malcolm Wicks: As a result of an informal consultation with key stakeholders on the outline of the programme the allocation for householders was set at £3 million for the first year.

On 23 March the Budget 2006 announced an additional £50 million for the programme. The Department will be considering urgently with Treasury colleagues how this money should be allocated.

The new programme will be launched on 3 April 2006. www.lowcarbonbuildings.org.uk.

Madagascar

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the value of trade was between the UK and Madagascar in each year since 2001. [62358]

Ian Pearson: The value of trade between the UK and Madagascar in each year since 2001 was as follows:

£ million

	UK Exports	*UK Imports*
2001	6.7	25.0
2002	3.0	17.9
2003	6.0	16.6
2004	9.3	15.5
2005	6.6	15.5

Note:
Current price data, Overseas Trade Statistics basis.
Source:
Compiled by DTI Statistics from HM Revenue and Customs data.

Media Monitoring

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much his Department has spent on media monitoring activities in each of the last eight financial years. [35637]

Alan Johnson: The following table sets out how much the DTI has spent on media monitoring in the last six financial years. Finance records are only required to be kept for six years and it would therefore incur disproportionate cost to go back any further.

	Total (£)
1999–2000	312,645.94
2000–01	276,838.60
2001–02	393,806.69
2002–03	282,067.55
2003–04	290,132.73
2004–05	269,443.56

Micro-Renewables

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much capital grant support was allocated to micro-renewable energy installations under the Clearskies and Solar photovoltaics major demonstration programmes in 2005. [62117]

Malcolm Wicks: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Morley and Rothwell (Colin Challen) on 28 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 862W.

Medical Research Facilities

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations he has *(a)* made and *(b)* received on the Medical Research Council's National Institute for Medical Research containment 4 status; and if he will make a statement. [61402]

Barry Gardiner: My noble Friend Lord Sainsbury of Turville is being briefed on these issues as part of the overall briefing by the MRC's Chief Executive, Professor Colin Blakemore, on MRC's plans for moving the National Institute for Medical Research (NIMR) to a new site.

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate has been made of the refurbishment costs for the Mill Hill medical research site in North London; and if he will make a statement. [61403]

Barry Gardiner: MRC are currently developing the detailed business case with UCL. This is an expensive project. MRC will find a large proportion of these costs but have approached OST for a contribution from the Large Facilities Capital Fund, where it is being assessed against competing priorities.

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many medical research facilities there are in England; and what the containment status is of each facility. [61507]

Barry Gardiner: Information on the number of medical research facilities in England is not held centrally. The Health and Safety Executive's records show that there are 115 containment level 3 research facilities currently located in England. These facilities are used for laboratory work in the research and biotechnology sectors, and are located in universities, medical schools, research council funded institutes and units, and pharmaceutical companies.

There are four high hazard containment level 4 facilities currently operating in England. These are used for research and diagnostic work for human pathogens.

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment has been made of the

need to maintain a containment 4 facility to protect staff and prevent escape of pathogens from the National Institute for Medical Research site in Mill Hill; and if he will make a statement. [61508]

Barry Gardiner: My noble Friend Lord Sainsbury of Turville is being briefed on these issues as part of the overall briefing by the MRC's Chief Executive, Professor Colin Blakemore, on MRC's plans for moving the National Institute for Medical Research (NIMR) to a new site.

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent discussions he has with the Treasury on funding for the Mill Hill medical research centre. [61608]

Barry Gardiner: MRC are currently developing the detailed business case with UCL. This is an expensive project. MRC will find a large proportion of these costs but have approached OST for a contribution from the Large Facilities Capital Fund, where it is being assessed against competing priorities.

Ministerial Visits

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the *(a)* destination, *(b)* date and *(c)* purpose was of each overseas visit made on official business by each Minister in his Department since May 2005. [62541]

Alan Johnson *[holding answer 30 March 2006]:* The Secretary of State undertook the following overseas ministerial visits since May 2005

Destination	*Date*	*Purpose of visit*
Luxembourg	1–2 June 2005	Employment and Social Affairs Council
Luxembourg	6 June 2005	Competitiveness Council
Brussels	14 June 2005	Meeting Key People and MEPs
Paris	30 June—1 July 2005	European Dinner and Bilateral Mtgs
Brussels	13 July 2005	Address European Parliament (EP) Presidency
Brussels	18 July 2005	Informal EU Trade Ministers' Dinner
Brussels	12 September 2005	EP Regional Affairs Committee plus mtgs with MEPs
Luxembourg	10–11 October 2005	Competitiveness Council
Athens	24–25 October 2005	Signing Ceremony of the Treaty of the Energy Community
Brussels	21–22 November 2005	General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC)
Brussels	28–30 November 2005	Competitiveness Council
Brussels	7–8 December 2005	Employment Council
Hong Kong	10–19 December 2005	World Trade Organisation (WTO) Ministerial
Davos, Switzerland	26–28 January 2006	World Economic Forum Annual Mtg
South Africa	10–12 February 2006	Trade Visit and Progressive Governance Summit
Australia and Japan	28 February—8 March 2006	Trade and Investment Visit
Moscow, Russia	15–16 March 2006	G8 Energy Ministerial Mtg

Lord Sainsbury undertook the following overseas ministerial visits since May 2005.

Destination	*Date*	*Purpose of visit*
Brussels	10 May 2005	Competitiveness Council
Luxembourg	6–7 June 2005	Competitiveness Council and Space Council
Brussels	22 June, 2005	To meet the European Commissioner and various MEPs to discuss the European Research Council
Brussels	13 July 2005	Industry, Research and Energy Committee meeting
Nice	1 October 2005	Global Chemical Industry European Convention
Luxembourg	11 October 2005	Competitiveness Council
Brussels	17 November 2005	Colloqium on State Aid for Innovation
Brussels	28–29 November 2005	Competitiveness Council
Berlin	5–6 December 2005	European Space Agency Ministerial Council
Brussels	13 December 2005	Competitiveness Council
India	16–23 February 2006	Ministerial visit to push forward international linkages on science and innovation

Meg Munn undertook the following overseas ministerial visits since May 2005.

Destination	*Date*	*Purpose of visit*
Brussels	13 July 2005	to appear in front of the European Parliament Women's Committee, speech outlined the UK Government plans during the UK EU Presidency in the area of gender equality.

Ian Pearson undertook the following overseas ministerial visits since May 2005.

Destination	*Date*	*Purpose of visit*
Geneva	19–20 October 2005	Bilaterals
Hong Kong	10–19 December 2005	WTO Ministerial
India/Sri Lanka	14–20 January 2006	CII Conference/bilaterals
Brazil	29 January—2 February 2006	Bilaterals
Russian/Ukraine	19–24 February 2006	Bilaterals

Destination	*Date*	*Purpose of visit*
Libya	4–7 March 2006	Bilaterals
Paris	30-March 2006	Wilton Park Conference
Hong Kong/China	1–7 April	Bilaterals

Barry Gardiner undertook the following overseas ministerial visits since May 2005.

Destination	*Date*	*Purpose of visit*
Slovenia	14 June 2005	Various bilaterals with counterpart and other Ministers (UK Presidency Commitment)
Estonia	21 June 2005	Various bilaterals with counterpart and other Ministers (UK Presidency Commitment)
Norway	31 August 2005	Various bilaterals with counterpart and other organisation on Postal liberalisation
Copenhagen	17 November 2005	Speech: Copenhagen PPP Global Summit and various bilaterals with counterparts
Brussels	28–29 November 2005	UK Presidency of the EU (Formal Council of Ministers meetings with a DTI Interest)—Research element
Brussels	30 November 2005	Speech: 20th Anniversary of !New Approach' Directives (as part of the Presidency programme)
Washington DC, USA	6–7 December 2005	Speech: PPP Americas Summit, Washington USA Bilateral on Postal Services
Brussels	30 January 2006	Various Bilaterals on UK policy on EU postal liberalisation: objectives, strategy and tactics
Brussels	7 February 2006	To discuss Services Directive
Strasbourg	14 February 2006	To discuss Services Directive
Brussels	13 March 2006	Competitiveness Council
Netherlands	28 March 2006	Bilateral with counterpart on postal liberalisation

Malcolm Wicks undertook the following overseas ministerial visits since May 2005

Destination	*Date*	*Purpose of visit*
Brussels	9–10 June 2005	EU OPEC Dialogue
Brussels	21 June 2005	European Committee
Luxembourg	27–28 June 2005	Energy Council
Brussels	13 July 2005	European Committee
Moscow	11–13 September 2005	Bilaterals
Washington and Tampa, USA	18–23 September 2005	Bilaterals
Brussels	21 November 2005	Keynote Speech (Renewable Energy for Europe)
Brussels	1 December 2005	Energy Council
Vienna	2 December 2005	EU OPEC Ministerial Meeting Dialogue
Oslo	2–5 February 2006	Sanderstolen Conference
Brussels	14 March 2006	Energy Extraordinary Council

Gerry Sutcliffe undertook the following overseas ministerial visits since May 2005

Destination	*Date*	*Purpose of visit*
Brussels	17 May 2005	Working Time bilateral discussions
Luxemburg	2 June 2005	Employment Council and Bilateral meetings (EU)
Brussels	11 July 2005	MEP Briefings on UK Presidency
Warsaw Poland	14–15 November 2005	Working Time Discussion with Polish Ministers
Brussels	7–8 December 2005	Employment Council (EU)
Austria (Vilach)	19–20 January 2006	Employment Informal Meeting (EU)
Austria (Vienna)	1–2 February 2006	Demographic Conference arranged by Austrian Presidency (EU)

Alun Michael undertook the following overseas ministerial visits since May 2005.

Destination	*Date*	*Purpose of visit*
Luxembourg	19–20 May 2005	Structural funds event
Berlin	7 June 2005	Telecoms related bilaterals
Paris	12–13 June 2005	Paris Airshow
Luxembourg	26–27 June 2005	Telecoms Council
Strasbourg	5 July 2005	European Parliament: structural funds
Brussels	13 July 2005	European Parliament's ITRE committee
Brussels	14–15 September 2005	Bioscience conference
Brussels	10 October 2005	Structural funds event
Tunis	16–17 November 2005	World Summit on the Information Society

Destination	Date	Purpose of visit
Brussels	30 November—2 December 2005	Telecoms Council
Budapest, Hungary	12–13 January 2006	ICT conference
Vienna, Austria	8–10 February 2006	ICT conference and bilaterals

Mobile Phones

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will introduce proposals to require the registration of the name and address of owners of pay as you go mobile telephones. [62738]

Alun Michael: I along with my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary have considered proposals for compulsory registration of mobile phone pre-pay users. However, a number of technical and financial implications have arisen. Some 33 per cent. of pre-pay mobile phone users change handsets, SIM cards or networks in any one year, all of which would entail some amendments to existing records if initial registration had taken place. If compulsory registration was introduced the estimated unit cost of £6 per SIM to administer, associated with this single aspect would not be insignificant and would have to be added to the costs associated with initial registration including, if found necessary, retrospective registration of all existing 41 million users. A compulsory registration scheme would only achieve its purpose if the information given was checked and verified. To do this would add considerable cost and delay to the purchase of a pre-pay phone. We do not at this stage believe the imposition of this burden is warranted.

The hon. Friend may or may not be aware of the industry's voluntary scheme of registration of pre-pay and post-pay users. Since January 2005 some 15 million (pre-pay and contract customers) have voluntarily registered their details via the industry/law enforcement run website (www.Immobilise.com). The Government believe this voluntary scheme is developing well and should be encouraged, and have decided not to include proposals to mandate the registration of prepaid mobile phones in the Counter Terrorism Bill that receives Royal assent in July 2006. However the wider issue of anonymity is being considered.

Neutron Facilities

Mr. Grogan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he expects to publish the report commissioned from the Council for the Central Laboratory of the Research Councils regarding the development of a strategy for future access to neutron facilities. [63077]

Barry Gardiner: The CCLRC published its UK Neutron Strategy Review on 29 March 2006.

Non-fossil Fuel and Renewables Obligations

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 290W, on non-fossil fuel and renewables obligations, what legal advice he was given regarding the powers available to him other than under the Sustainable Energy Act 2003 to make transfers from the Non-Fossil Fuel Obligation Fund to the consolidated fund. [63048]

Malcolm Wicks: I refer my hon. Friend, to my reply to the hon. Member for Leominster (Bill Wiggin) of 31 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 331W.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 290W, on non-fossil fuel and renewables obligation, whether there have been any transfers from the Non-fossil Fuel Obligation Fund to the Consolidated Fund other than that made on 14 July 2004; and what plans there are to make transfers. [62271]

Malcolm Wicks: Since 14 July 2004 there has been one further transfer to the Consolidated Fund of £150 million which took place on 20 September 2005.

Future transfers are likely to take place annually.

Northwest Development Agency

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans the Northwest Development Agency has for *(a)* train, *(b)* bus and *(c)* road transport in Chorley. [62588]

Alun Michael: The Northwest Development Agency does not currently have any specific plans for train, bus and road transport in Chorley. The regional economic strategy (RES), that was formally launched on Monday 27 March 2006, contains the agreed regional priorities. In addition, the region has agreed specific road priorities through its advice to Government on the regional funding allocation in January 2006.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans the Northwest Development Agency has in relation to *(a)* Chorley Town and *(b)* villages in Chorley constituency. [62589]

Alun Michael: The Northwest Development Agency does not currently have any specific plans relating to Chorley Town and surrounding villages. However, NWDA continues to support the successful development of the strategic regional site in Chorley. Investment of £1.3million by the agency towards the site has already secured the relocation of a major local employer, thereby safeguarding around 200 jobs in the Chorley area. The agency's REMADE Programme aimed at reclaiming derelict sites for public open space and environmental improvements throughout Lancashire includes a number of sites located on Chorley's urban fringe. The borough as a whole will also derive significant economic, social and environmental benefits from the implementation of the Central Lancashire City Region Development Programme.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the likely impact of the Northwest Development Agency's support for the Northern Way on Chorley. [62607]

Alun Michael: I have made no specific assessment of the impact of the Northern Way on Chorley, but Chorley forms part of the Central Lancashire City

Region which is a building block for greater economic benefit of the North of England. A city region is a key building block for the Northern Way.

The Northwest Development Agency's regional economic strategy (RES) recognises the importance of the city region within which Chorley lies and is working with the Lancashire Economic Partnership and other partners to ensure that the economic potential of the city region is realised. The borough of Chorley as a whole will derive significant economic, social and environmental benefits from the implementation of the development programme over the next few years.

Open-cast Mining

David Mundell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the procedure is for renewing expired licences for open-cast mining in South Lanarkshire. [62930]

Malcolm Wicks: The procedure for making an application to the Coal Authority for a licence is described in the Authority's guidance notes to applicants which can be viewed on its website at www.coal.gov.uk by following the path Services, Licensing and Indemnities, Model documents.

David Mundell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether *(a)* Poniel, *(b)* Auldton and Rougham Woods and *(c)* Mainshill Woods hold licences for open-cast mining in Lanarkshire. [62931]

Malcolm Wicks: The Coal Authority has not issued any licences for opencast mining in respect of Poniel, Auldton and Rougham Woods and Mainshill Woods. However Poniel might otherwise be known as Long Plantation and exploration licences have been granted for this site. These licences have now expired. In addition a site known as Dalquhandy might form part of Poniel and there is a current Coal Authority licence for this site.

Pipe Organs

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the impact of the EU directive on *(a)* restrictions on hazardous substances and *(b)* waste electrical and electronic equipment on the pipe organ building industry; and if he will make a statement. [62113]

Malcolm Wicks: The repair and refurbishment of existing pipe organs (both now and in the future) will not be affected; neither will pipe organs that are not reliant on electricity to function. A total exemption for the manufacture of new pipe organs from the substances restrictions of the RoHS Directive would require a formal application by the industry to the European Commission (under Article 5.1 b). The Department has offered to work with the industry to help them develop such a case.

A Full Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) on the RoHS Directive was published in September 2005. The Department of Trade and Industry continues to work closely with the European Commission, other member states and industry on the RoHS and WEEE Directives.

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the oral answer of 23 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 399 to the hon. Member for Mid-Worcestershire (Peter Luff), whether *(a)* individual pipe organ manufacturers must apply for an exemption and *(b)* the industry may apply for an exemption as a whole; and what information he has provided to the industry. [62718]

Malcolm Wicks: Exemptions to the RoHS Directive apply to specific applications of the heavy metals or brominated flame retardants in electrical and electronic equipment (such as the lead in the glass of cathode ray tubes), not to specific companies or specific products. Exemption requests are made by industry to the European Commission and need to be justified on the basis that there is no scientific or technical alternative—not on the basis of cost. DTI officials have provided information to the industry and met with them recently.

Post Office Card Account

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent representations he has received about the decision to end the Post Office card account; and if he will make a statement. [63315]

Barry Gardiner: I have received representations from the National Federation of Sub-Postmasters.

Postcodes

David Mundell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether his Department uses postcodes for purposes other than the postage of mail. [62928]

Alan Johnson: Postcodes are widely used in the Department but it is not possible to provide a detailed list of uses, because no central records are kept. The following examples are no more than indicative. Detailed postcodes can be readily linked to other geographical information, such as government region or ward and are frequently used to enable the production of analyses by geographical area. The link also enables the use of postcode as a means of indicating eligibility for schemes such as assisted area funding, although this does not imply that the schemes themselves are based on postcodes. Another website application gives the nearest Business Link operator for a given postcode.

Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what his Department's employer contribution rates to the Principal Civil Service pension scheme are; what assumed rate of return underlies those contribution rates; and what the contribution rate would be if the assumed rate of return was in line with current redemption yield on index-linked gilts. [61900]

Alan Johnson: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given to him by my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State for the Cabinet Office, the hon. Member for East Renfrewshire (Mr. Murphy) on 29 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1030W.

Shoes (Dumping)

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the EU *(a)* committees and *(b)* meetings at which the decision to impose anti-dumping duties on imported shoes were made; and how the UK representatives voted on each occasion. [61763]

Ian Pearson: On 16 March 2006, the European Commission consulted the Member States in its advisory Anti-Dumping and Anti-Subsidy Committee on a proposal to impose provisional anti-dumping duties on certain footwear with uppers of leather originating in China and Vietnam. The UK abstained on the proposal.

Solar Photovoltaics

Ian Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the capital grant expenditure on solar photovoltaics was in 2005. [60994]

Malcolm Wicks: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for East Surrey (Mr. Ainsworth) on 22 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 393W.

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what advice his officials give to householders applying for capital grants under his Department's Solar Photovoltaics Major Demonstration Programme. [62195]

Malcolm Wicks: The Energy Savings Trust (EST) runs the Photovoltaics Major Demonstration Programme on behalf of the Department. Inquiries to the Department are directed to the EST who maintain a website and help line number to provide information and advice on a wide range of issues, including the programme.

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the total number of accredited installation companies was under his Department's Clearskies and Solar Photovoltaic Major Demonstration programmes in *(a)* March 2003, *(b)* March 2004, *(c)* March 2005 and *(d)* March 2006. [62196]

Malcolm Wicks: Under the Clearskies Programme the following number of installers were registered on the approved list.

	Number of registered installers	*Number of new installers in this year*
2003	135	—
2004	204	69
2005	263	59
2006	290	27

Note:
Of all installers, 28 have either withdrawn or been suspended from the list which makes a current total of 262 installers currently registered.

Under the Photovoltaics Programme the details are as follows:

	Number accredited installers
2003	17
2004	5
2005	18
2006	22
Total	62

Note:
There were an additional 3 installers who have now either withdrawn or been disqualified.

Superannuation Liability

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what total amount of employers' normal contributions accruing superannuation liability charge has been accounted for by his Department in each of the last five years for which data are available. [61356]

Alan Johnson: The amount of employers' accruing superannuation liability charges in respect of members of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme in the last five years is:

	£000
2004–05[1]	34,876
2003–04[1]	32,195
2002–03[1]	30,053
2001–02	25,324
2000–01	27,333

[1] From 1 October 2002 new entrants have been able to opt for a partnership pension partnership account, a stakeholder arrangement will an employer contribution. Employers' contributions to partnership pension accounts are not included in the above figures.

Telephone Preference Service

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what total value of fines was imposed on UK companies as a result of actions in breach of telephone service rules since 2003; what maximum fine can be imposed under telephone preference rules; and what maximum fine has been imposed; [61651]

(2) on how many occasions the Information Commissioner has followed an initial warning with the imposition of a fine under telephone preference service regulations. [62237]

Alun Michael: The Information Commissioner is responsible for administering the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003. Regulation 21 of these regulations relates to unsolicited direct marketing telephone calls. Complaints received by the Commissioner about breaches of Regulation 21 concern Telephone Preference Service (TPS) registered numbers and also calls made to numbers where the subscriber has directly asked the calling organisation not to make marketing calls to that number.

The enforcement mechanism available to the Information Commissioner is provided under the Data Protection Act 1998 and the graded response includes Informal Resolution Undertaking, Preliminary Enforcement Notice, Enforcement Notice and Prosecution for a breach of Notice. If an organisation is found by a court to have breached the terms of an Enforcement Notice issued by the Information Commissioner, the court can fine that organisation up to £5,000 for each breach of the notice. To date most cases have

been resolved at an early stage of their proceedings. The objection of the process is to secure compliance rather than the level of fines imposed.

Tidal Power

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what financial support his Department is giving to the development of tidal power; [63068]

(2) what measures his Department has adopted to support the development of marine turbine power generation technology. [63071]

Malcolm Wicks: Since 2000 around £16 million has been committed to the development of tidal-stream power under the DTI's Technology Programme.

To date this has led to the development and testing of two full-scale prototypes, one of which is located in the sea, near Lynmouth in Devon. In the next year it is anticipated that at least three more prototypes will be installed at the European Marine Energy Centre in Orkney, the Humber Estuary at Hull and Strangford Lough in Northern Ireland.

A further £50 million 'Marine Renewables Deployment Fund' has been allocated to support the continued development of wave and tidal-stream technologies of which £42 million is for direct support to early-stage pre-commercial trials.

UK Trade and Investment

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the staffing levels necessary to allow UK Trade and Investment staff to assume a proactive role. [61553]

Ian Pearson: UKTI is already playing a pro-active role in promoting trade and inward investment. Consideration of appropriate starting staffing levels for UKTI activities will be taken forward as part of a programme of organisational change that UKTI is developing alongside a new five-year strategy. Details of the strategy and accompanying change programme will be published before the summer.

Uruguay (Imports)

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what percentage of UK imports came from Uruguay in each of the last five years. [62154]

Ian Pearson: In each of the last 5 years the percentage of UK imports from Uruguay was 0.02.

Wind Farms

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many wind farm proposals have been rejected in each region in England in each year since 2001. [62409]

Malcolm Wicks: The following table provides information on how many wind farm proposals have been rejected in each region in England, and in each year, since 2001.

	Region	*Number of schemes refused*
2001	Eastern	2
2001	North West	1
2001	South West	4
2002	Eastern	1
2002	North East	3
2003	East Midlands	1
2003	North West	3
2003	South East	2
2003	South West	6
2004	North East	1
2004	North West	4
2004	South West	2
2005	Eastern	1
2005	North East	1
2005	South West	1
2005	West Midlands	1

DEFENCE

15 Psychological Operations Group

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the work programme of 15 Psychological Operations Group. [63456]

Mr. Ingram: The primary role of 15 (UK) Psychological Operations Group is to influence attitudes and behaviour in support of military commander's mission. This is done through planned, culturally sensitive, truthful and attributable activities directed and disseminated by various means to appropriate audiences. The group has deployed its personnel to support all recent military and peace-keeping operations and major exercises. The group is also fully employed in training personnel in psychological operations (from across all three services) who are to deploy in this role on operations.

Boxer Caps/Initiators

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many UK firms are capable of producing *(a)* boxer caps and *(b)* initiators suitable for use by the UK armed forces. [63176]

Mr. Ingram: Since the suspension of production at BAES(LS) Chorley following an industrial incident on 2 March 2005, there are no firms in the United Kingdom that are capable of producing Boxer caps. Nobel Energetics is the only UK company that produces the primary explosives and compositions required to manufacture initiators.

These items are currently supplied to the Ministry of Defence by BAE Systems Land Systems, who determine the source of these products and ensure security of supply.

Contracts (Voluntary Sector)

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many contracts are let by his Department to voluntary sector organisations; how many of those are let on an annual basis; and how many of those had received finalised contracts for 2006–07 by 31 March. [63211]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence does not record centrally whether or not its contracts are let with voluntary sector organisations. This information could be provided only at a disproportionate cost.

DDT Exposure

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of whether the offspring of service men exposed to DDT have an increased risk of suffering from diseases with a genetic basis. [63809]

Mr. Touhig: From the Second World War dichlorodiphenyltrichlorethane (DDT) was widely used in military and civilian environments in the UK and throughout the world for its insecticidal properties. During the 1970s it was gradually withdrawn. This was related to its persistence in the environment and not adverse effects on human health. As there was no reliable evidence of adverse effects on humans there was no requirement for studies on the health of offspring of servicemen exposed to DDT.

Defence Intelligence and Security Centre

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what factors underlay the decision that from 1 April 2005 the Defence Intelligence and Security Centre should no longer be a Government agency; and if he will make a statement on its present status. [63454]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the written ministerial statement I made on 24 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 83WS.

Departmental Leave (Stress)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many staff have been on sick leave suffering from stress in the Department in each of the last three years; and what percentage of the total staff number this represents. [63533]

Mr. Touhig: The following table shows the number of Ministry of Defence civilian staff[1] who have had a period of sickness absence caused by anxiety, depression and stress (Mental and Behavioural Disorders ICD10 category) in each of the last three years and the percentage of the total staff number this represents. The MOD does not have a specific sickness absence code for stress.

[1] This includes all permanent and casual non-industrial and industrial civilian personnel, but excludes trading fund, locally engaged civilian and Royal Fleet Auxiliary personnel.

Calendar year	*Number of staff*	*Percentage of total staff*
2003	3,110	4.0
2004	3,950	5.0
2005	4,000	5.1

Note:
Number of staff has been rounded to the nearest 10 and the percentage of total staff has been rounded to the nearest decimal point.

European Defence Agency/NATO

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps he is taking to ensure the effective working of the European Defence Agency with NATO on the threat assessment process. [63168]

John Reid: The UK has insisted that the European Defence Agency's (EDA) work on a Long Term Vision of future military capability requirements should incorporate relevant NATO threat assessments to reduce any risk of divergence between the two organisations. This work is ongoing.

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the long-term vision of the European Defence Agency. [63170]

John Reid: The European Defence Agency's work on a long term vision of future military capability requirements is ongoing and will not report until the autumn. The UK sees clear benefit in developing a view of future requirements to guide capability planning in EU member states, and is participating fully in this work.

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the strategic relationship between the European Defence Agency and NATO. [63169]

John Reid: The strategic relationship between the European Defence Agency (EDA) and NATO is centred on the shared aim of improving the military capabilities of participating member states and allies. The UK has encouraged the EDA and NATO to ensure that capability development initiatives are complementary and mutually reinforcing, thereby enabling EU and NATO to benefit from improvements in nations' capability.

Falklands War

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans are in place to mark the 25th anniversary of the Falklands War. [63171]

Mr. Touhig: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave him on 23 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1715W.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what role the Falkland Islands will play in the 25th anniversary of the Falklands War. [63172]

Mr. Touhig: The Falkland Islands Government are in the process of planning a programme of commemorations centred on Liberation Day, 14 June 2007. We are investigating the feasibility of a television link between commemorations in the Falklands and those in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much he estimates will be spent on marking the 25th anniversary of the Falklands War. [63173]

Mr. Touhig: Commemorations will take place at several places in the United Kingdom and in the Falkland Islands and detailed planning has not yet been completed. It is too early to estimate how much might be spent.

Grievance Procedures

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many grievance procedures have been initiated in the Department in each of the last three years. [63534]

Mr. Touhig: Statistics on the numbers of civilian staff who have initiated the MOD grievance procedure in the last three years are not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Different grievance procedures apply to service personnel. Under the Army Act 1955, the Air Force Act 1955 and the Naval Discipline Act 1957, a service person who thinks themselves wronged in any matter relating to their service may make a complaint about that matter, which may be considered by the Defence Council, unless resolved at a lower level.

Complaints not resolved informally or at Commanding Officer level are shown in the following table. There are currently differences in the manner in which the services define and record formal complaints, which means that a direct comparison is not possible.

	RN	*Army*	*RAF*
2003	147	176	104
2004	156	192	93
2005	131	194	90

Harassment Complaints

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many complaints of *(a)* bullying and *(b)* sexual harassment have been investigated in the Department in each of the last three years; and how many complaints have been upheld. [63535]

Mr. Touhig: Records are not kept centrally for these years in the form requested. Changes to record-keeping will lead to improvements for the future. The available information is as follows:

Royal Navy

A complete record of the number of complaints upheld is not held centrally. The information provided in the table reflects the available information.

	2003	*2004*	*2005*
Bullying			
Investigated	10	10	22
Upheld	0	4	14
Sexual Harassment			
Investigated	5	0	7
Upheld	2	0	1

Army

Records of complaints that were dealt with administratively are not kept centrally for these years. The following information therefore relates only to disciplinary offences dealt with under the military justice system.

Bullying is not treated as a separate offence by the Army for the purpose of record-keeping.

Sexual Harassment. Records are not kept of the total number of offences investigated.

	Convictions
2003	26
2004	45
2005	30

Royal Air Force

	2003	*2004*	*2005*
Bullying			
Investigated	18	37	25
Upheld	5	6	1
Sexual Harassment			
Investigated	8	11	4
Upheld	2	4	2

MOD Civil Service

The figures quoted in the table are for civilian cases that were referred by local units to MOD Centre for complaints to be investigated by independent Harassment Investigation Officers (HIOs). Records are not held centrally of those cases where the HIOs' investigations led to complaints being upheld nor are records held centrally of bullying and sexual harassment cases that are investigated locally by MOD units and subsequently upheld.

	2003	*2004*	*2005*
Bullying			
Investigated	23	18	23
Sexual Harassment			
Investigated	2	2	4

HMS Ferret

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the remit of HMS Ferret is. [63457]

Mr. Ingram: HMS Ferret is a Royal Naval Reserve Unit responsible for the administration, management and training of Royal Naval Reserve Intelligence personnel in providing operational capability to UK defence.

Mental Health (Iraq)

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of mental health problems that have arisen among troops returning from military service in Iraq. [63271]

Mr. Touhig: The Ministry of Defence recognises mental illness, including post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), as a serious and disabling condition, but one that can be treated. We attach a high priority to the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of mental illness. Currently, less than 0.1 per cent. of all service personnel (including those who have served in Iraq) have had to be discharged from the armed forces because of psychological illness.

Between January 2003 and December 2005 inclusive, 1,551 UK service personnel who had served in Iraq were subsequently assessed as suffering from a mental health disorder. This represents around 1.5 per cent. of total

UK service personnel deployed to the region during the same period. Of those 1,551 personnel, 208 were assessed as suffering from PTSD. A further 696 personnel were diagnosed with an adjustment disorder, which will include some who have post traumatic symptoms not amounting to full PTSD but with some symptoms of post traumatic stress. Other personnel were diagnosed with a range of other mental health conditions, including mood and neurotic disorders, and psychoactive substance misuse.

As a result of the lessons identified during the 1990–91 Gulf conflict, the MOD took early action to put in place a large scale epidemiological study to monitor the physical and psychological health of personnel who served on Operation TELIC. This research is being undertaken by King's College London, and the preliminary results are due to be published later this year.

Mr. Nick Pope

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence in what capacity Mr. Nick Pope was employed by his Department between 1991 and 1994. [63392]

Mr. Touhig: From 1991 to 1994 Mr. Pope worked as a civil servant within Secretariat (air staff). He undertook a wide range of secretariat tasks relating to central policy, political and parliamentary aspects of non-operational RAF activity. Part of his duties related to the investigation of unidentified aerial phenomena reported to the Department to see if they had any defence significance.

Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what proportion of members of the principal civil service pension scheme in his Department joined the scheme before the age of *(a)* 20, *(b)* 25, *(c)* 30, *(d)* 35, *(e)* 40, *(f)* 45 and *(g)* over 45 years old. [62007]

Mr. Touhig: The following table gives the age of current civil servants within the Ministry of Defence (including trading funds) at date of entry into the principal civil service pension scheme (PCSPS).

Age group	*Percentage*
<20	21.2
20–25	20.1
25–30	12.0
30–35	10.1
35–40	9.8
40–45	11.2
>45	15.6

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his Department's employer contribution rates to the principal civil service pension scheme are; what assumed rate of return underlies those contribution rates; and what the contribution rate would be if the assumed rate of return was in line with current redemption yield on index-linked gilts. [62008]

Mr. Touhig: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 29 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1030–1031W by my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State for the Cabinet Office.

Royal Ordnance

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what volume of orders his Department has placed with Royal Ordnance in each of the last five years. [63588]

Mr. Ingram: Over the past five years, the following values of orders have been delivered by BAE Systems Land Systems through the Framework Partnering Agreement:

£ million

	Amount
2001	82
2002	74
2003	88
2004	154
2005	103

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the quality of products produced for the UK armed forces at *(a)* Royal Ordnance Chorley and *(b)* Royal Ordnance Bridgwater. [63177]

Mr. Ingram: Since the takeover by BAES Land Systems of the Royal Ordnance sites at Chorley and Bridgewater the products delivered for use by UK armed forces have met the specifications stipulated by the Ministry of Defence.

Seaford Drill Hall

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 27 March 2006 to question 61241, on Seaford Drill Hall, if he will consult *(a)* Seaford town council and *(b)* the hon. Member for Lewes as part of the process of identifying a future use. [63564]

Mr. Touhig: Discussions will commence shortly with Seaford town council, and others who are interested in the future of the Drill Hall, to explore their interest and to explain the procedures followed in the disposal of surplus Ministry of Defence property. Although progress is being made in identifying a future use for the site, no decision has yet been made.

Service Personnel (Discharge)

Mr. Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many service personnel have been discharged into the care of the NHS in each of the last five years due to stress-related medical problems. [63249]

Mr. Touhig: The Ministry of Defence recognises that stress-related illnesses can be serious and disabling conditions, but ones that can be treated. We attach a high priority to the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of mental illness. Currently, less than 0.1 per cent. of all Service Personnel have had to be discharged annually from the armed forces because of psychological illness.

Unfortunately, we are unable to give precise figures for Personnel discharged due to stress-related problems since this is not held centrally. Collation of such figures would be complicated by the fact that "stress-related medical conditions", could include both mental health

stress conditions and physical conditions of which stress is a component, and any breakdown of figures would not be able to differentiate between these.

It is the long established practice that the medical care of discharged Service Personnel, whether regular or reservist, passes to the NHS. This is subsequent to the individual either recovering from their condition or their condition being at a stage where it is unlikely to improve significantly. When individuals need to be discharged into NHS care, we make arrangements to ensure smooth transition.

Mr. Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the aftercare provided for service personnel discharged into the care of the NHS. [63250]

Mr. Touhig: No formal assessment has been made of the aftercare provided for service personnel once they leave the armed forces and responsibility for their healthcare transfers to the NHS. Most personnel are discharged from the armed forces fully fit or with only minor health or fitness problems. For those few with significant illness or disability, the aim before discharge is to achieve maximal recovery and functional outcome and to plan with the civilian services ongoing health and social care in the civilian community. The cross-governmental Veterans Programme aims to ensure excellent public services for veterans. To deliver and monitor this, my Department works closely with the four UK Health Departments and with the veterans' community.

Territorial Army

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 6 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 836W, on the Territorial Army, how many of those specialists that have reported for mobilisation more than once in the past five years have been deployed more than once in the last three years. [56067]

Mr. Touhig *[holding answer 3 March 2006]:* The information requested is not held centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost. The following table shows those specialist personnel who have reported for mobilization more than once in the past three years. These include individuals who subsequently did not mobilize for medical or other reasons. They also include personnel who may have undertaken a number of very short deployments. Individual records are checked to ensure that personnel do not breach the provisions of the Reserve Forces Act 1996 in respect of their periods of mobilization.

Specialist area	*Number of personnel*
Drivers	104
Clergy	1
Administrative	11
Ammunition	3
Construction	0
Catering	0
Petroleum	1
Policing	5
Medical	59
Logistical	198
Legal	0
Linguistic	0
Electrical Engineering	2

Note:
The method used to identify the logistical category means that the driver population are likely to be double-counted in the logistical personnel figures.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the future of each Territorial Army centre in Lancashire. [63174]

Mr. Touhig: Further to my answer of 29 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1007W, on the increased Territorial Army presence in Chorley, I can confirm that there will be no changes to the other Territorial Army Centres in Lancashire, other than that the Regimental Headquarters and Headquarter Company of the Lancastrian and Cumbrian Volunteers (based in Preston) will be retitled the 4th Battalion, The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment.

World Cup (Complimentary Tickets)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many complimentary tickets his Department has received for games taking place at the FIFA World cup 2006 in Germany. [63906]

Mr. Touhig: The Ministry of Defence has not received any complimentary tickets for games taking place at the FIFA World cup 2006 in Germany.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Fair Trade

Jo Swinson: To ask the honourable Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what steps the Commission is taking to encourage its British suppliers of souvenirs to source their raw materials from fair trade sources. [64168]

Nick Harvey: There is no formal framework currently in place to encourage British suppliers of souvenirs sold by the House to source raw materials from fair trade suppliers. Suppliers have been asked and will continue to be asked if they are intending to move to sourcing fair trade raw materials.

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the honourable Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what the Refreshment Department's policy is on the procurement of fair trade produce. [64419]

Nick Harvey: In all procurement exercises, the Department investigates what fair trade products are available. The Department was also one of the first organisations to support the fair trade movement over 10 years ago and has supported the Fairtrade Fortnight in March of each year. The Department sells eight fair trade products permanently and a further 10 intermittently.

Water Saving Devices

Jo Swinson: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission how many water saving devices *(a)* have been and *(b)* are due to be installed in the House of Commons estate; and what the type of device is in each case. [62737]

Nick Harvey: Refurbishment programmes involving water usage on the estate include measures to minimise water consumption as far as it is practical to do so. As a result much of the equipment on the estate has good water saving properties. The number and type of devices fitted is not centrally recorded.

A range of water efficiency measures have been carried out over the last few years including:

- low-volume and dual flush WC cisterns fitted in most modern lavatories;
- bags in large, older types of WC cisterns to reduce the flush volume;
- sensor sink taps, which work automatically, fitted in most of the Refreshment Department kitchens;
- automatic controls on many of the men's lavatories urinals to reduce water consumption.

The Director of Estates is arranging for a professional survey of the lavatory and washroom areas, to identify further improvements which can be made in water efficiency across the estate.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Agricultural Workers

Mr. Meale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether employment legislation in the agricultural industries applies to *(a)* seasonal workers and *(b)* foreign workers. [62961]

Jim Knight: In general employment legislation applies to the agricultural industry as it does to other sectors of the economy. The only employment legislation specific to the agricultural industry is the Agricultural Wages Act 1948. This applies to any person employed to undertake agricultural work including seasonal and foreign workers. However, in common with most employment legislation, the Agricultural Wages Act 1948 does not apply to foreign nationals working in the UK illegally.

European Union Law

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on how many occasions in each of the last five years her Department has been the cause of infringements in the implementation of European Union law; and if she will make a statement. [61587]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 28 March 2006]:* Between 1 June 2001 and 31 December 2005 the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs was the lead Department for 109 infringement proceedings initiated by the European Commission. The following table lists these by year:

	Number
1 June 2001 to 31 December 2001	10
2002	18
2003	41
2004	25
2005	15

A list of all infringements initiated by the European Commission against the UK can be found on the European Commission website at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/secretariat_general/sgb/droit_com.

Harassment Complaints

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many complaints of *(a)* bullying and *(b)* sexual harassment have been investigated in her Department in each of the last three years; and how many complaints have been upheld. [63546]

Jim Knight: The figures are collated each financial year and relate to core Defra and the following agencies: PSD, CSL, VMD, CEFAS, RDS and SVS.

Under Defra's formal equal opportunities complaints procedures between April 2003 and March 2004, six cases of bullying were investigated and one case was upheld. None of the cases related to sexual harassment.

Between April 2004 and March 2005, five cases of bullying were investigated and one case was upheld. None of the cases related to sexual harassment.

Between April 2005 and March 2006, six cases of bullying were investigated and no cases were upheld. None of the cases related to sexual harassment.

The Equal Opportunities Complaints Advisory Team provides advice and guidance on issues of bullying and sexual harassment within the Department via

- An internal intranet website
- Posters/educative events
- A telephone advice line available within normal office hours for staff to ring and speak to a member of the Complaints Advisory Team.

In addition there is a departmental network of local Harassment, Bullying and Support Advisers and an Employee Assistance Programme providing 365 days a year, 24 hour cover for staff to access further support.

Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her Department's employer contribution rates to the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme are; what assumed rate of return underlies those contribution rates; and what the contribution rate would be if the assumed rate of return was in line with current redemption yield on index-linked gilts. [62014]

Jim Knight: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him by my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State for the Cabinet Office (Mr. Murphy) on 29 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1030–31W.

Single Farm Payments

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will abandon the dynamic hybrid model of single farm payment in favour of full area payments as soon as possible. [63335]

Jim Knight: The decision to adopt a flat rate model of the single payment scheme in England, with transitional period to 2012, was taken after extensive analysis and consultation with a broad range of stakeholders. The redistribution in subsidy that would arise from abandoning the transitional period, and the immediate impact on some incomes which would result, would be too destabilising. Most importantly, it might act against the sort of behavioural change we want to see in helping the industry to become fit for purpose in getting closer to the market.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many and what percentage of recipients of single farm payment she expects will be paid *(a)* less than £50, *(b)* £51 to £100, *(c)* £101 to £200, *(d)* £201 to £300, *(e)* £301 to £400, *(f)* £401 to £500, *(g)* £501 to £1,000, *(h)* £1,001 to £2,000, *(i)* £2,001 to £3,000, *(j)* £3,001 to £4,000, *(k)* £4,001 to £5,000, *(l)* £5,001 to £10,000, *(m)* £10,001 to £20,000, *(n)* £20.001 to £30,000, *(o)* £30,001 to £40,000, *(p)* £40,001 to £50,000, *(q)* £50,001 to £100,000, *(r)* £100,001 to £500,000, *(s)* £500,001 to £1 million and *(t)*, more than £1 million in 2006. [63652]

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the number of *(a)* individuals and *(b)* companies which receive single farm payments of more than £100,000 a year; what the total cost is of such payments; and what proportion of the total value of single farm payments such payments represent. [63860]

Jim Knight: The Rural Payments Agency intends to follow a cycle of publishing single payment scheme payment details in the autumn and payment details of other subsidies in the spring each year.

Superannuation Liability

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the total amount of employers' normal contributions accruing superannuation liability charge that have been accounted for by her Department has been in each of the last five years for which data are available. [61361]

Jim Knight: The amount of employers' accruing superannuation liability charges in respect of members of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme in the last five years is:

£000

	Consolidated	*Core Department*
2004–05[1]	76,762	27,265
2003–04[1]	45,309	26,074
2002–03[1]	[2]39,194	[2]23,466
2001–02	[2]36,226	[2]22,493
2000–01	n/a	n/a

[1] From 1 October 2002 new entrants have been able to opt for a partnership pension partnership account, a stakeholder arrangement with an employer contribution. Employers' contributions to partnership pension accounts are not included in the above figures.

[2] Restated

Note:

There are no comparable figures available for the year 2000–01 as Defra was created as a new Government Department in June 2001.

TRANSPORT

Bridge Tolls

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which statutory tolled bridge crossings offer concessions for public transport vehicles; and what the level of the concession is in each case. [62653]

Dr. Ladyman: Whether to offer concessions for public transport vehicles is a matter for the operators/owners of the statutory tolled bridge crossings.

Only two—the Tamar bridge and the Itchen bridge—operate concession schemes specifically for public service buses. In both cases the scheme involves exempting public service buses from toll charges.

Capita Group

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much business his Department has placed with *(a)* Capita Group plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries in each of the last five years; what the total value is of outstanding contracts placed with Capita Group plc and its subsidiaries by his Department; for which current tenders issued by his Department (i) Capita Group plc and (ii) its subsidiaries have been invited to bid; and whether (A) Capita Group plc and (B) its subsidiaries have seconded staff (1) temporarily and (2) on a longer-term basis to (X) his Department and (Y) its agencies. [61063]

Derek Twigg: The Department was formed in May 2002. A table showing contracts awarded since that date has been placed in the Libraries of the House. The outstanding contracts have been highlighted.

Capita Group and its subsidiaries have currently been invited to bid for one contract which has not yet been awarded—this is the Highways Agency Project Support Framework.

Capita Group and its subsidiaries have not seconded any staff on either a temporary or longer term basis to the Department or its Agencies.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what meetings *(a)* he and *(b)* Ministers in his Department have held with directors and senior executives of (i) Capita Group plc. and (ii) its subsidiaries since 1 January 2004; and whether (A) Capita Group plc. and (B) its subsidiaries have provided input (1) in writing and (2) in person to policy discussions in his Department since 1 January 2004. [61064]

Derek Twigg: The Secretary of State and the Ministers in his Department have not held any meetings with directors or senior executives of Capita Group plc. and its subsidiaries since 1 January 2004.

Since 1 January 2004, Capita Group plc. and its subsidiaries have provided input into the Department as set out in the answers I have given to the hon. Gentleman (UIN 61063) and to the hon. Member for Hornchurch (James Brokenshire) (UIN 61453, 61454 and 61455) on 18 April 2006.

James Brokenshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the value of contracts held by his Department with *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries was in the last three financial years. [61453]

Derek Twigg: A table showing all the contracts awarded in the last three financial years has been placed in the Libraries of the House.

James Brokenshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many tenders *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries has submitted to his Department in each of the last three years; and how many tenders were successful. [61454]

Derek Twigg: The information requested is shown in the following table:

	Number submitted	*Number successful*
2003–04	6	2
2004–05	11	3
2005–06	9	3

James Brokenshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many contracts his Department holds with *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries which have a potential duration of five years or more. [61455]

Derek Twigg: The Department has one contract which has a potential duration of five years or more. This is a Driving Standards Agency contract for the provision of ICT services. The contract is due to end on 31 December 2010, but has an option to extend for a further four years.

Car-share Lanes

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what plans the Government have to build further car-share lanes; [62996]

(2) what the cost is of establishing the new car-share lane on the M1; [62997]

(3) if he will make a statement on the new car-share lane on the M1. [62998]

Dr. Ladyman: Carpool lanes encourage drivers to share their vehicle by providing dedicated lanes for vehicles with passengers. In December 2004 my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport announced a trial of high occupancy vehicle lanes on the M1 between junctions 7 and 10, as part of the planned widening scheme. The total cost of the car-sharing lane part of the scheme has yet to be finalised, but is currently estimated to be £6 million. The lanes are due to come into operation in 2008.

On 20 March 2006 my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport announced a second trial of a one-mile high-occupancy vehicle lane for traffic joining the M62 eastbound at junction 26, which will be implemented in 2007.

There are currently no firm plans to introduce further car-sharing lanes on the trunk road network. However, a further review of the trunk road network by the Highways Agency could identify other potential sites which might be assessed to develop a robust programme to deliver other car-sharing schemes.

Concessionary Fares

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the financial effects of the changes to concessionary fares upon pensioners who frequently travel across local authority boundaries. [61688]

Dr. Ladyman: We are introducing a national scheme in April 2008 which will allow 11 million older and disabled people free off-peak bus travel anywhere in England. In the interim, we are keen for local authorities to work together to provide cross-boundary or countywide schemes. However, ultimately it is for local authorities to decide whether to make these arrangements.

Departmental Policies

Emily Thornberry: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will set out, with statistical information relating as directly as possible to Islington, South and Finsbury constituency, the effects on Islington, South and Finsbury of his Department's policies and actions since 2 May 1997. [60735]

Derek Twigg: The Department for Transport (DfT) does not routinely hold transport statistics on a parliamentary constituency basis. However, the Department provides Transport for London with a block grant to fund transport delivery in London. This grant has increased by 203 per cent. over the last five years, rising to some £2,181 million in 2005–06. Drawing on these and other resources, the Mayor is responsible for providing a Transport Strategy for London while the boroughs are required to provide Local Implementation Plans which set out how they will contribute to the Mayor's strategy.

The additional funding that has been made available has helped deliver 976 million passenger journeys on the Tube in 2004–05, a rise of 2.7 per cent. from the previous year. The Tube is also running more kilometres than ever before with an all time high in customer satisfaction. Bus services in London have also improved. 1,788 million bus passenger journeys were made in 2004–05. Patronage has grown by almost 40 per cent. between 1999–2000 and 2004–05, rising by 5.0 per cent. in 2004–05 compared to the previous year. Service reliability on London's buses is at its highest level since records began in 1977.

Various improvements in relation to cycling have also been realised across London and Islington and Finsbury in particular. Investment in cycling in London has risen during the past five years from £5.5 million in 2000 to £20 million in 2005–06, and TfL will invest £24 million in cycling infrastructure, training, promotion and education in 2006–07. The number of recorded cycle journeys on London's major roads rose by 100 per cent. during the last five years—59,000 to 119,000 recorded journeys a week, number of cyclists killed or seriously injured has fallen by 40 per cent. during the last five

years. London's biggest staffed cycle park opened in Finsbury Park in March 2006, which marked the completion of the latest stage of TfL's £10 million Finsbury Park Transport Interchange Project.

The Public Performance Measure (PPM) on all heavy rail routes serving the constituency has also been improving—for example on West Anglia's Great Northern Inner service, where the PPM has risen from 83.4 per cent. in December 2005 to 94.1 per cent. in March 2006.

Driving Standards Agency

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the extent to which the Driving Standards Agency internet site on the highway code is user-friendly. [64327]

Dr. Ladyman: The website in question relates to the Highway Code review consultation being carried out by the Driving Standards Agency (DSA).

The website is constructed in such a way as to allow users to reply either by post, by downloading and printing relevant documents, or by replying online using a simple on-screen form.

Since being launched on 14 February 2006 the online system has had 3,000 visits and over 800 people have completed the online response system.

Humber Bridge

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent changes have been made to the interest paid on the debt on the Humber bridge; and if he will make a statement. [62674]

Dr. Ladyman: In 1998 the debt on the Humber bridge was restructured. This restructuring included significantly reducing the interest rate from an average yearly interest rate of 11.62 per cent. to a fixed consolidated rate of 7.75 per cent. Interest payments were suspended on £240 million of the Secretary of State's debt of £359 million.

The Department is currently reviewing the debt arrangements and expects to be in a position to approach the Humber bridge operator, the Humber Bridge Board, in the near future about a further restructuring.

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to receive the report into the inquiry into the Humber bridge tolls; and if he will make a statement. [62652]

Dr. Ladyman: The inquiry inspector's report has been received and considered.

Having considered the report and taking into account the representations received with regard to the Humber Bridge Board's application to revise the charges for using the Humber bridge, I have approved the making of the order authorising the revision of tolls as applied for by the Bridge Board in line with the inspector's recommendation.

I have already written separately to my hon. Friend, the Member for Cleethorpes, and the four other hon. and right hon. Members who made representations to the Secretary of State on this matter, providing copies of the report and the letter sent to the Bridge Board advising of the decision to authorise the revision of tolls.

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent representations he has received in relation to the level of Humber Bridge tolls. [62675]

Dr. Ladyman: The operator of the Humber Bridge, the Humber Bridge Board, published a notice on 26 September 2005 announcing its application to the Secretary of State for Transport for authorisation to revise the toll charges for using the Humber Bridge.

During the statutory representation period which ran from the first publication of the notice until 11 November 2005 four representations were received—from three bus and coach companies and one private individual.

Subsequent to the expiry of that statutory period a further 52 representations have been received—either sent directly to the Secretary of State or given directly to the Inspector who chaired an inquiry into the bridge board's application on 7 February 2006.

These representations consist of: five from hon. and right hon. Members (including my hon. Friend the Member for Cleethorpes); two local newspapers; four lobby and representative organisations; one local business; and one local authority. The remaining representations were from private individuals mainly residing in Cleethorpes, Grimsby and Barton-upon-Humber.

The representations (including those received during the statutory period) relate, in the main, to three main issues: reduced toll charges for local service buses using the bridge; concessions for journeys across the bridge for reasons related to healthcare; and the total abolition of toll charges.

Infrastructure

Mrs. Maria Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when Basingstoke and Deane will be allocated the £380 million set out in the Hampshire county council transport and infrastructure requirement plan to improve local services to meet the demands of the South East England regional assembly's house building targets. [64163]

Dr. Ladyman: I understand that a transport strategy for North Hampshire is under development in the context of a strategy for the Western Corridor and Blackwater Valley. This is a matter for the councils concerned, who need to have regard to regional strategies and the likely availability of resources.

London Airports (Security)

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much has been spent on security at each London airport in each of the last 10 years. [62999]

Derek Twigg: The Department does not hold this information. It is for the industry to decide how to deliver the Government's aviation security requirements.

M3

Mrs. Maria Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the peak flow of traffic at the southern roundabout of junction 6 of the M3 during the morning and evening rush hour periods. [64161]

Dr. Ladyman: I have nothing further to add to the answer I gave the hon. Member on 20 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1619W.

Mrs. Maria Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the traffic flow is on the southern roundabout of junction 6 of the M3, broken down by *(a)* hour and *(b)* day of the week. [64162]

Dr. Ladyman: There is little that can be added to the previous answer on 20 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1619W.

Detailed turning traffic flows are not surveyed on a regular basis. The most recent traffic survey at M3 Junction 6 was undertaken on 27 September 2005 and covered the am and pm peak periods. The following table sets out all the traffic flows surveyed on that date.

Traffic flows—27 September 2005

Vehicles

	Morning		*Evening*	
Direction	*7 to 8 am*	*Peak 8 to 9 am*	*Peak 5 to 6 pm*	*6 to 7 pm*
M3 southbound				
Off slip	1,310	1,600	1,440	1,200
On slip	610	530	1,210	870
M3 northbound				
Off slip	1,300	1,680	550	470
On slip	1,350	1,400	1,420	1,200

Myasthenia Gravis

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on Blue Badge entitlement for those diagnosed with myasthenia gravis. [62194]

Derek Twigg: The Blue Badge scheme is designed primarily to assist people with severe difficulty in walking, whatever the cause of their disability. People who are registered blind also qualify under the scheme. Drivers with a severe disability affecting both arms may also be eligible. Local authorities, which are responsible for administering the scheme, will decide on an individual's eligibility on the basis of these criteria. People with myasthenia gravis will be eligible for a badge if they meet the criteria.

Pensioners (Free Travel)

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will extend the free bus travel scheme announced in the Budget to ferry passengers. [61551]

Dr. Ladyman: There are no current plans to extend the older and disabled people's entitlement to free off-peak bus travel to ferries. Local authorities will remain able to offer concessions on other modes at their own discretion.

Railways

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will place in the Library a copy of all railway passenger franchise agreements. [62747]

Derek Twigg: Franchise agreements and associated documents are publicly available through the Department of Transport's Public Register. Requests should be made to the Public Register Manager, Department for Transport, 3–28 Great Minster House, 76 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DR. Telephone: 0207 944 2571 or email: sue.probets@dft.gsi.gov.uk.

Paul Rowen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what statistics on overcrowding of trains are collected for services outside London; and in what ways this information is published. [62750]

Derek Twigg: Train operating companies operating outside London, under the new Template Franchise Agreement (currently Northern Rail, and GNER) are required to provide passenger loading data to the Department for Transport as and when the Department requests such information. There is no contractual requirement to provide this data other than when the Department makes a request. This information is not routinely published.

Passenger transport executives operate their own monitoring of service loading data and this information is not routinely shared with the Department.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the level of demand for train services in the West Country. [62374]

Derek Twigg: The demand for rail travel in the West Country has been assessed in setting specifications for the Greater Western and South Western franchises. Furthermore, the Regional Planning Assessment (RPA) for the south west which will begin in the summer, will include carrying out forecasts of passenger demand for the next 20 years.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer given to the hon. Member for Carshalton and Wallington (Tom Brake) on 14 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 2061W, on railways, how many staff in his Department have worked on rail timetables in each year since 1997. [62632]

Derek Twigg: The Department currently has 14 staff who work on railway timetables. The Department acquired responsibility for specification of railway timetables associated with the letting of new franchises as a result of the Railways Act 2005, in mid-2005. Prior to this date, the Strategic Rail Authority had responsibility for the specification of new timetables for new railway franchises.

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many railway stations in the county of Greater Manchester do not have disabled access; and if he will make a statement. [62204]

Derek Twigg: The Department does not hold information on the level of accessibility at all stations across Greater Manchester.

The Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC) run, on behalf of the rail industry, the National Rail website (www.nationalrail.co.uk) where information on the accessibility of each station can be found. This information can also be provided by telephone through the National Reservations Service.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much has been allocated to providing enhanced CCTV to railway stations across the country; and when these funds are likely to become available. [62857]

Derek Twigg: Each new franchise let has obligations for station improvement, and this will include CCTV and other security measures. Exact CCTV investment figures are a matter for each individual franchise and are not held by the Department for Transport. These initiatives will normally come into effect in the early years of each new franchise.

Road Accidents

Mrs. Maria Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many children were involved in vehicle accidents in *(a)* England, *(b)* Hampshire and *(c)* the Borough of Basingstoke and Deane in each year since 1990; and how many child (i) fatalities and (ii) serious injuries there were as a result in each year. [63285]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of children injured in personal injury road accidents in England, the county of Hampshire and Basingstoke and Deane local authority for the years 1990–2004 (the last year for which data are available) is given in tables 1, 2 and 3 respectively. Information on the number of children involved in road accidents but who were not injured is not available.

Table 1: Child (aged 0–15 years) casualties by severity: England: 1990–2004

	All severities	Fatalities	Serious injuries
1990	4,1571	350	7,374
1991	3,7911	315	6,378
1992	3,7813	250	6,243
1993	3,6574	251	5,633
1994	3,8627	242	5,918
1995	3,7598	227	5,778
1996	3,8716	230	5,633
1997	3,8548	217	5,241
1998	3,7729	163	4,997
1999	3,6737	179	4,650
2000	3,4709	162	4,255
2001	3,3448	186	4,056
2002	3,0101	156	3,728
2003	2,7789	141	3,336
2004	2,7070	145	3,208

Table 2: Child (aged 0–15 years) casualties by severity: Hampshire: 1990–2004

	All severities	Fatalities	Serious injuries
1990	1,239	14	207
1991	1,059	8	186
1992	1,032	6	163
1993	1,066	5	166
1994	1,158	4	183
1995	1,178	2	162
1996	1,200	3	155
1997	1,151	5	137
1998	1,163	4	129
1999	1,149	9	122

Table 2: Child (aged 0–15 years) casualties by severity: Hampshire: 1990–2004

	All severities	Fatalities	Serious injuries
2000	1,061	4	114
2001	1,014	3	106
2002	866	7	127
2003	839	5	88
2004	847	3	97

Table 3: Child (aged 0–15 years) casualties by severity: Basingstoke and Deane: 1990–2004

	All severities	Fatalities	Serious injuries
1990	92	1	16
1991	82	1	24
1992	97	—	25
1993	87	—	17
1994	127	1	15
1995	97	—	24
1996	99	—	16
1997	98	—	14
1998	74	—	13
1999	85	—	14
2000	89	—	10
2001	95	—	18
2002	69	—	13
2003	60	1	9
2004	61	—	4

Mrs. Maria Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many vehicle accidents occurred on A roads in the Borough of Basingstoke and Deane in each year since 1990; and how many *(a)* fatalities and *(b)* serious injuries there were as a result in each year. [63287]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of personal road injury accidents on A roads in Basingstoke and Deane local authority and the number of people killed and seriously injured in those accidents are given the following table.

Accidents and casualties on A roads: Basingstoke and Deane: 1990–2004

	All accidents	Fatalities	Serious injuries
1990	249	12	101
1991	222	4	95
1992	226	6	83
1993	240	11	92
1994	249	6	72
1995	266	5	75
1996	257	6	88
1997	278	4	93
1998	220	2	63
1999	244	4	77
2000	236	3	70
2001	211	3	41
2002	232	3	55
2003	223	9	50
2004	187	2	47

Mrs. Maria Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many vehicle accidents have occurred on the M3 between exit 5 and 8 in each year since 1990; and how many *(a)* fatalities and *(b)* serious injuries occurred as a result in each year. [63289]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of personal road injury accidents which occurred between 1990 and 2004 (the latest year for which figures are available) on the M3

between junctions 5 and 8 and the number of people killed and seriously injured in those accidents are given in the following table.

Number of personal injury road accidents and the resulting killed and serious casualties on M3 between the junctions of 5 and 8: 1990–2004

	Accidents	Number of: Fatal casualties	Serious casualties
1990	41	0	17
1991	33	0	11
1992	37	0	12
1993	52	0	19
1994	36	1	6
1995	38	1	14
1996	33	1	8
1997	44	3	13
1998	49	0	12
1999	50	3	22
2000	52	1	18
2001	47	0	21
2002	42	1	15
2003	39	1	17
2004	51	0	17

Willie Rennie: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many people were *(a)* killed and *(b)* injured in road accidents in Fife in each year from 1976 to 2005 for which figures are available. [64421]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of people killed or injured in personal injury road accidents in Fife in each year from 1979 to 2004 (the earliest and latest years for which figures are available) are given in the table.

The number of people killed or injured in Fife: 1979 to 2004

	Killed	Seriously and slightly injured
1979	45	1,962
1980	49	1,679
1981	50	1,781
1982	41	1,659
1983	30	1,538
1984	37	1,516
1985	32	1,566
1986	29	1,373
1987	33	1,281
1988	35	1,303
1989	22	1,397
1990	26	1,225
1991	20	1,108
1992	23	1,003
1993	26	1,068
1994	15	1,043
1995	17	1,067
1996	23	1,019
1997	24	1,100
1998	24	989
1999	15	996
2000	12	1,064
2001	21	991
2002	29	1,051
2003	18	982
2004	30	982

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many people were *(a)* killed and *(b)* injured in road accidents in Cumbria in each year from 1976 to 2005. [64425]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of people killed or injured in personal injury road accidents in Cumbria in each year from 1979 to 2004 (the earliest and latest years for which figures are available) are given in the table.

Number of people killed or injured in Cumbria, 1979–2004

	Killed	Seriously or slightly injured
1979	66	3,082
1980	95	2,995
1981	62	2,900
1982	65	2,814
1983	64	2,618
1984	62	2,705
1985	53	2,687
1986	52	2,742
1987	72	2,708
1988	67	2,754
1989	60	2,796
1990	88	2,932
1991	75	2,532
1992	64	2,469
1993	61	2,557
1994	46	2,545
1995	54	2,634
1996	48	2,628
1997	52	2,977
1998	48	2,798
1999	62	2,928
2000	55	2,725
2001	47	2,621
2002	49	2,868
2003	54	2,641
2004	57	2,685

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many people were *(a)* killed and *(b)* injured in road accidents in each year from 1975 to 2005 in which the negligent driver was aged (i) 17 to 21, (ii) 22 to 25, (iii) 26 to 29 and (iv) 30 or over. [64426]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is not available.

Road Improvements

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the South East of England Regional Assembly's recommendation on regional funding allocations with particular reference to high priority for the A3 Hindhead Improvement Scheme; and what recent assessment he has made of the affordability of the scheme. [63836]

Dr. Ladyman: We are currently considering the advice received from the South East of England Regional Assembly on its priorities for major transport schemes including the proposed A3 Hindhead Improvement. We are also considering the Inspector's report on this scheme.

Royal Travel

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what funding mechanism covers the 60 per cent. of royal travel not covered by the grant in aid for royal travel by air and rail. [63094]

Derek Twigg: Approximately 40 per cent. of all official royal engagements involved travel where the cost was more than £2,500. Full details of these related

journeys are provided in the appendix to the annual report on the grant in aid. The remaining official royal engagements that involved travel costs fall into the following two categories:

Journeys by air and rail costing less than £2,500—these are funded by the grant in aid and the total cost in 2004–05 was £2,849,745.

Journeys by car—official travel by car for HM the Queen is paid for from the civil list and for HRH the Duke of Edinburgh from his parliamentary annuity. Official travel by car for other members of the royal Family is paid for from private sources.

Smartcard Technology

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the public sector organisations that have access to personal data held within the Oyster card database. [62294]

Derek Twigg: Oyster is provided under a PFI contract managed by Transport for London (TFL). We understand from TFL that they comply fully with the Data Protection Act.

Information on individual travel is kept for a maximum of eight weeks and is only used for customer service purposes, to check charges for particular journeys or for refund inquiries.

Very few authorised individuals can access this data and there is no bulk disclosure of personal data to third parties for any commercial purposes or any public sector organisation.

Any public sector organisation can request information within their power and if information is disclosed, it is always done so in accordance with the Data Protection Act after a case-by-case evaluation.

Speed Cameras

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the accuracy of the measurement of speeds by speed cameras, with particular reference to motorcycles; and if he will make a statement. [62855]

Dr. Ladyman: Safety cameras used by the police to produce evidence for court have to be of a type approved by the Home Secretary. The UK type approval process is extremely rigorous and involves both operational and laboratory testing. Expert advice is provided by the Home Office Scientific Development Branch.

No specific test is prescribed that involves motorcycles, or any other particular sort of vehicle, because they are not considered to present any distinct problems. The operational tests do however involve measuring the speed of any passing traffic including motorcycles.

The Home Secretary only type approves those devices which successfully complete the whole process. The Home Office is satisfied that all devices currently in use merit their type-approved status and are accurate and reliable on motorcycles and any other vehicle.

Station Safety

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will reconsider the proposed timetable for trialling new security technologies on mainland railway stations. [62858]

Derek Twigg: The passenger screening trial at Paddington station was completed to the timetable agreed with operators and other stakeholders. It finished on 8 February. Data collected during this trial is being assessed.

The other passenger screening trials, which the Secretary of State announced on 2 November 2005, are being planned. The timetable for these trials is being developed with the appropriate stakeholders including station operators and the British Transport police.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

BBC (3G)

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps she is taking to encourage the BBC to provide content to 3G telecommunications networks; and if she will make a statement. [63989]

James Purnell: As the White Paper 'A public service for all: the BBC in the digital age made clear', the Government believes the BBC should have the flexibility to deliver content in new ways and on different platforms as technology develops. Decisions on how to pursue this will be for the BBC within the framework of the Charter and Agreement. In particular, where a proposal requires a new public service or a significant change to an existing service, the BBC Trust will be required to undertake a public value test. The test will involve a market impact assessment carried out by Ofcom.

Capita Group

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much business her Department has placed with *(a)* Capita Group plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries in each of the last five years; what the total value is of outstanding contracts placed with Capita Group plc and its subsidiaries by her Department; for which current tenders issued by her Department (i) Capita Group plc and (ii) its subsidiaries have been invited to bid; and whether (A) Capita Group plc and (B) its subsidiaries have seconded staff (1) temporarily and (2) on a longer-term basis to (X) her Department and (Y) its agencies. [61089]

Mr. Lammy: The information requested could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

James Brokenshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the value of contracts held by her Department with *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries was in the last three financial years. [61471]

Mr. Lammy: The details regarding DCMS are as follows;

(a) DCMS has had no contracts with Capita plc in the last three financial years.

(b) DCMS has a contract for healthcare services with Capita Health Solutions following acquisition of BMI Health Services.

Departmental Leave (Stress)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many people have been on sick leave suffering from stress in her Department in each of the last three years; and what percentage of the total staff number this represents. [63553]

Mr. Lammy: The number of employees who have been on sick leave suffering from stress in each of the last three years is as follows:

	Number of employees	*Percentage of total staff*
2003–04	6	1
2004–05	[1]—	[1]—
2005–06	[1]—	[1]—

[1] In cases where there have been less than five people absent due to stress in any one year this information is suppressed on grounds of confidentiality

DCMS has a legal obligation to provide a safe working environment for all employees and guidance is available for staff and managers on how to manage stress effectively.

As part of our attendance, health and welfare programme for staff we have a range of policies in place to reduce work related stress. These include:

stress management policy;

sickness absence policy, which includes guidance on making reasonable adjustments;

full range of flexible work patterns to support work-life balance;

dedicated stress management channel on DCMS Intranet;

health awareness pages on Intranet;

access to welfare services, onsite gym and yoga classes.

Eastway Cycling Circuit

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what factors underlay her Department's decision to close the Eastway cycling circuit in September 2006 in preparation for the 2012 Olympics. [63994]

Mr. Caborn: The London Development Agency (LDA) is responsible for assembling the land for the Olympic park.

Eastway cycle circuit falls within the footprint of the Olympic park and will therefore need to be closed to make way for the construction of the site. I have been informed by my colleagues at the LDA that the decision was taken to close the facility in September 2006 to enable the necessary preparation work to take place ahead of construction works. The site is required at the earliest opportunity due to the presence of contamination and the significant amount of earth works required.

I understand that the LDA is currently working with stakeholders such as British Cycling to secure an alternative facility for the period during which Eastway is unavailable to users.

Funding (Museums etc)

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what funding her Department has made available for *(a)* museums, *(b)* libraries and *(c)* archive development in each of the last five years. [63290]

Mr. Lammy: The information is in the following table.

DCMS funding for museums, libraries and archive development 2001–02 to 2005–06

Museums	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*£ million 2005–06*
Total grant in aid to DCMS sponsored museums and galleries[1]	244.1	268.1	280.8	287.3	299.4
Museums Libraries and Archives Council support for regional museums	16.5	16.7	22.1	30.3	40.1
DCMS/Wolfson Foundation Museums and Galleries Improvement fund[2]	1.0	1.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Libraries					
Grant in aid to the British Library	86.2	85.1	[3]87.6	90.1	97.6
Museums Libraries and Archives Council support for local libraries	6.6	7.4	6.5	9.7	8.6
Private Finance Initiative credits for local authorities[4]	13.0	31.8	21.1	16.5	63.0
Archive Development5					
Museums Libraries and Archives Council support for archive development	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3

[1] Comprises grant-in-aid to the 22 sponsored museums and the DCMS contribution to the Strategic Commissioning programme run jointly with DfES. The 2004–05 figure includes £1.3 million DCMS reform pot funding.
[2] Figures quoted are DCMS contribution only. This is matched by an equivalent sum from the Wolfson Foundation.
[3] Includes £1.5 million DCMS reform pot funding.
[4] Figures show the amount of private finance initiative credits allocated to local authority libraries projects based on a competitive bidding process.
[5] Excludes regional film archives and any funding for archives held by museums or other cultural bodies.

Grievance Procedures

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many grievance procedures have been initiated in her Department in each of the last three years. [63554]

Mr. Lammy: The number of times the grievance procedure has been initiated in the last three years are so small that they cannot be provided on grounds of confidentiality.[1]

All staff are provided with a personal copy of a leaflet entitled "Putting Things Right" which gives a quick

guide to the informal and formal processes and support this Department has in place for anyone who has a problem or complaint in the workplace which they wish to be addressed.

[1] Where there have been less than five cases in any one year this information is suppressed on grounds of confidentiality.

Harassment Complaints

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many complaints of *(a)* bullying and *(b)* sexual harassment have been investigated in her Department in each of the last three years; and how many complaints have been upheld. [63555]

Mr. Lammy: There have been less than five cases of sexual harassment and bullying in DCMS in the past 3 years. As this is the case, further information is suppressed on grounds of confidentially.

Orchestras (National Insurance)

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what recent representations she has received from orchestras on national insurance contributions; and if she will make a statement. [63987]

Mr. Lammy: Arts Council England is facilitating discussions between representatives of the music sector and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs to clarify the circumstances in which Class 1 national insurance contributions are payable for freelance musicians. I understand that good progress is being made. We will continue to monitor the situation.

Regional Casinos

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pursuant to the answer of 17 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 2520–1W, on gambling, if she will publish the work done by her Department on the social cost of regional casinos referred to by the Minister of State on 1 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 100WH. [63460]

Mr. Caborn: Exchanges during the Westminster Hall Adjournment debate on 1 March 2006, *Official Report*, column100WH referred to a report published by Hall Aitken in February 2006. The estimate of the possible social cost of regional casinos contained in the Hall Aitken report was based on the February 2004 Henley Centre report "Economics and Social Impact Study of the Proposed Gambling Bill" which had been commissioned by the British Amusement Catering Trade Association. The Hall Aitken report took no account of any alternative views to the Henley report, including a review of Henley report commissioned by DCMS, which was published on the Department's website in July 2005.

I set out the research to which we are committed into the impact of the introduction of the new categories of casino permitted by the Act in my previous answer of 17 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 2520–1W.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the impact on the number of regional casinos of the new measures on casino taxation announced in the Budget. [63796]

Mr. Caborn: The number of new casinos that will be permitted under the Gambling Act 2005 is set out in section 175 of that Act. The Act makes provision for one regional, eight large and eight small casinos.

Taxation is a matter for the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the tendering process will be for regional casinos. [63990]

Mr. Caborn: The process for the consideration of application for casino premises licences, including the one regional casino premises licence, is set out in Schedule 9 to the Gambling Act 2005.

If the licensing authority (or licensing board in Scotland) receives more than one application for the regional casino premises licence, it will conduct a two stage process.

The licensing authority shall first consider in respect of each application whether they would grant it, if there were no limit on the number of regional casino premises licences.

If more than one application passes this initial stage, the licensing authority is required to determine which of those applications to grant on the basis of which, if successful, would be likely to result in the greatest benefit to the authority's area.

In making these determinations, the licensing authority will be required to comply with a code of practice which will be issued by the Secretary of State in due course.

Sporting Events

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions she has had with the organisers of the *(a)* Melbourne Commonwealth games and *(b)* Sydney Olympics on the hosting of major sporting events; and if she will make a statement. [63319]

Mr. Caborn: Both my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State and I visited the recent Commonwealth Games in Melbourne and met Ministers responsible for the games. I also met Ron Walker, Chair of Melbourne 2006, and other Melbourne 2006 officials.

During London's bid for the 2012 Olympic games and Paralympic games, we took advice from a number of previous Olympic host cities, including people involved in the Sydney games.

Television Licence (Exemption)

Mr. Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) what the total cost of the television licence exemption for those aged 75 years and over has been since the scheme was established; [63436]

(2) what the total cost of the exemption from the television licence fee for the 75-year-olds and over in the Walsall borough *(a)* was in 2005 and *(b)* has been since the scheme was established [63611]

James Purnell: Neither Television Licensing, who administer the television licensing system as agents of the BBC, nor the Department for Work and Pensions, who have responsibility for funding the free television licence scheme, are able to provide geographical breakdowns of the amount spent on free television licences. However, the total cost of funding free television licences for those aged 75 and over for the financial years 2000–01 to 2004–05 inclusive was £1,895 million. The estimated outturn for the year 2005–06 is £459 million.

Wembley Stadium

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of reports that the construction company Multiplex has had to lay-off sub-contractors building the new Wembley Stadium; and if she will make a statement. [63320]

Mr. Caborn: Issues relating to the employment of sub-contractors on the Wembley Stadium construction site are matters for Multiplex.

World Cup (Complimentary Tickets)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many complimentary tickets her Department has received for games taking place at the FIFA World Cup 2006 in Germany. [63908]

Mr. Caborn: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has not received any complimentary tickets for World Cup matches taking place in Germany this summer.

It is likely that a number of DCMS Ministers will attend matches and may be accompanied by officials. However, no decisions about Ministerial attendance have been made at this time.

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 19 April 2006

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Council Tax

10. **Mr. Holloway:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the effect of council tax increases on pensioners. [63762]

Mr. Woolas: The Government recognise the concerns of many pensioners about council tax. So does Sir Michael Lyons's Independent Inquiry into Local Government which will recommend at the end of the year how best to reform the council tax system. We look forward to receiving his findings.

14. **Ann Winterton:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the change has been in the average Band D council tax since 1997–98. [63766]

Mr. Woolas: The average Band D area council tax in England has risen from £688 in 1997–98 to £1,268 in 2006–07; an increase of £580 or 84.3 per cent.

Community Schools

12. **Mr. Hoyle:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on his plans for community councils. [63764]

Mr. Woolas: Government will be setting out a range of proposals for parish and town councils in the forthcoming local government White Paper.

Building Regulations

Colin Challen: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) if he will introduce a national quality control system under Part L of the building regulations; [60570]

(2) what steps he is taking to ensure compliance with Part L of the building regulations; [60571]

(3) if he will introduce measures to improve training for building control officers in the *(a)* public and *(b)* private sector on Part L of the building regulations. [60572]

Yvette Cooper: Local authorities and approved inspectors have a general duty under the Building Act to check that persons carrying out building work comply with the Building Regulations. Building Control Performance Standards set out recommended standards and guidance for the performance of building control that all Building Control Bodies should adopt. Beyond this there are no plans to introduce an additional national quality control system under Part L of the Building Regulations.

The Government continues to work with Building Control Bodies to see how enforcement with the new tougher energy performance standards that come into effect on 6 April 2006 can be cost effectively improved. This includes regulations to improve compliance by simplifying the process for calculating energy performance, requiring air pressure testing and establishing new competent person self-certification schemes.

We also have under way the largest ever training and dissemination programme for new building regulations. This programme of seminars, regional road shows and workshops targeted at building control surveyors in both the public and private sectors started in September 2005 and will include an e-learning pack for every building control surveyor.

Building Targets

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the building targets set for each local authority under the *(a)* Regional Planning Guidance and *(b)* Spatial Strategy for each Government Office region. [62316]

Yvette Cooper: There are no general building targets. However, house building targets for each local authority are set out in regional spatial strategies (formerly Regional Planning Guidance). They are assessed by the respective Regional Planning Body, both on an annual basis by monitoring actual completion rates against the respective target and, less frequently, through the review of regional spatial strategy policies.

Coastal Erosion (Essex)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what recent assessment he has made of coastal erosion around *(a)* the Southend West constituency and *(b)* Essex; and if he will make a statement. [64022]

Mr. Morley: I have been asked to reply.

Defra has overall policy responsibility for coastal erosion risk in England and grant aids individual local authority improvement projects to reduce this risk but does not build defences, nor direct the authorities on which specific projects to undertake.

Erosion risk will vary around the coastline depending on local conditions and defences in place. Defra has encouraged the relevant authorities to produce Shoreline Management Plans (SMPs) which provide large-scale assessments of the risks associated with coastal processes and present long term policy frameworks to manage these risks in a sustainable manner. In 2001 Defra funded a national study of information on long term coastal processes and evolution over the next century (Futurecoast). This is designed to be used by coastal authorities to inform their current revisions of SMPs. The Office of Science and Technology's Foresight Future Flooding report, published in 2004, used Futurecoast and other information to consider possible rates of coastal erosion for the whole country under different scenarios over the next 80 years.

Management of coastal erosion risk and associated monitoring in specific locations is the responsibility of the relevant local authority in each area. Defra has not carried out any specific assessment in the areas identified.

Contracts (Voluntary Sector)

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many contracts are let by his Department to voluntary sector organisations; how many of those are let on an annual basis; and how many of those had received finalised contracts for 2006–07 by 31 March. [63205]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not hold this information centrally and it could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Home Information Packs

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what help will be given to estate agents to implement home information packs. [63784]

Yvette Cooper: Individual estate agents, as with other advisers to the public on home buying and selling, should consider what action they need to take to remain competitive in the new market environment which will follow from the introduction of home information packs on 1 June 2007. These are commercial decisions, and the Government do not envisage providing financial help to the industry.

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what trials have been carried out in the last three years to see how home information packs will be implemented. [63786]

Yvette Cooper: I refer to my statement of 7 April 2006 which gives details of a dry-run prior to introducing home information packs on 1 June 2007. HIP providers are currently marketing the packs, and to date 45 organisations in England and Wales have provided 2,500 packs on a voluntary basis. This number will grow significantly during stage 2 of the dry-run from October 2006 when packs will be marketed with home condition reports produced by certified inspectors.

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what meetings his Department has had with *(a)* estate agents, *(b)* mortgage lenders, *(c)* the Law Society and *(d)* other stakeholders concerning home information packs. [63789]

Yvette Cooper: The Department has regular meetings with all the key stakeholders in the home buying and selling industry. The principal forum for discussion with the representative bodies, including the National Association of Estate Agents, the Council of Mortgage Lenders and the Law Society, is the Central Stakeholder Group which generally meets every month.

Local Authority Housing

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much rental income was received by each local authority from their council house stock in each year since 1997; how much of this rental income each year was *(a)* kept for use by the local authority in their housing revenue account and *(b)* transferred from local authority control for other purposes; and what percentage the amount transferred away from local authority control represents as a percentage of the amount remaining in the housing revenue account in each case. [56381]

Yvette Cooper *[holding answer 7 March 2006]:* A table showing available data has been placed in the House Library.

Rent forms part of the HRA, along with various allowances for expenditure (management, maintenance, major repairs allowance, debt charges etc). Some authorities are in deficit and we are providing net subsidy of around £200 million in 2005–06, with similar amounts forecast for future years.

Where an authority has an assumed surplus (negative subsidy) transfers are made to the ODPM according to calculations and assumptions made independently of the actual rents an authority charges. These transfers are recycled through the subsidy system and paid to authorities with an assumed deficit. None of the transfers are used for 'other purposes'.

Prior to 2004–05, net subsidy entitlement was calculated differently. Housing element requirements were calculated similarly to the current HRA subsidy, but then added to the rent rebate element which was then accounted for in the HRA. Where the housing element was a negative amount, it was deducted from the rent rebate subsidy entitlement, and any net subsidy requirement was met by the Exchequer.

In some cases, where surpluses remained after the two subsidy streams had been reconciled, the balance would be transferred to that authority's own general fund and lost to housing. No data were routinely collected to show the amounts transferred.

Local Government Pensions

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the earliest retirement age possible under the Local Government Pension Scheme is for a worker in good health; and what the average retirement age of a member of the scheme was in the last period for which figures are available. [60197]

Mr. Woolas: As with all occupational pension schemes approved by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, the earliest age for release of a pension in the Local Government Pension scheme is 50. No figures are held centrally.

Mortgage Repossessions

Mr. Mudie: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many mortgage repossessions there were in each year between 2003 and 2006. [63394]

Yvette Cooper: Information on mortgage possessions is only available for the United Kingdom as a whole and is collected by the Council of Mortgage Lenders. The figures in the table include properties that are surrendered voluntarily.

	Mortgages at end of period (Number)	*Properties taken into possession (Number)*	*Properties taken into possession (Percentage all loans)*
1995	10,521,000	49,410	0.47
1996	10,637,000	42,560	0.40
1997	10,738,000	32,770	0.31
1998	10,821,000	33,870	0.31

	Mortgages at end of period (Number)	Properties taken into possession (Number)	Properties taken into possession (Percentage all loans)
1999	10,982,000	29,990	0.27
2000	11,173,000	22,870	0.20
2001	11,247,000	18,280	0.16
2002	11,364,000	11,970	0.11
2003	11,452,000	7,830	0.07
2004	11,512,000	6,230	0.05
2005	11,591,000	10,250	0.09

Source:
Council of Mortgage Lenders

National Affordable Housing Scheme

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what funding will be allocated in housing units built or procured in each Government office region through the National Affordable Housing Scheme in 2006–07 and 2007–08, broken down by *(a)* mixed funding social rented housing, *(b)* temporary social rented housing, *(c)* homebuy general market purchase, *(d)* homebuy general new build, *(e)* mixed funded general low-cost ownership for sale, *(f)* miscellaneous works to registered social landlord (RSL) stock, *(g)* improvement to rented RSL stock, *(h)* works-only rehabilitation of rented RSL stock, *(i)* works-only rehabilitation of RSL stock for sale, *(j)* intermediate rented accommodation for key workers, *(k)* homebuy market purchase for key workers, *(l)* homebuy new build for key workers, *(m)* the London challenge teacher market purchase homebuy, *(n)* mixed funded sale for key workers and *(o)* starter home initiative; [63361]

(2) how many affordable housing units will be built or procured through the National Affordable Housing Programme in each Government office region in 2006–08; and how many will be accounted for by *(a)* mixed funded social rented housing, *(b)* temporary social rented housing, *(c)* homebuy general market purchase, *(d)* homebuy general new build, *(e)* mixed funded general low-cost ownership for sale, *(f)* miscellaneous works to registered social landlord (RSL) stock, *(g)* reimprovement to rented RSL stock, *(h)* works-only rehabilitation of rented RSL stock, *(i)* works-only rehabilitation of RSL stock for sale, *(j)* intermediate rented accommodation for key workers, *(k)* homebuy market purchase for key workers, *(l)* homebuy new build for key workers, *(m)* the London challenge teacher market purchase homebuy, *(n)* mixed funded sale for key workers and *(o)* starter home initiative. [63413]

Yvette Cooper: The Housing Corporation's regional offices will be publishing initial allocation statements by mid-April. In May, they intend to publish their final allocation statements which will contain the aforementioned requested information. Both the initial allocation statement and the final allocation statement for each region will be available on the Housing Corporation's website www.housingcorp.gov.uk

Planning

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the number of change of use planning applications made in each of the last five years *(a)* in total and *(b)* for premises that were previously categorised as in (i) domestic and (ii) business use. [62279]

Yvette Cooper: The total number of decisions on change of use planning applications for each of the last five years is given in the following table. Data are not collected about the nature of the previous use.

Thousand

	'Change of use' decisions
2000–01	37.5
2001–02	37.8
2002–03	36.8
2003–04	36.9
2004–05	36.3

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 13 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1956W, on planning (schools), how many planning appeals the Planning Inspectorate considered in the most recent year for which figures are available in relation to planning applications made by schools. [62208]

Yvette Cooper: The Planning Inspectorate decided 21 appeals made by schools during the period 1 January to 31 December 2005 of which 14 were allowed and seven were dismissed.

Response Times (Fire Engines)

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average response time is for fire engines to get to an emergency call-out in *(a)* England and *(b)* Taunton constituency. [64069]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The available information covers attendance at primary fires only. 2004 is the latest year for which finalised data are published.

(a) The average response time to primary fires attended by fire and rescue services in the UK in 2004 was 6.8 minutes. This is measured from time of first call to the fire and rescue service to time of arrival at the scene.

(b) Data are not available at constituency level. The average response time to primary fires attended by Somerset fire and rescue service in 2004 was 9.2 minutes.

Wellingborough (Development)

Mr. Bone: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will visit Wellingborough to discuss local housing development and infrastructure. [63879]

Yvette Cooper *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* Wellingborough plays an important part in the growth proposals for North Northamptonshire. We are kept regularly updated on development of the plans to take these forward and I chair the regular Milton Keynes and South Midlands Inter Regional Board. In addition, officials are closely involved with the borough council and other partners in bringing forward housing, growth and other agendas. There have already been a number of ministerial visits to North Northamptonshire and more are planned. Ministers from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister are more than happy to discuss housing development and infrastructure provision in Wellingborough during future visits to Northamptonshire.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Capita Group

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much business her Department has placed with *(a)* Capita Group plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries in each of the last five years; what the total value is of outstanding contracts placed with Capita Group plc and its subsidiaries by her Department; for which current tenders issued by her Department (i) Capita Group plc and (ii) its subsidiaries have been invited to bid; and whether (A) Capita Group plc and (B) its subsidiaries have seconded staff (1) temporarily and (2) on a longer-term basis to (X) her Department and (Y) any of its agencies. [61079]

Jim Knight: From information held centrally, the core-Department has dealt with seven Capita Group plc subsidiaries over the financial years 2001–02 to 2005–06 (April 2005 to December 2005) inclusive. The value of these contracts is as follows:

	Financial years					
Vendor name	*2001–02*	*2003–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06 (April to December)*	*Total*
Capita Business Services Ltd.	511,230.76	406,048.24	467,751.86	505,693.43	21,749.45	1,912,473.74
Capita DBS Ltd.	440,211.10	10,635.32	—	—	—	450,846.42
Capita Health Solutions Ltd.	—	—	—	—	8,263.19	8,263.19
Capita HR and Financial Resourcing	—	—	—	14,747.63	—	14,747.63
Capita Property Consultancy Ltd.	—	82,663.84	75,209.37	—	—	157,873.21
Capita Resourcing Ltd.	—	—	—	40,774.76	313,935.31	354,710.07
Capita Symonds Ltd.	138,426.68	—	—	80,670.48	216,581.51	435,678.67
Total	1,089,868.54	499,347.40	542,961.23	641,886.30	560,529.46	3,334,592.93

The core Department does not hold information centrally of what the total value is of outstanding contracts placed with Capita Group plc and its subsidiaries by the Department and the information could be provided only at disproportionate cost. Similarly, the core Department does not hold information centrally of which current tenders issued by the Department that Capita Group plc and its subsidiaries have been invited to bid against. From information held centrally, the core Department is unaware of any staff from Capita Group plc and its subsidiaries being seconded either temporarily or on a longer term basis to the core Department.

The core Department does not hold information centrally identifying contracts and contractual expenditure with Capita Group and its subsidiaries by each of its non-departmental public bodies, executive agencies, independent statutory bodies and organisations and bodies financially sponsored by the core Department.

James Brokenshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the value of contracts held by her Department with *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries was in the last three financial years. [61468]

Jim Knight: From information held centrally, the core Department has dealt with a total of seven Capita Group plc subsidiaries over the financial years 2001–02 to 2005–06 (April 2005 to December 2005) inclusive. The figures are as follows:

	Financial years					
Vendor name	*2001–02*	*2003–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06 (April to December)*	*Total*
Capita Business Services Ltd.	511,230.76	406,048.24	467,751.86	505,693.43	21,749.45	1,912,473.74
Capita DBS Ltd.	440,211.10	10,635.32	—	—	—	450,846.42
Capita Health Solutions Ltd.	—	—	—	—	8,263.19	8,263.19
Capita HR and Financial Resourcing	—	—	—	14,747.63	—	14,747.63
Capita Property Consultancy Ltd.	—	82,663.84	75,209.37	—	—	157,873.21
Capita Resourcing Ltd.	—	—	—	40,774.76	313,935.31	354,710.07
Capita Symonds Ltd.	138,426.68	—	—	80,670.48	216,581.51	435,678.67
Total	1,089,868.54	499,347.40	542,961.23	641,886.30	560,529.46	3,334,592.93

James Brokenshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many tenders *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries have submitted to her Department in each of the last three years; and how many tenders were successful. [61469]

Jim Knight: The information requested is not held centrally by the core Department and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

James Brokenshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many contracts her Department holds with *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries which still have a potential duration of five years or more. [61470]

Jim Knight: From information held centrally, no contracts between the core Department and Capita Group plc and its subsidiaries have a potential duration of five years or more.

Climate Change

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what factors led her to conclude that the announcement on 28 March 2006 on the UK Climate Change Programme 2006 was best made through a written rather than an oral statement to the House. [63257]

Mr. Morley: The written statement made by the Secretary of State on the day provided a full account of the review process and the scope of the new Climate

Change Programme. A copy of the Programme was placed in the Library. This approach was thought to provide the House with full and speedy information about the Programme.

Farming Link

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the cost was of *(a)* production and *(b)* distribution of the latest edition of her Department's Farming Link publication; and how many copies were produced. [63259]

Jim Knight: The cost of producing the March edition of Farmer's Link was £70,505. It was circulated to 170,000 recipients, including all farmers and growers.

This means that the March edition—which included 31 different news items and articles—cost around 41 pence per copy.

Flooding

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if the Government will take steps to provide insurance to householders and businesses which are repeatedly flooded where insurance indemnities exclude cover. [63773]

Mr. Morley: There are no plans for the Government to provide flood insurance cover. As I explained in my answer to the hon. Member on 16 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 2397W, this remains broadly available to households in areas at risk of flooding in accordance with the Association of British Insurers' Statement of Principles. In some cases property-owners in areas of higher flood risk can take additional measures to enable them to obtain insurance, for example by investing in individual protection products to reduce potential damage to their property. The Environment Agency provides advice on these.

Government Offices (Energy Consumption)

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what advice her Department has issued to other Government Departments on the reduction of energy consumption in offices; and whether advice has been issued on the setting of average room temperature for offices. [63607]

Mr. Morley: Defra has not issued any advice to other Departments on reduction of energy consumption in offices, or on the setting of average room temperatures for offices. The onus lies with each Department to decide how best they can make energy and carbon savings, against cross Government targets set out in the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government estate. Practical advice on energy saving is available to Departments through the Carbon Trust.

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether her Department has adopted an ambient room temperature for its offices. [63610]

Mr. Morley: During early 2006, Defra has been running the 'BIG SWITCH' energy efficiency campaign in its' offices, with the focus on eliminating waste and reducing carbon emissions. One element of the campaign has involved closer monitoring and control of ambient temperatures in our buildings. This has been informed by guidance issued by the Carbon Trust, who advise that for every 1°C of over-heating, fuel consumption increases by 8 to 10 per cent.

Oilseed Rape

John Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many acres were given over to the growing of oilseed rape in England in the last five years. [63370]

Jim Knight: The information is as follows:

Hectares

	Winter oilseed rape	*Spring oilseed rape*
2001	306,405	60,793
2002	305,770	18,733
2003	367,014	55,365
2004	386,515	68,911
2005	455,173	24,781

Pesticides

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to carry out further research into the possible link between cancer and pesticides use. [63336]

Mr. Morley: The Government undertake a programme of research into pesticides and the potential human health effects of exposure to them. As part of this programme, we have commissioned a specific analysis of existing epidemiological research on cohorts of workers in pesticides manufacturing plants regarding possible links to prostate cancer.

Both the Department of Health's Committee on Carcinogenicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COG) and the Advisory Committee on Pesticides monitor the relevant scientific literature for emergency issues. The research programme is reviewed in the light of advice from these committees.

The Government are also currently considering its response to the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution (RCEP) report on 'Crop Spraying and the Health of Residents and Bystanders'. The Government may commission new research as a result of this although no decisions have yet been taken.

World Cup (Complimentary Tickets)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many complimentary tickets her Department has received for games taking place at the FIFA World Cup 2006 in Germany. [63898]

Jim Knight: None.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Foreign Students

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many foreign students have travelled to England for university education in each of the last 10 years. [62986]

Bill Rammell: The latest available figures are given in the table. The figures in part reflect the success of the Prime Minister's initiative to increase the number of non-EU overseas students who come to study in the UK. Between 1996/97 and 2002/03 non-EU overseas students increased by 56,000.

Students[1] from overseas studying at English higher education institutions 1994/95 to 2004/05

	Students from:		
	EU	*Non-EU*	*Total*
1994/95	49,130	75,890	125,020
1995/96	65,130	86,590	151,720
1996/97	67,135	86,605	153,745
1997/98	74,400	92,740	167,140
1998/99	79,435	92,875	172,315
1999/2000	79,640	97,500	177,140
2000/01	79,270	107,035	186,310
2001/02	73,890	117,935	191,825
2002/03	72,490	142,660	215,150
2003/04	70,775	161,250	232,030
2004/05	78,365	163,750	242,115

[1] Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 5, so components may not sum to totals. Figures are based on a snapshot count of students at 1 December in each academic year. The figures include incoming and exchange students who study part, as opposed to all, of their course at an English HEI.

Source:

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

Higher Education

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people in Coventry, South went on to higher education in *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2005; and what proportion went to university. [62687]

Bill Rammell: The latest available figures on participation in higher education by constituency were published by the Higher Education Funding Council for England in January 2005 in "Young Participation in England", which is available from their website at: http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2005/05_03/ This report shows participation rates for young people who enter higher education aged 18 or 19, disaggregated by constituency, for the years 1997 to 2000. It does not distinguish between those who entered universities and those who entered other higher education institutions. The figures for Coventry South, and the comparable figure for England, are shown in the table. HEFCE have not produced figures beyond 2000.

Young Participation Rate (YPR (A)) in higher education

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*
Year cohort aged 18 in Coventry, South (number)	1,100	1,150	1,150	1,110
Participation rate for Coventry, South[1] (percentage)	32	32	32	32
Participation rate for England (percentage)	29.2	28.8	29.2	29.9

[1] Participation rates for constituencies are reported to the nearest whole number.

Source:

Higher Education Funding Council for England.

The total numbers of entrants from Coventry, South for each year since 2001/02 are given in the table:

Entrants to undergraduate courses from Coventry South

	2001/02	*2002/03*	*2003/04*	*2004/05*
Aged 18–19	445	420	425	485
Aged over 19	570	695	775	930
Total entrants	1,015	1,115	1,200	1,415

Source:

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 5.

The Department uses the Higher Education Initial Participation Rate (HEIPR) to assess progress on increasing first-time participation of English students aged 18–30 in higher education towards 50 per cent.: the latest provisional figure for 2004/05 is 42 per cent. The HEIPR is not calculated at constituency level.

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of people in Beverley and Holderness went on to higher education in *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2005; what proportion went to university; and if she will make a statement. [63511]

Bill Rammell: The latest available figures on participation in higher education by constituency were published by the Higher Education Funding Council for England in January 2005 in "Young Participation in England", which is available from their website at: http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2005/05_03/. This report shows participation rates for young people who enter higher education aged 18 or 19, disaggregated by constituency, for the years 1997 to 2000. It does not distinguish between those who entered universities and those who entered other higher education institutions. The figures for Beverley and Holderness, and the comparable figure for England, are shown in the table. HEFCE have not produced figures beyond 2000.

Young participation rate (YPR (A)) in higher education

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*
Year cohort aged 18 in Beverley and Holderness	1,180	1,260	1,220	1,170
Participation rate for Beverley and Holderness[1] (percentage)	33	30	31	31
Participation rate for England (percentage)	29.2	28.8	29.2	29.9

[1] Participation rates for constituencies are reported to the nearest whole number.

Source:

Higher Education Funding Council for England.

The total numbers of entrants from Beverley and Holderness for each year since 2001/02 are given in the table:

Entrants to undergraduate courses from Beverley and Holderness

	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05
Aged 18–19	420	445	410	440
Aged over 19	865	810	715	870
Total entrants	1,290	1,260	1,125	1,310

Note:
Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 5, so components may not sum to totals.
Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

The Department uses the Higher Education Initial Participation Rate (HEIPR) to assess progress on increasing first-time participation of English students aged 18–30 in higher education towards 50 per cent.: the latest provisional figure for 2004/05 is 42 per cent. The HEIPR is not calculated at constituency level.

Ministerial Activities

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* public speeches and *(b)* official visits she has made since 5 May 2005; and how many letters she sent in this period. [55712]

Ruth Kelly: Between 5 May 2005 and 2 March 2006, I have made 49 public speeches, been on 49 official visits and replied to 2,014 letters.

All official speeches and visits are conducted in accordance with the ministerial code.

Overseas Universities

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many English students have travelled outside the UK for university education in each of the last 10 years. [62987]

Bill Rammell: The latest available information is given in the table. Comparable figures for students who study the whole of their course overseas are not held centrally.

Undergraduates from England studying part of their course overseas

Academic year	Number[1]
1994/95	2,075
1995/96	2,785
1996/97	3,365
1997/98	3,100
1998/99	3,860
1999/2000	4,640
2000/01	4,030
2001/02	4,140
2002/03	8,040
2003/04	7,950
2004/05	7,590

[1] The figures up to 2001/02 include students on exchange schemes which involve studying abroad for the whole of the year; students studying abroad for part of the year, or studying abroad on non-exchange schemes are excluded. Figures for 2002/03 and later years include all students on study years abroad for all or part of the year, except those on industrial placements.
Note:
Figures are based on a snapshot count of students at 1 December in each academic year.
Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). Figures have been rounded to the nearest 5.

Rawtenstall Campus

Janet Anderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will investigate the sale of the Rawtenstall campus site by Accrington and Rossendale college; and whether she is satisfied the college has achieved best value as required by the Learning and Skills Council. [63782]

Bill Rammell: The capital disposal receipt generated from the sale of Accrington and Rossendale College's Rawtenstall site was less than 5 per cent. of the college's annual turnover.

Under the terms of the Learning and Skills Council's (LSC) financial memorandum with the college, this sale, as a result of its value, did not require LSC consent. It is therefore the responsibility of the college and its corporation to ensure that it has achieved best value when disposing of its Rawtenstall campus.

Student Discipline

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many recorded incidents of antisocial behaviour took place in universities in *(a)* Havering, *(b)* Greater London and *(c)* England in each of the last 10 years. [62983]

Bill Rammell: Information on the incidence of antisocial behaviour at higher education institutions is not collected centrally.

Sure Start/Children's Centres

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what services are provided by children's centres; and if she will make a statement. [63991]

Beverley Hughes: Sure Start Children's Centres deliver a range of integrated services to children under five and their families including health and family support services and advice and support for the unemployed through effective links with Jobcentre Plus. Those children's centres located in the 30 per cent. most disadvantaged areas must also provide integrated early learning and daycare.

At 31 March 2006 there were 836 Sure Start Children's Centres. All are located in the 30 per cent. most disadvantaged areas bringing integrated services to around 657,000 children under five and their families. We have exceeded our target agreed in the 2002 Spending Review which was to enable 650,000 children to access children's centre services by that date.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the total expenditure on *(a)* Sure Start and *(b)* Children's Centres was in each year since 2001–02; what expenditure is planned in each category in each year to 2008–09; and if she will make a statement. [63986]

Bill Rammell: Details of actual and planned expenditure on Sure Start, childcare and nursery education to 2007–08 are published in Table 12.2 of the Department for Education and Skills' Departmental Report (Cm 6522). To reflect the increasing integration

of services for young children and families, from 2003–04 funding for childcare and nursery education was merged into Sure Start funding:

£ million

Financial Year	*Sure Start*	*Childcare*	*Nursery Education*	*Total*
2001–02	134	109	224	467
2002–03	216	158	306	680
2003–04[1]	721	721		
2004–05[2]	927	927		
2005–06	1,140	1,140		
2006–07	1,696	1,696		
2007–08	1,809	1,809		

[1] From 2003–04, all funding to deliver the free nursery education entitlement was incorporated into what is now called the Early Years element of the of the Dedicated Schools' Grant (formerly known as the under 5 sub-block for the Education Formula Spending Share).
[2] Outturn in DfES Resource Accounts 2004–05 (HC 686)

Within the Sure Start budget, increasing amounts of money have been allocated to local authorities to help establish our network of Children's Centres, delivering a wide range of early learning, childcare, health and family support. The delivery of 1st phase Children's Centres began in 2003–04 with £1.9 million revenue and £2.2 million capital being spent by local authorities on Children's Centres in that year. For the period 2004–06, the memorandum of grant letter to all local authorities allocated £111 million revenue and £315 million capital over the two year period to continue the delivery of phase 1 Children's Centres. In addition to this funding, we allocated £313 million capital to Sure Start local programmes (SSLP) in 2004–06 and we expect that this budget would have been largely used to facilitate the evolution for all SSLPs to become Children's Centres.

For 2006–08, we have streamlined the majority of funding streams within the General Sure Start Grant (GSSG) to give local authorities more flexibility in facilitating local childcare markets and developing early years and childcare services to deliver the Ten Year Childcare Strategy. The GSSG main revenue and capital allocations are £596 million and £421 million in 2006/07 and £664 million and £392 million in 2007/08. The GSSG allocations are for local authorities to fund children centres and provide support for extended schools and sustainable early years and childcare provision to meet parental demand for childcare in their local areas. Local authorities have the freedom to decide how much they wish to spend on each area based on the knowledge of their local market.

Allocations from 2008 onwards will only be announced in the comprehensive spending Review 2007.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what monitoring of the effectiveness of Sure Start is being undertaken; and if she will make a statement. [64001]

Beverley Hughes: There is a comprehensive national level evaluation of Sure Start local programmes in place which began in January 2001, which will run until 2008. It examines the implementation, cost-effectiveness and impact of Sure Start on children, families and communities, in the short, medium and long-term. Fifteen reports have been published to date which have been instrumental in understanding what is effective for young children and families, and in designing and rolling out Sure Start children's centres.

Training Schools

Ms Angela C. Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many schools in the *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary sector will lose their designation as training schools in 2007. [63673]

Bill Rammell: From 2005, participation in the training schools programme is open to schools that successfully redesignate and meet the high performing specialist schools criteria.

Seven secondary schools which redesignated in 2005 did not meet the criteria and have been told that their funding will cease when their current contract comes to an end in 2007. A further tranche of secondary schools will redesignate in 2006 and we do not yet know how many of these will meet the necessary criteria.

Those training schools that are not yet specialist have been told that they should aim to become specialist schools before their contract expires.

We are considering with the Training and Development Agency (TDA) how to retain in the system the expertise built up by existing training schools.

Primary schools will no longer be able to apply directly for training school status, but the TDA are currently considering the development of a primary initiative.

University Lecturers (Industrial Action)

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the effect of university lecturers' industrial action on *(a)* university graduations and *(b)* university students in 2005–06. [64381]

Bill Rammell: We have made no such assessment. It is a matter for higher education institutions (HEIs), as autonomous bodies, to make these assessments and consider how best they can minimise the adverse effects of the current dispute. HEIs are responsible for determining their own academic and administrative affairs, including deciding what to pay their own staff. Pay and conditions of service are subject to negotiations between employers, their staff and their representative trade union bodies. The Government play no part in this.

The Government would encourage both employers and unions to reach a speedy resolution in relation to the current dispute, to ensure minimal further disruption to students.

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what representations the Department has received from *(a)* individual students and *(b)* student bodies relating to the industrial action taken by university lecturers; and if she will make a statement. [64382]

Bill Rammell: The Department has received correspondence about university staff pay and the current dispute from students. However, as universities

are autonomous, they are responsible for determining their own academic and administrative affairs, including deciding what to pay their own staff. Pay and conditions of service are subject to negotiations between employers, their staff and their representative trade union bodies. The Government play no part in this.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Coercive Abortion

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to the Answer of 27 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 622W, on coercive abortion, when he next proposes to raise the issue of coercive abortion with the government of China; and if he will make a statement. [64203]

Mr. Thomas: While the UK Government do not question China's right or need to implement family planning policies, we are concerned about reports of enforced sterilisation and abortion. We believe that China's family planning policies should be based on the principle of consent, and not coercion, as set out by the International Conference on Population and Development.

In February 2006, the EU raised with the Chinese Government, the case of Chen Guangcheng, a lawyer who highlighted reports of enforced sterilization and abortion in Linyi City, Shandong Province. We will continue to raise our concerns about reports of enforced sterilization and abortion in China, where appropriate.

Ethiopia

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what representations he has made to the Ethiopian Government on the need to release prisoners currently held without charge. [63633]

Ian Pearson: I have been asked to reply. We have consistently urged the Ethiopian Government either to charge or to release detainees. My noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, and my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Development have both made clear to Prime Minister Meles the need for a prompt, fair and open judicial process for those currently detained.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what financial aid has been given to Ethiopia in each of the last three years; and what funding is proposed for 2006–07. [63634]

Hilary Benn: Total DFID aid to Ethiopia from the UK amounted to £43.3 million in 2003–04 and £62.56 million in 2004–05. We expect to spend approximately £61.73 million in 2005–06 and our planning figure for 2006–07 is £90 million subject to the developments of a new more accountable method of providing funds in the light of our concerns about political developments.

Sri Lanka

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the progress of the UK's support for the Peace and Reconciliation in Sri Lanka strategy. [63115]

Mr. Thomas: The British Government supports peace building and reconciliation in Sri Lanka through a variety of programmes and activities. Its peace building and Reconciliation Strategy aims to describe the activities needed to establish the conditions necessary to sustain peace in Sri Lanka. It supports and complements the Norwegian facilitation between the Government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). The Strategy is agreed across the three Government Departments involved in the Global Conflict Prevention Pool and informs decisions on dispersing funds from that pool in Sri Lanka.

Our programme includes support for UNICEF, OXFAM and Save the Children Fund, we are working to improve the access and quality of basic health and education services for communities in conflict affected districts. The goal is to ensure that these services are provided equitably across Sri Lanka, thus addressing one long held grievance, and to help return communities to normal peacetime conditions. Under these programmes 75,000 emergency education kits have been provided to schools in the North and East, student drop-out rates have reduced by 50 per cent. and over 1,800 child soldiers have been returned to their families. Psychosocial care is provided to these and other children affected by the conflict. Measles, Polio and DPT (Diphtheria-polio-tetanus immunisation) vaccination has been provided for all children in conflict affected areas and vitamin supplements to 90 per cent. of children. Some 88 per cent. of pregnant and lactating women now receive ante-natal care and nutrition supplements.

To establish a more secure environment in the North and East, support for de-mining and mine awareness is provided through the United Nations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). This has helped encourage some 500,000 conflict displaced people to return to their homes. Their return has been supported with grants of material and tools to rebuild homes and restart their livelihoods.

We are also working with NGOs and civil society groups to reduce tensions within communities and to promote their resolution without resort to violence, including the implementation of an early warning mechanism to mitigate and prevent conflict in the east of Sri Lanka. To help these communities enjoy a more secure environment within which to pursue their livelihoods, we are working with the police and the security services to improve their awareness of human rights and adherence to international humanitarian law. Under the strategy, we also assist the Sri Lankan Human Rights Commission to provide increased access to justice for disadvantaged groups. Through the Asia Foundation, we are helping to strengthen legal institutions and processes at a local and national level by improving language skills for court staff, improving paralegal and advocacy skills for community based organisations and funding research into discrimination.

This programme also includes support for public interest litigation relating to the protection of civil rights including for internally displaced persons (IDPs).

We also provide support for peace building and reconciliation through our diplomatic engagement. The Government of Sri Lanka have expressed gratitude for Britain's constructive contribution in this area.

World Food Programme

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent discussions he has had with the World Food Programme on aid for those in *(a)* eastern Chad and *(b)* Sudan. [57731]

Hilary Benn: DFID is in regular contact with the World Food Programme (WFP) in Sudan and Chad, and monitors the food needs of the affected populations closely.

For Chad, in 2005, the UK contributed £2 million to the WFP for their activities providing food assistance to Sudanese refugees in Eastern Chad. We will provide a further £1.25 million in 2006. For Sudan, where the scale of need is substantially greater, the UK contributed £11.2 million to the WFP in 2005, and we will continue our support in 2006 through the Common Humanitarian Fund (CHF). The UK will contribute £40 million to this pioneering multi-donor fund which is administered by the UN and will ensure the top humanitarian priorities across Sudan are funded. In the initial CHF allocation of £106 million, the WFP has received nearly $27 million for its activities.

WALES

Craig Goch Reservoir

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what representations he has *(a)* made to and *(b)* received from the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on the proposed expansion of the Craig Goch reservoir in the Elan valley; what discussions he has had on the matter with the Welsh Assembly; and what representations he has received. [63686]

Mr. Hain: None. Any proposal to expand the Craig Goch reservoir would be subject to the approval of the National Assembly for Wales. However, neither the Welsh Assembly Government nor the Environment Agency are aware of any such plans.

Departmental Televisions

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many television sets are in operation in the Department *(a)* in total, *(b)* in Ministers' private offices and *(c)* in each building in the Department; and how many television licences are held by the Department. [62806]

Mr. Hain: In total there are 11 TVs in operation at The Wales Office. Three of these are in the Ministers' private offices. There are nine in the London office and one in the Cardiff Office. There are two TV Licences held by The Wales Office.

Energy Efficiency

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what steps he is taking to increase energy efficiency within his Department; and if he will make a statement. [60334]

Mr. Hain: As part of the machinery of Government changes in June 2003 the Wales Office became a separate entity within the Department for Constitutional Affairs (DCA) The Wales Office is fully covered by the commitments outlined in the DCA's Sustainable Development Policy, which is on the DCA website:

http://www.dca.gov.uk/dept/sustaindev/sustaindev.htm

Locally the Wales Office has reinforced the need for all staff to be energy efficient by ensuring senior managers remind their teams, reissuing staff instructions to turn off all electrical equipment when not in use and deploying posters and publicity material from the Carbon Trust near electrical equipment and light switches.

We have contacted the Carbon Trust which has agreed to carry out an energy audit of the office. We have provided the Carbon Trust with all relevant materials needed and await a date from it for a visit.

Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what his Department's employer contribution rates to the Principal Civil Service pension scheme are; what assumed rate of return underlies those contribution rates; and what the contribution rate would be if the assumed rate of return was in line with current redemption yield on index-linked gilts. [61906]

Mr. Hain: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given to him by my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State for the Cabinet Office (Mr. Murphy) on 29 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1030.

World Cup (Complimentary Tickets)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many complimentary tickets his Department has received for games taking place at the FIFA World Cup 2006 in Germany. [63905]

Mr. Hain: None. I will not be attending the 2006 World Cup Finals in Germany.

DEFENCE

Iraq

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what his estimate is of the number of *(a)* Shia, *(b)* Kurdish and *(c)* Sunni non-state militia in Iraq; [61844]

(2) what assessment he has made of the infiltration of national and local Iraqi security forces by sectarian militias. [61847]

John Reid: There are a variety of estimates of the size of the various Iraqi militias. But both these, and the extent of their influence, are difficult to assess with any accuracy. Ethnic, religious and tribal loyalties are widespread within Iraqi society and part of the reform

and democratisation process of Iraqi institutions is the removal from office of those individuals whose loyalties are fundamentally not to the state. The capability of the Iraqi interior and defence ministries, and of the Iraqi Security Forces, will be important factors in assessing the conditions that will enable the transfer of responsibility for security to the Iraqi civilian authorities.

Mark Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what estimate he has made of the number of British service personnel requiring medical treatment following active service in Iraq who have been advised to attend NHS hospital accident and emergency departments for treatment; and if he will make a statement; [63665]

(2) what estimate he has made of the number of British servicemen and servicewomen who have paid for private medical treatment following injuries incurred during active service in Iraq; and if he will make a statement. [63666]

Mr. Touhig: It is not the policy of the Ministry of Defence to advise service personnel requiring medical treatment following active service in Iraq to attend NHS hospital A and E departments for treatment. The Defence Medical Services (DMS) manages the medical treatment pathways for all members of the UK armed forces, both regulars and mobilised reservists, who require medical treatment as a result of active service and makes all the necessary arrangements to ensure that it is delivered. There are of course other occasions where service personnel resident in the United Kingdom will present to A and E departments for emergency treatment of injuries and illnesses; service personnel are entitled to NHS care, including emergency care, and this is set out in the Department of Health's Establishing the Responsible Commissioner document.

The DMS has a number of referral options depending upon the nature of the medical treatment required. For example, the DMS refers service personnel with complex musculoskeletal or neurological needs requiring hospital care to one of the six Ministry of Defence Hospital Units (MDHUs) embedded within NHS trusts or to non-MDHU NHS facilities if the location and availability of clinical service is more socially convenient and clinically appropriate for the patient than MDHU care. Service personnel with moderate/minor musculoskeletal injuries who have been assessed and have a working diagnosis and a planned care pathway are referred to one of our 12 Regional Rehabilitation Units, while those with more complex rehabilitation needs are referred to the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre (DMRC) at Headley Court.

I am aware of a very small number of cases where the system has not delivered the standards of care that we always endeavour to provide for military patients. The MOD takes all allegations of poor medical care very seriously, and will investigate any complaint that individual service personnel or ex-service personnel raise with us.

It is not possible to provide an estimate of the number of British servicemen and servicewomen who have paid for private medical treatment following injuries incurred during active service in Iraq, as such information is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. The armed forces do sometimes refer personnel for private care when this is considered appropriate. In such circumstances, the costs are borne by the Department. Whichever course of action is taken, it is with a view to ensuring that military patients are assessed and treated in a timely fashion and receive the optimal high quality treatment and rehabilitation to deliver the best possible outcome, including an early return to operational fitness when this is clinically possible.

Military Intelligence

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which units in the *(a)* Royal Navy, *(b)* Royal Air Force, *(c)* Army and *(d)* Department are involved primarily in activities related to military intelligence; and how many (i) military and (ii) civilian personnel serve in each such unit. [63085]

John Reid: Other than for the Defence Intelligence Staff (DIS) and the Intelligence Corps, the information requested is not held centrally. The DIS employs some 4,700 staff and of those 2,800 are military and 1,900 civilian. The military element includes personnel from all three services. Intelligence Corps figures were published in *Hansard* on 30 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 32W. However, a number of Intelligence Corps personnel are posted to the DIS.

Submarines (Astute Class)

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate he has made of the cost of converting Astute class submarines to accommodate Trident II D5 (A) missiles. [64247]

John Reid: Work has been undertaken to keep options open in considering platforms to carry the Trident D5 missile in the longer term pending future decisions on any replacement for Trident. However, while decisions on any replacement for the Trident system are likely to be required in the current Parliament, they are still some way off. Initial preparatory work is being undertaken by officials on possible options for the future of the UK's nuclear deterrent. However, Ministers have not yet begun to consider the position on this issue in any detail and it is therefore too early to speculate, among other things, on the range of options that might be available and their potential costs.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

2G Switch Off

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions he has had with Ofcom on 2G switch off in the telecommunications market. [63993]

Alun Michael: There have been no such discussions to date, with Ministers or DTI officials.

Business Links

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what penalties there are for contractors breaking the statutory requirements of the Business Links service. [63107]

Alun Michael: There are no specific statutory instruments under which the Business Link services are provided. Business Link must comply with all statutory requirements set out in relevant Acts of Parliament.

In addition, organisations delivering Business Link services receive funding from the regional development agencies on a contractual basis. The terms of these contracts provides the regional development agencies with the right of suspension or clawback of funding.

The Business Link contract, originally agreed between the DTI and Business Link providers, has been managed by the regional development agencies since April 2005, and contains provisions for termination and breach.

Gas Supplies

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to his statement during the debate on 14 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1303, on gas supply and demand, what the source was of the statement that Germany's wholesale gas prices have increased by 80 per cent. [62677]

Malcolm Wicks: The sources of the statement are publicly available IMF data on Russian-German border prices over 2005 and Royal Bank of Scotland exchange rate data.

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to his statements during the debate on 14 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1303, on 16 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 1551 and on 12 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 486, on gas supply, how he calculated the figures regarding the costs of energy to British and German industry. [62678]

Malcolm Wicks: The statement on 12 January,

"Our liberalised markets mean that the cost of industrial gas is also competitive. In the past 14 years, the cost of energy to British industry has been around £8 billion less than the cost to German industry"

referred to the difference in cost were UK industry to have paid German prices for the gas they consumed over the period 1990 to 2004. The statistics for the prices to UK and German industries were taken from the IEA publication 'Energy Prices and Taxes' and Ofgem estimates, while the consumption of UK industry was taken from the IEA publication 'Energy Statistics of OECD countries'. A similar exercise undertaken by Ofgem came to the same figure.

The statement on 16 February,

"over the past 10 years British companies have paid £9 billion less for their energy than German companies, for instance, but there is an issue here that we need to tackle"

referred to the difference in cost were UK industry to have paid German prices for the gas and electricity they consumed over the period 1995 to 2004. The statistics for the prices to UK and German industries were taken from the IEA publication 'Energy Prices and Taxes', while the consumption of UK industry was taken from the IEA publication 'Energy Statistics of OECD countries'.

National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what *(a)* annual running costs and *(b)* total costs to date have been incurred by the National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship. [63810]

Alun Michael *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* The Department of Trade and Industry Small Business Service and The Department for Education and Skills jointly fund the National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship (NCGE). The NCGE is awarded a combined grant of £700,000 per year to fund its activities. The NCGE has just completed its second year and has received a total of £1,400,000.

Photovoltaic Industry

Andrew Stunell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he *(a)* is taking and *(b)* plans to take to support the UK based photovoltaic industry to compete in the international photovoltaics market; and if he will make a statement. [63580]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department has supported photovoltaics since 2000 through the £31 million major photovoltaic demonstration programme which ended in March 2006 and £10 million on field trials which are still to report. Photovoltaics will continue to receive support, along with other microgeneration technologies, through the new £80 million low carbon buildings programme over the next three years. In addition, the Government have just launched their microgeneration strategy which will seek to tackle non-grant barriers hindering development of sustainable markets for these technologies. This will include working with industry to develop a route map for each microgeneration technology. These measures will help the photovoltaic industry to continue to develop in the UK, building a platform for business to take decisions on international developments.

Telephone Preference Service

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether change in legislation is being considered regarding the number of unsolicited nuisance telephone calls made to members of the public after an application has been processed to the Telephone Preference Service to ensure no such calls are made. [63051]

Alun Michael *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* No change is being considered as under the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003, consumers are offered protection from unsolicited telephone sales calls through the Telephone Preference Service (TPS) scheme. This has proved to be an effective deterrent with 11.2 million registrations to date. No one is allowed to make an unsolicited telephone sales call to a subscriber who has either previously notified the caller that they do not wish to receive such calls or has been registered with the TPS scheme for at least 28 days.

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what process was used to grant the contract to manage the telephone preference service registers to the Direct Marketing Association (DMA); and if he will place in the Library correspondence between his Department and the DMA on the matter. [62269]

Alun Michael: The matter raised is the responsibility of the Office of Communications (Ofcom). Ofcom is the independent regulatory for the communications sector, deriving its main powers and duties directly from statute rather than by delegation from my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State, and accountable to Parliament in its own right. The Chief Executive of Ofcom has pointed out that under the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003 ("the Regulations") Ofcom is required to maintain registers of the numbers allocated to subscribers who have notified Ofcom that they do not for the time being wish to receive unsolicited communications for direct marketing purposes by means of telephone (Telephone Preference Service) or fax (Fax Preference Service). Ofcom is permitted by the Regulations to make arrangements for the provision of the registers to be discharged by some other person.

Ofcom undertook a full, competitive and open tender process prior to the award of the contract to Telephone Preference Service Limited (TPSL). The invitation to tender can be accessed at: http://www.ofcom.org.uk/about/jobs/contracts_tenders/mngd_fax_tgel_reg/.

The invitation to tender includes: the aims and objectives for the registers; services and tender retirements; and minimum criteria for evaluation of tenders. I am informed by Ofcom that eight companies expressed an interest in tendering for the new contract, although three tenders were actually received by Ofcom. Having evaluated the tender and interviewed the bidders, Ofcom decided to award the new contract to TPSL, the existing provider of the registers.

Accordingly, my officials have asked the Chief Executive Officer of Ofcom to reply to the hon. Member and to send me a copy of his response. Copies of the Chief Executive's letter will also be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Women Entrepreneurs

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps his Department is taking to increase the number of women entrepreneurs in the North East. [63283]

Alun Michael: Greater levels of entrepreneurship are essential if we are to succeed by increasing economic growth, and female entrepreneurship can, make a crucial contribution in this growth. Because there are unique issues attaching to female entrepreneurship the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) has established the National Women's Enterprise task force, in association with women's business support organisation Prowess. The task force will champion women's enterprise issues across Government.

Both directly and through regional development agency ONE NorthEast the Government supports a range of initiatives which are achieving increases in the numbers of entrepreneurs in the North East of England. Support provide through the Business Link network in the region, ongoing restructuring and simplification Government business support, and the £26.4 million to be shared by Easington, Derwentside, Wear Valley, Sedgefield and South Tyneside under the local enterprise growth initiative (LEGI) will all contribute to the encouragement of new business start-ups in the region.

While many initiatives are aimed at all potential entrepreneurs, there are some which seek to increase opportunities, enhance levels of business skills and raise entrepreneurial aspirations specifically among the female population.

For example:

ONE North East in association with regional partners in the public and private sectors has drawn up the North East of England enterprise strategy. The strategy draws together the priorities for developing enterprise in the region and outlines and actions, timescales and responsibilities for their delivery with the aim of encouraging the region's entrepreneurs to create, develop and grow their enterprises. Recognising the importance of encouraging female entrepreneurs, a North East Women's enterprise action plan is currently being developed.

ONE NorthEast backs the Women into the Network, which has already achieved success in encouraging an enhanced culture of entrepreneurship in the region by assisting the integration of aspiring women entrepreneurs into existing business networks.

The Government announced this month that ONE NorthEast will receive £80,000 to establish a pilot Women's Enterprise unit, which will assess measures needed to accelerate rates of women's entrepreneurship in the North East of England.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

BBC

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport which services that the BBC proposes to offer will be subject to *(a)* a market impact assessment and *(b)* the public value test. [62815]

Tessa Jowell: The BBC's new Charter and Agreement will require the BBC Trust to subject all new services and significant changes to existing services to a public value test. Every public value test will include a market impact assessment.

British Sub-Aqua Club

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will meet the elected officials of the British Sub-Aqua Club. [63636]

Mr. Lammy: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has no current plans to meet the elected officials of the British Sub-Aqua Club.

Officials from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, and the chairman of the Advisory Committee on Historic Wreck Sites have recently met elected officials of the British Sub-Aqua Club (BSAC), among other

diving organisations. Officials have been in regular correspondence with BSAC and are forming good working relationships over a variety of issues.

Freeview

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps are being taken to increase the number of households able to receive Freeview television in *(a)* South Swindon and *(b)* England. [64036]

James Purnell: Digital Switchover will enable digital terrestrial coverage to match the current 98.5 per cent. analogue level. Switchover for the HTV West region and the Central region will happen in the first half of 2010 and the first half of 2011 respectively.

The Government have confirmed the regional timetable for the switchover to digital television and announced details of a support scheme to help the most vulnerable households to make the switch.

Digital UK, an independent, not-for-profit company, will co-ordinate the implementation of digital switchover and ensure that consumers have timely and accurate information about the switch.

Joint Nautical Archaeology Policy Committee

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport on what dates she met the Joint Nautical Archaeology Policy Committee; who represented the committee; and whether they were *(a)* elected or *(b)* appointed. [63635]

Mr. Lammy: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has not recently met the Joint Nautical Archaeology Policy Committee (JNAPC).

I met Robert Yorke, the chair of the JNAPC, on 2 November 2005.

Robert Yorke was elected as chairman of the JNAPC by the committee.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Capita Group

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much business his Department has placed with *(a)* Capita Group plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries in each of the last five years; what the total value is of outstanding contracts placed with Capita Group plc and its subsidiaries by his Department; for which current tenders issued by his Department (i) Capita Group plc and (ii) its subsidiaries have been invited to bid; and whether (A) Capita Group plc and (B) its subsidiaries have seconded staff (1) temporarily and (2) on a longer-term basis to (X) his Department and (Y) any of its agencies. [61077]

Ian Pearson: In each of the last five financial years the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has placed the following levels of business with Capita Group plc.

	£
2001–02	1,198,500
2002–03	763,300
2003–04	565,100
2004–05	199,300
2005–06	860,500

In 2005–06 the FCO placed £44,000 of business with Veredus, a subsidiary of Capita Group plc.

The total value of outstanding contracts with Capita Group plc is £321,116.

The FCO has no current tenders ongoing which involve Capita Group plc or its subsidiaries.

Neither the FCO nor its Executive Agency, Wilton Park, have seconded staff from Capita Group plc or its subsidiaries either temporarily or on a longer-term basis.

James Brokenshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the value of contracts held by his Department with *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries was in the last three financial years. [61435]

Ian Pearson: The value of contracts held by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office with Capita plc in the last three financial years is:

	£
2003–04	565,100
2004–05	199,300
2005–06	860,500

The value of contracts held with Veredus, a subsidiary of Capita plc, over the last three financial years is as follows:

	£
2003–04	0
2004–05	0
2005–06	44,000

Ministerial Responses

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make it his policy when placing material in the Library in response to a parliamentary question to supply a copy of the material to the hon. Member who tabled the question; and if he will make a statement. [64210]

Mr. Straw: Yes.

Political Memoirs

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his evidence to the Public Administration Committee of 29 March 2006, HC 689-v, on publication of political memoirs, why and how he will arrange to dismiss an official or an adviser who keeps a daily diary; whether an official or an adviser may keep a journal; when that policy was first made; and when it was first made public. [63685]

Mr. Straw: The Diplomatic Service Regulations do not prohibit the keeping of diaries by officials, and no official or adviser would be dismissed for doing so. My evidence to the Committee made clear that I do not object to the keeping of diaries in principle, only to their publication in disregard of the Regulations.

Self-Determination

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether it is his Department's policy that the principle of self-determination can be *(a)* limited and *(b)* constrained by treaty. [63613]

Ian Pearson *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* The Government supports the right or principle of self-determination reflecting the wishes of the people concerned. It should be exercised in accordance with the other principles and rights in the UN Charter and with other treaty obligations. This has been and continues to be the position of successive British Governments.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Child Immigrants (Detention)

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the longest length of time is that a child who is being detained for immigration purposes has been held. [58857]

Mr. McNulty: Information on the longest length of time that a child who is being detained solely under Immigration Act Powers is unavailable. Published statistics on immigration and asylum issues are available on the Home Office's Research Development and Statistics website: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects to answer the letter of 23 February from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, about Mrs. Eva Wilson. [63933]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I wrote to my right hon. Friend on 10 April 2006.

Home Detention Scheme

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners were released on the Home Detention Curfew scheme in 2004–05 for *(a)* less than one month, *(b)* one to two months, *(c)* two to three months, *(d)* three to four months and *(e)* over four months in each year since the scheme was introduced. [59140]

Fiona Mactaggart: Information on the number and percentage of prisoners released on Home Detention Curfew (HDC) by time to be spent on curfew, from 1999 to 2005, is given in the following tables.

HDC releases with information on time to be served on HDC

	1999		*2000*		*2001*		*2002*	
	Actual	*Percentage*	*Actual*	*Percentage*	*Actual*	*Percentage*	*Actual*	*Percentage*
Less than one month (i.e. up to 30 days)	3,768	26	3,978	26	3,301	25	5,573	29
One to two months (31 to 60 days inclusive)	10,740	74	11,170	74	9,935	75	12,817	67
Two to three months (61 to 90 days inclusive)	—	—	—	—	—	—	875	5
Three to four months (91 to 120 days inclusive)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Four to four and a half months (121 to 136 days inclusive)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total (excluding those with no valid centrally held information)	14,508	100	15,148	100	13,236	100	19,265	100

	2003		*2004*		*2005*	
	Actual	*Percentage*	*Actual*	*Percentage*	*Actual*	*Percentage*
Less than one month (i.e. up to 30 days)	5,564	29	5,266	30	4,329	27
One to two months (31 to 60 days inclusive)	4,195	22	3,896	22	3,359	21
Two to three months (61 to 90 days inclusive)	6,420	33	2,817	16	2,730	17
Three to four months (91 to 120 days inclusive)	1,337	7	1,456	8	1,556	10
Four to four and a half months (121 to 136 days inclusive)	1,912	10	4,301	24	4,188	26
Total (excluding those with no valid centrally held information)	19,428	100	17,736	100	16,162	100

Notes:

1. The table does not include those with no valid centrally held information on time to be spent on tag.
2. These statistics are based on information recorded on the central Prison Service IT system on 1 April 2006.
3. Further updates and amendments may be made to records on this system in future resulting in revised figures.
4. Two changes were made to the scheme in 2002: the introduction of the Presumptive HDC scheme in May for prisoners serving between three months and under 12 months, and the increase of the maximum curfew period to 90 days on 16 December. On 14 July 2003 the maximum curfew period was increased to four and a half months.

Identity Cards Register

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on what date the Identity Cards Register will commence operation. [63895]

Andy Burnham: No date has yet been determined for the commencement of the National Identity Register. This will depend on the progress of the procurement exercise.

Security Industry Authority

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many licence applications had been processed by the Security Industry Authority by 1 March. [62303]

Paul Goggins: The total number of fully processed licence applications by the Security Industry Authority at 1 March 2006 was 79,974.

World Cup (Complimentary Tickets)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many complimentary tickets his Department has received for games taking place at the FIFA World Cup 2006 in Germany. [63909]

Paul Goggins: The Home Office has not received any complimentary tickets for World Cup matches taking place in Germany this summer. The Home Secretary may attend matches, and may be accompanied by officials. However, no decisions have been made at this time.

TREASURY

Bank Accounts

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people in Coventry, South did not have access to a bank account on 31 December *(a)* 2005 and *(b)* 1997. [63423]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The most recent data available that allows assessment to be made of the number of households with no access to a bank account is the Family Resources Survey from 2002–03. This indicates that 8 per cent. of households in the United Kingdom had no bank account of any kind. This equated to 1.9 million households containing around 2.8 million adults. This data is broken down to Government Office regional level. This shows 10 per cent. of households in the West Midlands were unbanked.

In 1997–98, the Family Resources Survey was collected on a Great Britain basis, excluding Northern Ireland. 8 per cent. of households in the West Midlands were unbanked at that time compared to 8 per cent. of households in Great Britain as a whole.

In December 2004, the Government and the banks agreed to work together towards the goal of halving the number of adults in households with no access to a bank account of any kind and of making significant progress within two years. The Financial Inclusion Taskforce has been asked to monitor progress. The taskforce recently made its first annual report, which concluded that steady progress has been made towards the goal but also encouraged banks to continue to address the difficulties faced in opening a bank account.

Ben Chapman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the take-up of basic bank accounts. [63274]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Following the report of Policy Action Team 14: Access to Financial Services in 1999, the banking industry worked with the Government to introduce the basic bank account which is specifically designed to address the needs of the financially excluded.

The Government do not collect data on the numbers of basic bank accounts. The latest data from the British Bankers Association show that between April 2003 and December 2005, a net total of 1.64 million basic bank accounts were opened.

The Family Resources Survey indicates that in 2002–03 8 per cent. Of households, containing around 2.8 million adults, had no access to a bank account of any kind.

In December 2004, the Government and the banks agreed to work together towards the goal of halving the number of adults in households with no access to a bank account of any kind and of making significant progress within two years. The Financial Inclusion Taskforce recently made its first annual report on progress towards the goal, which concluded that steady progress has been made but also encouraged banks to continue to address the difficulties faced in opening a bank account.

Birth Rate (UK/EU)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his latest estimate is of the birth rate per 1,000 women in *(a)* the UK and *(b)* other EU member states; and what forecast he has made for each of the next 20 years. [64019]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 19 April 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your question regarding, estimates of the birth rate per 1,000 women in *(a)* the UK and *(b)* other EU member states; and what forecast has been made for each of the next 20 years. (64019)

Table A below shows the number of births per 1,000 women aged 15 to 44 (the general fertility rate) in the UK in 2004 and the latest projections for the next 20 years.

General fertility rates for other EU member states are not readily available. However, Eurostat publish total fertility rates for each country annually (the total fertility rate measures the average number of children who would be born to a group of women if current age-specific fertility rates persisted throughout their lives). Estimates for 2004 are shown in Table B. Eurostat's latest projections of future total fertility rates are available at: http://epp.eurostat.cec.eu.int/portal/page?_pageid=0,113618,0_45572595&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL

Table A: Births per 1,000 women aged 15 to 44, United Kingdom

	General fertility rate[1]
Actual	
2004	57.7
Projected	
2004–05	57.7
2005–06	56.8
2006–07	56.3
2007–08	56.1
2008–09	56.1
2009–10	56.3
2010–11	56.7
2011–12	57.2
2012–13	57.6
2013–14	58.1
2014–15	58.7
2015–16	59.2
2016–17	59.7
2017–18	60.1
2018–19	60.2
2019–20	60.1
2020–21	59.9
2021–22	59.6
2022–23	59.4
2023–24	59.1

[1] Births per 1,000 women aged 15 to 44

Sources:

Actual: ONS

Projections: 2004-based national population projections, GAD

Table B: Total fertility rates, EU member states, 2004

	Total fertility rate[1]
Austria	1.42
Belgium	1.64
Cyprus	1.49
Czech Republic	1.23
Denmark	1.78
Estonia	1.40
Finland	1.80
France	1.90
Germany	1.37
Greece	1.29
Hungary	1.28
Ireland	1.99
Italy	1.33
Latvia	1.24
Lithuania	1.26
Luxembourg	1.70
Malta	1.37
Netherlands	1.73
Poland	1.23
Portugal	1.42
Slovakia	1.25
Slovenia	1.22
Spain	1.32
Sweden	1.75
United Kingdom[2]	1.77

[1] The average number of children who would be born to a group of women if current age-specific fertility rates persisted throughout their lives.

[2] ONS estimate provided for UK

Sources:

Eurostat, ONS[2]

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what discussions he has had with the European Union about falling birth rates; and if he will make a statement. [64021]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 19 April 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your question about what discussions have taken place with the European Union about falling birth rates. (64021)

The National Statistics Centre for Demography at ONS participates, with colleagues in other European countries and at Eurostat, in scientific discussions of fertility trends across Europe. In particular, there have been consultations between Eurostat and member states on the fertility assumptions underlying Eurostat's latest set of population projections for EU member states.

Cancer Treatment

James Duddridge: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many cases of *(a)* upper gastro-intestinal, *(b)* urological, *(c)* head and neck, *(d)* breast, *(e)* lung, *(f)* prostate, *(g)* stomach, *(h)* colon and *(i)* bowel cancer in 2005 were treated in each cancer network, expressed as (i) an absolute figure and (ii) as a proportion of the population covered by the network; [63669]

(2) how many cases of *(a)* female cancers and *(b)* male cancers were treated in each cancer network in 2005, expressed as (i) an absolute figure and (ii) a proportion of the population covered by the network. [63671]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 19 April 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Questions asking (1) how many cases of *(a)* upper gastro-intestinal, *(b)* urological, *(c)* head and neck, *(d)* breast, *(e)* lung, *(f)* prostate, *(g)* stomach, *(h)* colon and (i) bowel cancer in 2005 were treated in each cancer network, expressed as (i) an absolute figure and (ii) as a proportion of the population covered by the network and (2) how many cases of *(a)* female cancers and *(b)* male cancers were treated in each cancer network in 2005, expressed as (i) an absolute figure and (ii) a proportion of the population covered by the network. (63669 & 63671)

Nationally comparable incidence rates are available for England, Government Office Regions, and Strategic Health Authorities (but not for other areas such as cancer networks). The latest year for which figures are available by single years for Strategic Health Authorities (SHAs) is 2002. These can be found on the Clinical and Health Outcomes Knowledge Base website at the address below, for the following cancer sites: skin, malignant melanoma, bladder, colorectal, lung, oesophagus and stomach (for both sexes), breast and cervix (for females), and prostate (for males). http://www.nchod.nhs.uk/

Census Records

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many applications were received by the Registrar General for a search of the closed decennial census records for *(a)* 1901 and *(b)* 1911 in each year from 1994 to 2005; and what average number of staff hours was required for searches in that period. [63314]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 19 April 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking how many applications were received for a search of the closed decennial census records for a) 1901 and

b) 1911 in each year from 1994 to 2005; and what was the average man-hours required for an individual search in that period. (63314)

a) 1901 Census

I have listed the number of applications by individual year from 1997 to 2001. For 1994–1996 the information relates only to the number of searches carried out as information on the number of applications is no longer available. The 1901 Census was opened to the public in January 2002.

1901 year	*Number of applications*	*Number which resulted in search*
1994	[1]	629
1995	[1]	578
1996	[1]	437
1997	222	211
1998	227	213
1999	179	172
2000	149	144
2001	63	62

[1] Not available

These numbers refer to applications made under concessions announced in Parliament in 1972 and 1989. The details of the concessions as reported in Hansard are attached for reference.

The average man-hours for a search of the 1901 Census records was originally 2 hours. This included travelling time and administration time for supplying the information. The average reduced to 1 hour when the records had been microfilmed and no travelling time was involved.

b) 1911 Census

The numbers of applications for a search of the 1911 Census are listed below.

	Number of applications	*Number which resulted in a search*
1994	5	4
1995	1	1
1996	3	2
1997	5	3
1998	3	0
1999	0	0
2000	0	0
2001	1	0
2002	1	0
2003	2	0
2004	2	0
2005 (under FOI)	2	0

From 1994–2004 the numbers relate to applications made under a concession announced in 1993. The numbers for 1997–2004 revise the information supplied in the reply to your similar question in July 2005 as a result of further research. Not all of the applications resulted in a search. There were some cases where the Registrar General was not satisfied that all the conditions were fulfilled; in some instances the applicants decided not to pursue their application. From 2005 applications were made under the Freedom of Information Act. The number of applications is significantly lower than for 1901 because the concession which allowed the release of information from the 1911 Census was more restrictive.

Details of the 1993 concession as reported in Hansard are attached for reference.

The average man-hours for a search of the 1911 Census was 5 hours 20 minutes including travelling and administration time for supplying the information. This is higher than for a 1901 Census search as more travelling was involved (the 1911 records were located at a more remote site) and also because of a lack of searching aids such as a street index.

Child Benefit (Administration)

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his latest estimate is of the annual administration costs of child benefit. [63563]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Birmingham, Selly Oak (Lynne Jones) on 30 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 111W.

Child Trust Funds

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his latest estimate is of the annual administration costs of the Child Trust Fund since it was introduced. [63312]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer given to the hon. Member for Leeds, North-West (Greg Mulholland) on 25 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 2214W.

Clinical Outcomes (Cancer)

James Duddridge: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the clinical outcomes were for *(a)* upper gastro-intestinal, *(b)* urological, *(c)* head and neck, *(d)* breast, *(e)* lung, *(f)* prostate, *(g)* stomach, *(h)* colon and *(i)* bowel cancer in each cancer network in each year since 2001; [63668]

(2) what the clinical outcomes were for *(a)* female cancers and *(b)* male cancers in each cancer network in each year since 2001. [63670]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 19 April 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Questions asking (1) what the clinical outcomes were for *(a)* female cancers and *(b)* male cancers in each cancer network in each year since 2001 and (2) what the clinical outcomes were for *(a)* upper gastro-intestinal, *(b)* urological, *(c)* head and neck, *(d)* breast, *(e)* lung, *(f)* prostate, *(g)* stomach, *(h)* colon and (i) bowel cancer in each cancer network in each year since 2001. (63668 & 63670)

Nationally comparable survival rates are available for England, Government Office Regions, and Strategic Health Authorities (but not for other areas such as cancer networks). The latest available figures are one-and five-year relative rates for patients (aged 15–99) diagnosed in 1995–97 and followed up to the end of 2002. These can be found on the National Statistics website at the address below, for the following cancer sites: bladder, colon, lung, oesophagus and stomach (for both sexes), breast and cervix (for females), and prostate (for males). http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=11991&Pos=4&ColRank=1&Rank=272

These figures are also available on the Clinical and Health Outcomes Knowledge Base at: http://www.nchod.nhs.uk/

Contracts (Voluntary Sector)

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many contracts are let by his Department to voluntary sector organisations; how many of those are let on an annual basis; and how many of those had received finalised contracts for 2006–07 by 31 March. [63212]

John Healey: The Treasury has one contract with voluntary organisations. Campbell Robb, Director of Public Policy at the National Council for Voluntary Organisations, has been seconded to the Treasury by the NCVO to play a leading advisory role in the review, announced in the Budget, into the future role of the third sector in social and economic regeneration. Agreement in principle on the secondment for an initial six months was reached before 31 March.

Earnings (Southend, West)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average earnings of *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time employees in Southend, West constituency were in April in each year since 1997. [64196]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 19 April 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question to ask what the average earnings of a) full-time and b) part-time employees in Southend West constituency were in April in each year since 1997. (64196)

Average earnings are estimated from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), and are provided for employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey period was not affected by absence. This is the standard definition used for ASHE. The ASHE does not collect data on the self employed and people who do unpaid work.

I attach tables showing Average Gross Weekly Earnings by parliamentary constituency for the years 1997 to 2005 for full-time and part-time employees on adult rates. These statistics are already published on the National Statistics website at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=13101.

The ASHE, carried out in April of each year, is the most comprehensive source of earnings information in the United Kingdom. It is a one per cent sample of all employees who are members of pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) schemes.

Gross weekly pay for all employee jobs[1] by place of work

£

	Full-time		*Part-time*	
Southend West	*Median*	*Mean*	*Median*	*Mean*
1997	**281	*342	**105	**132
1998	**285	*352	**107	**143
1999	*317	*372	**126	**154
2000	*306	*342	**110	**142
2001	**321	*384	**136	*159
2002	**356	*426	**128	**148
2003	**318	*382	x	**169
2004	**327	*384	x	**206
2004[2]	**326	*386	x	**199
2005	**341	*417	128	**169

[1] Employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey pay-period was not affected by absence.
[2] Includes supplementary survey data.
Guide to quality:
The Coefficient of Variation (CV) indicates the quality of a figure, the smaller the CV value the higher the quality.
The true value is likely to lie within ± twice the CV e.g. for an average of 200 with a CV of 5 per cent. we would expect the population average to be within the range 180 to 220.
Key:
CV ⩽5 per cent.
*CV >5 per cent. and ⩽10 per cent.
**CV >10 per cent. and ⩽20 per cent.
x Unreliable
Note:
The median replaces the mean as the headline statistic. The weighted mean is the sum of the weighted values divided by the sum of the weights. The median is the value below which 50 per cent. of employees fall. It is preferred over the mean for earnings data as it is influenced less by extreme values and because of the skewed distribution of earnings data.
Source:
Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, Office for National Statistics.

Gross weekly pay for all employee jobs[1] by place of residence

£

	Full-time		*Part-time*	
Southend West	*Median*	*Mean*	*Median*	*Mean*
1997	2__	2__	2__	2__
1998	2__	2__	2__	2__
1999	2__	2__	2__	2__
2000	2__	2__	2__	2__
2001	2__	2__	2__	2__
2002	**395	*484	**129	*149
2003	**413	*519	**102	**151
2004	*459	*563	x	**144
2004[2]	*455	*549	x	**143
2005	*490	*577	**143	**198

[1] Employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey pay-period was not affected by absence.
[2] Denotes data not collected before 2002.
[3] Includes supplementary survey data.
Guide to quality:
The Coefficient of Variation (CV) indicates the quality of a figure, the smaller the CV value the higher the quality.
The true value is likely to lie within ± twice the CV e.g. for an average of 200 with a CV of 5 per cent. we would expect the population average to be within the range 180 to 220.
Key:
CV ⩽5 per cent.
*CV >5 per cent. and ⩽10 per cent.
**CV >10 per cent. and ⩽20 per cent.
x Unreliable
Note:
The median replaces the mean as the headline statistic. The weighted mean is the sum of the weighted values divided by the sum of the weights. The median is the value below which 50 per cent. of employees fall. It is preferred over the mean for earnings data as it is influenced less by extreme values and because of the skewed distribution of earnings data.
Source:
Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, Office for National Statistics.

Financial Advice (Mortgages)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will take steps to ensure that borrowers are told by *(a)* an estate agent and *(b)* a financial adviser how many lenders are on the panel from which a mortgage can be obtained. [63339]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Estate agents and financial advisers that arrange or advise on regulated mortgage contracts are regulated by the Financial Services Authority (FSA).

They are required by FSA rules to disclose whether they offer mortgages from a limited number of lenders. If that is the case they are required to tell consumers that a list of lenders is available on request.

Estate agents that confine their financial services activity to introducing clients to an authorised mortgage broker or lender are exempt from FSA regulation, provided the necessary conditions are met.

Education Spending

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of the UK's gross domestic product has been spent on education in each year since 2004. [64136]

Mr. Des Browne: As set out in Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses 2005 (http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/172/47/pesa2005_complete.pdf) the percentage of the UK's gross domestic product spent on education in 2003–04 and 2004–05 (estimated outturn) is 5.3 per cent. and 5.4 per cent. respectively.

Final outturn data for 2004–05 and estimated outturn data for 2005–06 will be published in Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses 2006 (for publication in May 2006).

Identity Fraud

Mr. Evans: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 27 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 705W, on identity fraud, what steps are taken to ensure that staff in his Department are aware of the dangers of identity fraud; and which staff are provided with this training. [63794]

John Healey: It would be inappropriate to provide details of the action taken within the Treasury to ensure that officials are made aware of the importance of safeguarding information which should remain confidential, as to do so would compromise the operational efficiency of the Department.

Income Tax

Andrew George: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent estimate he has made of the number of people who would cease to pay tax if the starting rate were raised to *(a)* £1,000, *(b)* £2,000, *(c)* £2,500 and *(d)* £3,000. [63877]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The starting rate band is £2,150 in 2006–07. The number of people who would cease to pay tax if this were increased from £2,150 to £2,500 and £3,000 is 15,000 and 33,000 respectively. This is due to their married couples allowance (MCA) offsetting their decreased tax liability.

The income tax information is based upon the 2003–04 Survey of Personal Incomes (SPI) and projected forwards in line with 2006 Budget assumptions. The figures exclude any estimate of behavioural response, which could be significant given the scale of the changes.

Andrew George: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the potential impact on Government income of a starting point for the basic rate of income tax band of *(a)* £2,200, *(b)* £2,300, *(c)* £2,400, *(d)* £2,500, *(e)* £2,600, *(f)* £2,700, *(g)* £2,800, *(h)* £2,900, *(i)* £3,000, *(j)* £3,100, *(k)* £3,200, *(l)* £3,300, *(m)* £3,400, *(n)* £3,500 and *(o)* £4,000. [63878]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information is provided in the table.

Year: 2006–07

Basic rate threshold (£)	*Cost (£ billion)*
2,200	0.2
2,300	0.5
2,400	0.8
2,500	1.1
2,600	1.4
2,700	1.7
2,800	2.0
2,900	2.3
3,000	2.6
3,100	2.9
3,200	3.1
3,300	3.4
3,400	3.7
3,500	4.0
4,000	5.4

The higher rate threshold has not been changed.

The income tax information is based upon the 2003–04 Survey of Personal Incomes (SPI) and projected forwards in line with 2006 Budget assumptions. The figures exclude any estimate of behavioural response, which could be significant given the scale of the changes.

Andrew George: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of *(a)* the extent to and *(b)* methods by which higher income earners (i) legally and (ii) illegally avoid paying the top rate of income tax. [63998]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested is not available.

Andrew George: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimates his Department has made of income to the Inland Revenue of an increase in the upper rate of income tax from 40p in the pound to *(a)* 45p, *(b)* 50p, *(c)* 51p, *(d)* 52p, *(e)* 53p, *(f)* 54p, *(g)* 55p, *(h)* 56p, *(i)* 57p, *(j)* 58p, *(k)* 59p, *(l)* 60p, *(m)* 65p and *(n)* 70p. [63874]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information is provided in the table.

Year: 2006–07

Higher rate of tax (per cent.)[1]	*Yield (£ billion)*
45	5.2
50	10.5
51	11.5
52	12.5
53	13.6
54	14.6
55	15.7
56	16.7
57	17.8
58	18.8
59	19.9
60	20.9
65	26.1
70	31.4

[1] The new higher tax rate applies to earnings and savings income only. Dividends at the higher rate remain taxed at 32.5 per cent.

The income tax information is based upon the 2003–04 Survey of Personal Incomes (SPI) and projected forwards in line with 2006 Budget assumptions. The figures exclude any estimate of behavioural response, which could be significant given the scale of the changes.

London and Continental Railways

Chris Grayling: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) if he will list the meetings which have taken place between potential bidders for London and Continental Railways and officials and ministers at the Treasury; [54768]

(2) whether there have been recent discussions between the Treasury and *(a)* London and Continental Railways (LCR) and *(b)* potential bidders for LCR about altering LCR's debt structure; [54769]

(3) what representations have been made to his Department by *(a)* London and Continental Railways (LCR) and *(b)* potential bidders for LCR. [54770]

Mr. Des Browne: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the Secretary of State's Statements on the matter, 14 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 104WS, 1 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 28WS and 30 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 111WS.

Ministerial Responses

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make it his policy when placing material in the Library in response to a parliamentary question to supply a copy of the material to the hon. Member who tabled the question; and if he will make a statement. [64198]

John Healey: It is the policy of Treasury Ministers always to provide the hon. Member concerned with a copy of any documents placed in the Library of the House in response to a parliamentary question, except where the material is too unwieldy to warrant the production of an additional copy.

New Employees (Wirral, West)

Stephen Hesford: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many of the extra people in work since the 2005 budget are residents of Wirral, West. [64316]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 19 April 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about the increase in employment, in the Wirral West Parliamentary Constituency, since the 2005 budget. (64316)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics on numbers in employment for local areas, including parliamentary constituencies, from the Annual Population Survey (APS) following International Labour Organisation definitions.

The latest available APS data refer to the period April 2004 to March 2005, so it is not possible at present to say how many of the total extra people in work, since the 2005 budget, are residents of Wirral West. Statistics from the APS for the period April 2005 to March 2006 are expected to be published in September 2006.

Pensions

Mr. Dunne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total annual contributions would be to the *(a)* NHS, *(b)* teachers, *(c)* civil service, *(d)* armed forces, *(e)* police, *(f)* firefighters, *(g)* judiciary and *(h)* Atomic Energy Authority pension schemes if the current market interest rate for the appropriate maturity was used as the discount rate. [63818]

Mr. Des Browne: Contribution rates to reflect the costs of participation in these schemes are calculated by scheme actuaries using assumptions which represent a stable basis for determining the accruing pension benefits over the long-term. A common set of long-term financial assumptions is used across the unfunded public service schemes. As is common practice these financial assumptions differ from those used to prepare annual accounts and do not necessarily relate to particular market interest rates.

Supervisory and Regulatory Staff

Chris Huhne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many staff were employed in institutions with statutory duties for the *(a)* supervision and *(b)* regulation of (i) banks, (ii) insurance companies, (iii) mortgage lenders and (iv) other financial institutions in each year since 1996, broken down by supervisory and regulatory institution and including his Department; and what the cost of such institutions was in each year. [63854]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The following table shows the number of staff employed in institutions with statutory duties for the supervision/regulation of banks, insurance companies, mortgage lenders and other financial institutions since 1996.

	Institutions							
	Self-regulating organisations							
	PIA	*IMRO*	*SFA*	*Securities and Investments Board*[1]	*Building Societies Commission*	*Friendly Societies Commission*	*Central Office of the Registry of Friendly Societies*	*Financial Services Authority*
					n/a			
					[2]168			
1996–97	n/a	n/a	n/a		—			
					n/a			
					[2]162			
1997–98	n/a	n/a	n/a		185			
					—			
					[2]112			
1998–99	—	—	—		[3]1,768			
1999–2000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	[4,5]2,548
2000–01	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	[6]2,156
2001–02	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	[7,8]2,196
2002–03	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	[7]2,288

	Self-regulating organisations			Institutions				
	PIA	IMRO	SFA	Securities and Investments Board[1]	Building Societies Commission	Friendly Societies Commission	Central Office of the Registry of Friendly Societies	Financial Services Authority
2003–04	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	[7]2,312
2004–05	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	[7]2,467
2005–06	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	[7]2,826

n/a = Not available.

[1] Securities and Investments Board—a private limited company formerly reporting to the Chancellor of the Exchequer with responsibility for the regulation of the UK investment market in accordance with the Financial Services Act 1986, was replaced by the Financial Services Authority (FSA) in October 1997.

[2] Government Expenditure Plans 2000–01 to 2001–02 CM 4615.

[3] FSA Annual Report 1998–99.

[4] FSA Annual Report 1999–2000.

[5] In 1998, 1,464 staff transferred from the three SROs, the Bank of England, and FSA(SIB). A further 142 transferred on 1 January 1999 from the Insurance Directorate of HM Treasury, the Registry of Friendly Societies/Friendly Societies Commission/Building Societies Commission and the Treasury Solicitors.

[6] From the FSA's annual report 2000–01 and was the average number of staff employed by or contracted to work for the FSA.

[7] Full-time equivalent at 31 March.

[8] Until 1 December 2001 ('N2'), the date at which the FSA assumed its responsibilities under FSMA, the FSA carried out and provided staff to support, under contract, the supervision and enforcement functions of a number of financial services regulators, including the self-regulating organisations (SROs); SFA, PIA, and IMRO. At N2, all of the functions of these financial regulators were transferred to the FSA when it became the single statutory regulator of financial services in the UK.

Tax Credits (Overpayments)

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the *(a)* level of overpayments and *(b)* cost to the Exchequer was of (i) interest foregone on overpayments and (ii) written-off overpayments of child tax credit in each of the last three years for which information is available; and what his most recent estimate is of the cost of administration of (A) the child tax credit system and (B) overpayments. [63343]

Dawn Primarolo: In answer to *(a)* for the level of overpayments, I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Mid-Sussex (Mr. Soames) on 15 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 2164W.

In answer to *(b)* (i) for the interest foregone on overpayments, the information is not available.

For answer to *(b)* (ii) for the level of overpayments written off, I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws) on 18 April 2006 (63043).

For answer to (A) for the most recent estimate of the cost of the administration of the tax credit system, I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Vale of York (Miss McIntosh) on 17 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 723W.

For answer to (B) for the most recent estimate of the cost of the administration of overpayments, the information is not available.

World Bank

Lynne Jones: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on his proposal for a $20 billion target at the World Bank for investment into alternative sources of energy, energy efficiency and adaptation to climate change in developing countries; and what sources of finance he proposes to make available from the UK. [63218]

John Healey: Climate change and access to energy are global problems that need a global response. Maximising energy efficiency (in both the production and use of energy) and diversification of energy sources and technologies has both environmental and developmental benefits. Both of these are crucial for developing countries, which are more vulnerable to rising oil prices and the adverse impacts of climate change.

There is an estimated annual $60 billion shortfall in energy investment in developing countries. This is why at Gleneagles the G8 asked the World Bank and other Multilateral Development Banks to develop a framework to increase investment in cleaner and more efficient energy in developing countries and to address the need for more investment to support adaptation to climate change. The World Bank has made good progress on this work and will present proposals for its component of the framework to the Development Committee at the spring meetings in Washington D.C. this month. The Government believes this framework presents a good opportunity to leverage more public and private investment in clean energy and encourage more effective use of existing financing instruments.

At the spring meetings the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary of State for International Development will propose an initial annual target of $20 billion for the investment framework. We expect this to include public and private sector investment, non-concessional lending from the Multilateral Development Banks, and grant and concessional financing from relevant mechanisms. Concessional financing from donors, including the UK, will play an important role in the framework. We expect the World Bank to set out financing required from all sources in order to leverage $20 billion in total investment.

World Cup (Complimentary Tickets)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many complimentary tickets his Department has received for games taking place at the FIFA World Cup 2006 in Germany. [63900]

John Healey: None.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Correspondence

Sarah Teather: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs when she will reply to the letters dated *(a)* 27 October 2005, *(b)* 30 January 2006 and *(c)* 9 February 2006 from the hon. Member for Brent, East on access to legal help for Mrs. French-Walsh. [64280]

Ms Harman: The Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs, my hon. Friend the Member for Lewisham, East (Bridget Prentice), responded to the hon. Member's letters of 30 January and 9 February on 7 March. A copy has been forwarded to her. My Department has no record of receiving her letter of 27 October.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many and what proportion of *(a)* staff and *(b)* new staff employed in (i) her Department and (ii) each of the agencies for which she has responsibility were registered as disabled in each of the last three years for which data is available. [61375]

Ms Harman: The Cabinet Office collects and publishes annually statistical information on the Civil Service by Department. These include data on the number of staff in departments who have declared a disability.

Declaration of a disability is voluntary.

The latest available information at April 2004 is available in the Library and on the Civil Service website and the following addresses: http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management/statistics/publications/xls/disability_apr04_4nov04.xls for data relating to 1 April 2004, and http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management/statistics/archive/index.asp for previous reporting periods.

Electoral Registration (West Lancashire)

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what percentage of young people in West Lancashire were not on the electoral register in *(a)* 1997, *(b)* 2001 and *(c)* 2005; and what steps her Department is taking to increase the proportion registered. [64114]

Bridget Prentice: Other than for those due to turn 18 before the next statutory annual publication of the register, electoral registers in the UK do not identify the age of electors and no record is kept of categories of electors upon that basis. The Electoral Administration Bill currently before Parliament includes a new duty on electoral registration officers to take all necessary steps to ensure comprehensive registers. The Department for Constitutional Affairs (DCA) is actively working with committed organisations to promote awareness of voter registration at the national and local levels, in particular it has delivered a pan-London campaign ("1824 Collective") directed at London's 'urban youth'. Lessons learnt from these initiatives will be used to inform the DCA's ongoing programme of work in democratic engagement (which includes raising voter registration levels). At present, DCA is working with the Department for Education and Skills, student unions, universities and colleges and local authorities to encourage eligible student populations to register to vote. It is hoped that the introduction of 'citizenship' into the school curriculum will prove to be a major step in raising awareness of young people in the democratic process and can be expected to develop further over time.

FIFA World Cup

Mr. Hands: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many complimentary tickets her Department has received for games taking place at the FIFA World Cup 2006 in Germany. [63910]

Bridget Prentice: The Department for Constitutional Affairs has not received any complimentary tickets for World Cup matches taking place in Germany this summer.

Legal Aid

Paul Rowen: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what discussions she has had with the Legal Services Commission on recovering payments from legal aid solicitors. [62751]

Ms Harman: It is the duty of the Legal Services Commission (LSC) to recover payments owed to it by solicitors when it is appropriate to do so, and forms part of its normal operational function.

Statutory Measures (EU)

Mr. Carswell: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many and what percentage of statutory measures passed between *(a)* 1998 and 2004 and *(b)* 1 May 2004 and 1 May 2006 had their origin in (i) EU regulations, (ii) EU directives and (iii) other EU legislation. [64267]

Ms Harman: This information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

TRANSPORT

Buses

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many accidents involving buses were recorded in England in each year since 1997, broken down by region. [63977]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of personal injury road accidents, involving at least one bus[1] between 1997 and 2004 (the latest year for which data is available) is given in the table.

Number of personal injury accidents involving at least one bus[1], by English Government Office regions, 1997–2004

	Year of Accident							
Government Office Regions	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
North East	728	677	687	580	584	579	614	602
North West/Merseyside	1,454	1,549	1,503	1,437	1,478	1,301	1,210	1,184
Yorkshire/Humberside	1,327	1,340	1,402	1,320	1,197	1,142	1,068	1,015
East Midlands	528	551	586	551	571	499	535	473
West Midlands	789	807	867	865	860	811	844	719
Eastern	552	596	635	576	494	497	495	486
South East	966	988	999	1028	1006	955	914	985
London	2,778	2,954	3,083	3,177	3,146	2,864	3,097	2,939
South West	511	572	593	579	619	581	603	582
England	9,633	10,034	10,355	10,113	9,955	9,229	9,380	8,985

[1] Buses including coaches

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many bus services operated in Taunton constituency for each year since 1997. [64071]

Dr. Ladyman: The information is available only at disproportionate costs.

Car Sharing

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what *(a)* financial and *(b)* other measures he is taking to promote car sharing; and if he will make a statement. [63566]

Dr. Ladyman: The Government encourages local authorities to promote car sharing through a range of initiatives, including:

Spending over £100 million to 2008 on the Travelling to School Initiative;

Spending £10 million over five years on the Sustainable Travel Towns Initiative;

Researching and disseminating publications such as "Making car sharing and car clubs work" and "Making Smarter Choices Work"; and

Encouraging the inclusion of car sharing and car club schemes in the Local Transport Plans that local authorities submitted on 31 March this year.

It is not possible however to disaggregate from these projects the amount spent specifically on car sharing.

Through the Highways Agency, the Government are also taking direct measures to encourage and facilitate car sharing. This includes implementing workplace travel plans on the strategic road network and piloting the use of dedicated car share lanes.

Climate Change

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what input his Department had into the preparation of Cm 6764, "Climate Change: The UK Programme 2006" in respect of *(a)* aircraft passenger travel, *(b)* aircraft freight transport, *(c)* road passenger transport and *(d)* road freight transport. [64303]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department for Transport was fully involved with all stages of the preparation of "Climate Change: The UK Programme 2006". As part of this, the Department was an active member of the Climate Change Project Board, the Sustainable Energy Policy Network and the Interdepartmental Analysts Group.

As a result of the transport measures in this and the previous Climate Change Programme, carbon emissions will be reduced by 6.8 million tonnes, 13 per cent. lower than they would have been had we not acted at all.

Council Workers Strike

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he has estimated the cost to the transport industry of the council workers strike of 28 March 2006 as a consequence of closures and reduced capacity at bridges and tunnels. [63971]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department has not undertaken any analysis of these specific costs.

EU Regulations

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans his Department has made to inform UK lorry drivers of their obligation to work on Co-ordinated Universal Time when the new EU digital tachograph regulations come into force. [63972]

Dr. Ladyman: Universal Time Co-Ordinated (UTC) is the same as Greenwich Mean Time. All records made by a digital tachograph vehicle unit will be made against UTC, irrespective of the vehicle's country of origin or what country the vehicle is in. Drivers using vehicles equipped with digital tachographs need to understand that vehicle units record in UTC and the implications of this should be explained as part of the overall package of guidance and training available to industry from the tachograph manufacturers and other organisations. Vehicle units display both local time and UTC; guidance on how to set the vehicle unit display to local time is contained within the user handbooks provided by tachograph manufacturers and should normally be part of any training package aimed at drivers.

Both the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA) and the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency have arranged seminars to help industry better understand the implications of digital tachographs, including UTC. In addition, VOSA's digital tachograph website—www.digitaltachograph.gov.uk—contains general information about digital tachographs.

Fuel Duty Exemption

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the cost of extending the existing fuel duty exemption for buses to coaches. [62445]

Dr. Ladyman: There is no fuel duty exemption for buses. This Department however does pay Bus Service Operators Grant to operators of local bus services and many community transport services in respect of the fuel used in providing those services. This recognises the particular role of such services in providing a local public transport network and contributing to the Government's objectives of reducing congestion, improving the environment and increasing social inclusion.

We have made no estimate of the cost of extending this grant to coaches, though it would clearly be substantial.

Government Car Service

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Lewes of 13 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1886W, on the Government Car Service, what make and model of car has been made available to each Government Minister; how many hours a day a chauffeur is available to them; what the monthly cost is of this provision; and how much is accounted for by *(a)* running costs of the vehicle, *(b)* costs of the chauffeur and *(c)* all other costs. [63981]

Dr. Ladyman: The Prime Minister's guidance "Travel by Ministers" sets out what official cars are available for Ministers. The total contracted cost of providing ministerial cars in 2005–06 was £5,683,100. A breakdown of the figures in the format requested is not readily available and could be obtained only at a disproportionate cost. However, the contracted costs for each Ministerial department for the year were:

2005–06

Department	*Number of cars*	*Annual contracted value (£)*
Cabinet Office[1]	7	446,200
ODPM	6	390,900
DCMS	4	265,500
DfES	7	436,600
DFID	2	124,400
DTI	6	377,800
FCO	4	340,700
Department of Health	6	365,700
HM Treasury	5	330,600
Home Office	7	461,600
DCA	4	268,200
Law Officers	2	127,400
MOD	1	163,800
Northern Ireland Office	5	433,000
Privy Council Office	3	140,200
Scotland Office[2,3]	1	58,900
Wales Office[2]	1	72,900
Defra	5	322,800
DfT	4	259,800
DWP	6	396,200
Total	86	5,683,100

[1] Cabinet Office figures include cars for the Prime Minister's Office, the Leader of the House of Lords, the Chief Whip in the House of Commons and the Minister without Portfolio.

[2] The right hon. Alistair Darling MP is both Secretary of State for Transport and Secretary of State for Scotland. All his GCS costs are met by the Department for Transport. The right hon. Peter Hain MP is both Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and Secretary of State for Wales. All his GCS costs are met by the Northern Ireland Office.

[3] The GCS car and driver provided to the Scotland Office is shared by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, David Cairns MP and the Advocate-General.

Heathrow

Colin Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what provision he has made for a public consultation on the revised assumptions to be used in the Stage Two air quality modelling assessments for Heathrow. [63646]

Derek Twigg: The air quality technical panel's review of airport-related emissions at Heathrow has been completed and we expect to publish a full report shortly. This will comment on emissions sources and recommend how these can best be represented and modelled in future years. The work has been independently peer reviewed and its findings will inform the next stage of assessment and subsequent consultation.

Colin Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much has been allocated to his Department's project for the Sustainable Development of Heathrow, including associated staffing costs and the use of consultants. [63647]

Derek Twigg: Provision of around £1 million has been made to cover work to date, mainly on the technical review of air quality, noise assesment and surface access modelling. This takes no account of Departmental staffing costs, which are not separately identified. Expenditure in the coming year could be of a similar order.

High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what research his Department has undertaken into the effectiveness of existing high occupancy vehicle lanes in *(a)* the UK and *(b)* other developed countries; and if he will publish it. [62631]

Dr. Ladyman: In November 2004, the Highways Agency commissioned consultants KBR to produce a report entitled 'High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes Feasibility Study' looking at potential sites for car sharing lanes on the motorway network. This report is available on the agency's website www.highways.gov.uk .

Highways Agency

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many plants and shrubs have been planted by the Highways Agency in each year since 1997; and at what cost. [63659]

Dr. Ladyman: The numbers of trees and shrubs planted by the Highways Agency in each planting season (November-March) from 1997 to 2005 and their cost are:

	Number (million)	*Cost (£ million)*
1997–98	1.2	12.6
1998–99	0.9	9.9
1999–2000	1.1	12.1
2000–01	1.0	11.2

	Number (million)	Cost (£ million)
2001–02	0.9	10.3
2002–03	1.0	11.5
2003–04	0.95	10.9
2004–05	1.0	11.5

Figures for 2005–06 are not yet available.

Infrastructure

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans costing over £5 million there have been for improving rail infrastructure in the East Dorset area, including Bournemouth, over the last four years. [63569]

Derek Twigg: Network Rail has responsibility for the maintenance and improvement of railway infrastructure, working within the resources available to them, as determined by the Office of Rail Regulation. The Department does not have the detailed records of expenditure over individual sections of route.

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans costing over £5 million there are for improving road infrastructure in East Dorset, including the Bournemouth area, over the next four years. [63570]

Dr. Ladyman: The Poole Bridge Regeneration Initiative was provisionally approved for funding through the Local Transport Programme in 2001 and is currently being progressed by Poole borough council through the necessary statutory procedures.

There are no other major road infrastructure schemes costing over £5 million currently approved by the Department in East Dorset, including the Bournemouth area.

London and Continental Railways

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the Ministers and officials involved in discussions on the possible takeover of London and Continental Railways between the date that Adrian Montague's first approach was made to his Department and the first public statement by the Department about the possible takeover. [62446]

Derek Twigg: Various Ministers and Officials have regular discussions on such matters relating to the Channel Tunnel Rail Link as may be relevant at the time.

Penalty Fares

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to increase penalty fares on public transport. [62692]

Derek Twigg: The details of penalty fare regimes vary across modes and between different operators. For those schemes where the penalty fare is set centrally by Government, the minimum fine was raised from £10 to £20 in 2005. We keep penalty fare levels under review and continue to assist operators where necessary in drawing up their revenue protection strategies.

Pensioner Travel

Mr. Beith: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether the arrangement for free bus travel for pensioners from 2008 will include arrangements for pensioners in border areas to travel into Scotland. [62694]

Dr. Ladyman: The Government will be looking at the detailed arrangements closely, and discuss with devolved Administrations this issue ahead of the 2008 introduction date.

Ports

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on proposals for a new container port in the United Kingdom; and what estimate he has made of the likely cost. [63270]

Dr. Ladyman: Earlier this year the Department approved container terminal developments at Bathside Bay, Harwich, and at Felixstowe. We are aware of three further proposals for significant container port expansion which are at differing stages of the decision-making process. The Under-Secretary of State for Transport my hon. Friend the Member for Halton (Derek Twigg) also indicated that he was minded to approve the London Gateway proposal; an application for expansion at the Seaforth Terminal on the Mersey will be considered at a public inquiry later this month, and the Department has been given formal notice of an intended application by PD Teesport for their Northern Gateway project.

Port expansion is funded exclusively from private sector sources and we have made no estimate of the costs.

Priority Bus Lanes

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many miles of priority bus lanes have been created in each year since 1997 *(a)* in total and *(b)* broken down by local authority area. [61742]

Dr. Ladyman: A table showing the mileages of priority bus lanes created in England in each year since the financial year 2001–02 has been placed in the House Library. Estimates are not available for years prior to 2001–02.

Public Transport

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what measures the Department takes to ensure that *(a)* bus companies and *(b)* train companies provide important public transport services on routes which are not financially profitable; [59922]

(2) what measures the Department takes to provide rural areas with affordable public transport when the services provided by local companies are limited. [59923]

Dr. Ladyman: There are a number of mechanisms to ensure that bus and train services are provided on routes that are not financially profitable.

Subsidy of non-commercial bus services is provided primarily through local authorities who have the best understanding of local travel needs and the level of bus services required.

However, since 1998 nearly £450 million has been allocated by this Department to local authorities specifically for the support of rural bus services. The main element of this is Rural Bus Subsidy Grant which will provide £54.3 million in 2006–07 and which supports some 2000 services.

Last year we announced "Kickstart" support, totalling £20 million, for 43 projects involving new and improved bus services which will become viable through growth in passenger numbers after an initial period of pump-priming from Government funds. 11 of these schemes will serve areas which are mainly rural in character.

Demand-responsive, flexibly routed and community transport services have a particularly significant role to play in rural areas. We have encouraged their development in particular by Rural Bus Challenge competitions held from 1998 to 2003, which have supported some 300 rural transport projects. In addition, many rural community transport services have since 2002 been eligible to receive Bus Service Operators Grant and regulations were introduced in 2004 to enable flexibly routed bus services to be registered with the Traffic Commissioner.

We are expecting all local transport authorities to include accessibility strategies in their next Local Transport Plans. Our guidance to authorities makes clear that the strategies should take account of the particular needs of rural communities.

From 1 April this year people aged 60 and over and disabled people in rural and urban areas alike are entitled to free off-peak bus travel within their local authority boundary.

For rail services these are either directly supported by the Department or through Passenger Transport Executives, Transport for London and the Scottish Executive. Some £5.8 billion of Government funds will be spent on the railway in 2006–07.

The Government's Community Rail Development Strategy seeks to improve the value of local and rural rail services to the taxpayer and the communities they serve. This pragmatic approach includes greater flexibility in the setting of fares and timetables to ensure that the resources available for running the service are used as effectively as possible. Part of the strategy involves forging closer links between the community and the railway through community rail partnerships (or rail development companies) that bring together local stakeholders and the railway to jointly develop services.

Rail Security

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the *(a)* cost and *(b)* practicality of implementation of extending security screening arrangements to mainline railway stations. [63246]

Derek Twigg: A trial of a millimetre wave body scanner took place at Paddington station in January and February. This is the first in a series of trials of different screening technologies and techniques on the national railway and London Underground networks that the Secretary of State announced on 2 November 2005.

The objective of the trials is to assess the capabilities of existing screening technologies and procedures in railway environments where conditions are very different from those in an airport terminal building.

An assessment of the costs and practicalities of the screening technology and procedures trialled at Paddington is under way, and will also be carried out in respect of the forthcoming trials. We will announce our findings once all the trials have been completed later this year.

Railways

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to open new commuter services on railway lines that are solely used for freight. [61209]

Derek Twigg: There are no committed schemes to introduce passenger services on any existing freight-only railways at present.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many stations have been *(a)* opened and *(b)* closed on the rail network in each year since 1997; and what the reason was in each case. [62634]

Derek Twigg: 39 stations have been opened since 1997 as follows:

	Number of stations opened
2005	8
2004	0
2003	2
2002	3
2001	1
2000	5
1999	5
1998	10
1997	5
Total	39

Four stations have been closed since 1997 and 13 stations have been replaced by either: light rail, tram, or a station in a new location.

The four stations which have been closed are:

Etruria in 2005 because the number of passengers using it was low and its retention did not represent good value for money.

Sinfin North and Sinfin Central in 1998 because passenger demand was low and their retention did not represent good value for money.

Pendleton station in 1998, which had not been in use since 1994 following severe damage by an arson attack: Passenger demand had been low prior to the damage, and repair did not represent good value for money.

Roads

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the percentage of total capacity on the motorways that is used. [63330]

Dr. Ladyman: No estimates of the total capacity of the motorway network have been made nor what percentage of this capacity is currently used. On most

motorways, the traffic demand reaches capacity for a relatively small proportion of the day, usually during the morning or evening peak periods, or both.

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the cost to the *(a)* environment and *(b)* economy of (i) North East Hampshire Constituency and (ii) South East England of not progressing the A3 Hindhead Improvement Scheme as soon as possible. [63830]

Dr. Ladyman: Under our appraisal criteria all major transport schemes are assessed for their impact on the environment and the economy. In the case of the A3 Hindhead scheme no separate assessment is available of the impact of the scheme specifically on the North East Hampshire Constituency nor on the South East of England.

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much money the Government granted each local authority for the maintenance of local roads in each year since 1997. [63978]

Dr. Ladyman: Capital maintenance funding is allocated to local highways authorities for investment in their highway network, including its structures and street lighting. Details for the funding allocated for capital highway maintenance to all English local authorities outside London since 1997 have been placed in the House Library. It is for each local authority to determine how their allocations are spent, in line with their priorities.

The Revenue Support Grant (RSG) from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister provides revenue funding for highway maintenance. However, RSG is unhypothecated and may be applied by local authorities to any services.

Funding for local authority maintenance on local roads in London is a matter for the Mayor.

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much has been awarded in compensation to people who have suffered blight from road noise in each year since 1997. [63661]

Dr. Ladyman: The Highways Agency does not break down financial information on claims for compensation specifically for noise intrusion, resulting from the use of new or improved trunk roads.

The following amounts have been awarded by the Highways Agency under part I of the Land Compensation Act 1973 as compensation for the reduction in value of property caused by physical factors (including noise). These gross figures include interest on the compensation and agents' fees:

	£ million
1997–98	22.09
1998–99	15.23
1999–2000	26.54
2000–01	31.47
2001–02	29.43
2002–03	25.59
2003–04	49.96
2004–05	29.22
2005–06	48.57

Local highway authorities follow the same statutory process under part I of the Land Compensation Act 1973 for the payment of noise compensation following the construction or alteration of non-trunk roads. Compensation is funded from local authority revenue and is not reflected in figures given to this question.

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his projections are for traffic growth on *(a)* motorways, *(b)* trunk roads and *(c)* detrunked roads for the next (i) five, (ii) 10, (iii) 20 and (iv) 50 years. [63980]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department publishes projections for 25 years, using a base year of 2000 to forecast traffic growth up to 2025. The latest projections were published in 2005, consistent with the Future of Transport White Paper, projecting a 33–40 per cent. growth in traffic from 2000 to 2010, for all vehicle types on Inter-Urban Highways Agency roads in England and a 23–29 per cent. growth for the same period for all road types for England. For the period 2000 to 2015, growth is 40–51 per cent. for Inter-Urban roads and 29–38 per cent. for all roads. The projections for 2000 to 2025 are 51–69 per cent. and 38–53 per cent. respectively.

The projections currently do not differentiate between motorways, trunk roads and detrunked roads. Traditionally, motorway traffic growth has been higher than other trunk roads, suggesting motorway traffic growth would be at the upper end of the projection ranges. More detail on the projections can be found in the 'Future of Transport: Modelling and Analysis' available on the Department's website:

http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_about/documents/downloadable/dft_about_036814.pdf.

Road Rage

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) whether he has made an assessment of the impact of road rage on drivers; [63974]

(2) what steps his Department *(a)* has taken and *(b)* plans to take to help combat and prevent road rage. [63975]

Dr. Ladyman: The term "road rage" is used to cover a wide range of aggressive behaviour. Unless a serious incident takes place the police do not become involved. It is not therefore practicable to assess the impact on drivers.

Rule 125 of the Highway Code gives guidance on being careful of and considerate towards other road users.

Those who drive aggressively may be prosecuted for offences such as careless and inconsiderate driving (section 3 of the Road Traffic Act 1988, as amended by the Road Traffic Act 1991). Conviction may result in disqualification, a fine of up to £2,500 and an endorsement of 3–9 penalty points. Courts also have the discretion to require offenders to retake the driving test, including the theory test.

Seat Belts

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 27 March 2006,

Official Report, column 632W on seat belts, if he will list those cars sold in the United Kingdom which are fitted with a seat belt reminder; and if he will make a statement. [64241]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department does not collect this information.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate his Department has made of the number of *(a)* males and *(b)* females who do not regularly wear a seat belt; and if he will make a statement. [64242]

Dr. Ladyman: I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 16 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 942W. The observational survey report mentioned in that gives seat belt wearing rates by gender at Table 3.

SPECS Cameras

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many SPECS cameras are in place; and how many orders have been placed by *(a)* the Highways Agency and *(b)* Safety Camera Partnerships for additional cameras to be delivered in the next 12 months. [62239]

Dr. Ladyman: There are currently 16 SPECS camera systems operating at core sites within the National Safety Camera Programmes for England and Wales and Scotland. There are currently no additional sites planned in the next 12 months.

Safety Camera Partnerships are also allowed to install SPECS systems to enforce temporary reduced speed limits during road works. We do not hold records of these installations centrally.

Station Closures (Newcastle to Carlisle)

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many stations on the Newcastle to Carlisle railway are to be closed; for what reason a decision was taken to close Wetheral station; what economic and social case was made for closing *(a)* Wetheral and *(b)* Brampton stations; and what measures are being considered to avoid congestion on the railway network around Carlisle. [59683]

Derek Twigg: No stations will close on the Newcastle to Carlisle line. Wetheral and Brampton stations will remain open. Network Rail and train operators are considering measures to relieve congestion on rail routes around Carlisle, reflecting in particular the recent growth in freight traffic.

Strategic Road Network

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many tunnels *(a)* under and *(b)* over the strategic road network have been built for the use of (i) animals and (ii) pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders in each year since 1997; and at what total cost in each case. [63660]

Dr. Ladyman: The Highways Agency has constructed a total of 92 over-bridges and 47 under-bridges or subways since 1997 at an overall cost of just over £122 million. The number and the costs of each type of crossing are given in the following tables.

Bridge type	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*2006*	*Total*
Bridleway Underbridge	0	1	5	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	9
Bridleway Overbridge	1	3	3	0	1	2	0	4	0	2	16
Footbridge Overbridge	6	13	12	7	4	5	14	4	10	1	76
Pedestrian Subway	1	3	6	1	2	3	13	1	0	3	33
Underpass	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	5
Grand total	9	20	27	8	7	12	27	11	11	7	139

£ million

Bridge type	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*2006*	*Grand total*
Bridleway Overbridge	0.482	3.822	2.659	0	1.104	2.287	0	6.146	0	1.698	18.198
Bridleway Underbridge	0	0.619	6.735	0	0	3.824	0	1.269	0	0	12.447
Footbridge Overbridge	7.298	11.962	7.466	4.001	2.470	3.805	9.409	5.736	6.520	2.249	60.916
Pedestrian Subway	0.047	1.794	1.256	0.152	0.398	0.651	5.857	0.384	0	1.405	11.944
Underpass	11.067	0	4.759	0	0	0	0	0.484	0.939	1.332	18.581
Grand Total	18.894	18.197	22.875	4.153	3.972	10.567	15.266	14.019	7.459	6.684	122.086

Structures that are below 900 mm in diameter such as those aimed at supporting bio-diversity are not separately recorded and are therefore not included in the above tables. Such smaller structures are normally delivered as part of much larger schemes.

Traffic Lights

Mr. Heath: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the total energy consumption per hour of traffic lights in *(a)* London and *(b)* England. [63774]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department for Transport does not collect data on numbers of traffic signals (traffic lights) and so has no accurate figures of the overall energy consumption.

Transport for London is responsible for all the traffic signals in London and estimates the energy consumption to be 3 MW/h.

The Department has previously estimated the number and energy consumption of traffic signals in UK but has not produced a figure for England alone. The likely power consumption was estimated to be of the order

15.8 and 21.5 MW/h (in 2000). There were many assumptions made in producing these estimates and they should be regarded as indicative figures only.

Train Operating Companies (Pension Fund Deficits)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which train operating companies have pension fund deficits; what the deficit is in each case; and what recent discussions he has held on the matter with *(a)* train operating companies and *(b)* others. [59065]

Derek Twigg: The results of the 31 December 2004 valuation of the Railways Pension Scheme (RPS) have revealed past service deficits for 29 of the 32 train operating company sections of the RPS have deficits, the other three sections are in surplus. Details of the deficit amounts and the funding level for each of these sections is shown in the following table:

	Train operating company section of the RPS	*Past service deficit (£ million)*	*Past service funding (percentage)*
1	Anglia Railways	3,160	92.3
2	Arriva Trains Wales	3,732	84.9
3	Arriva Trains Wales (ex-Central Trains)	311	92.3
4	Arriva Trains Wales (ex-Great Western Trains)	253	94.5
5	Arriva Trains Wales (ex-North Western Trains)	710	105.1
6	Arriva Trains Wales (ex-Wales & West)	2,576	93.9
7	C2c Rail	1,407	96.3
8	Central Trains	11,371	92.3
9	Cross Country Trains	12,624	87.2
10	First Great Western Link	5,269	91.3
11	Gatwick Express	824	96.1
12	Great Eastern Railway	9,778	90.1
13	Great North Eastern Railway	19,578	89.8
14	Great Western Trains Company Ltd.	18,745	90
15	Island Line Ltd.	14	100.7
16	London Eastern Railway (West Anglia)	1,969	94.1
17	Merseyrail	5,905	90.4
18	Midland Mainline	6,467	89.8
19	Northern—ex North East	22,156	86.7
20	Northern—ex North West	6,334	95.3
21	ScotRail Railways	1,471	100.7
22	Silverlink Train Services Ltd.	7,856	89.4
23	South Eastern Trains	4,244	98.2
24	South West Trains Ltd.	44,147	85.8
25	Southern	12,530	93.3
26	Thameslink Rail	4,630	89.8
27	The Chiltern Railway Company Ltd.	4,672	87.1
28	TransPennine Express (former Arriva Trains Northern)	368	98.2
29	TransPennine Express (former North Western Trains)	549	94.5
30	Wales & West Passenger Trains Ltd.	10,023	84.5
31	West Anglia Great Northern Railway	7,925	90.8
32	West Coast Trains Ltd.	9,876	95.1

It is for the employers (in consultation with their employees) to agree revised contribution rates with the trustees of the RPS in the light of the recent valuation. Ministers meet regularly with train operating companies and other rail industry representatives. A range of issues are discussed.

Train Timetable (West Country)

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what criteria the Department used in deciding to specify in the Greater Western Franchise that the first train from London to Totnes should not arrive before midday on weekday services. [60181]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 21 March 2006]:* The specification for the Greater Western franchise was set to achieve value for money for the taxpayer and the travelling public and provide the best service for the greatest number of passengers across the franchise.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what criteria the Department used in deciding to specify in the Greater Western Franchise that trains between London and the West Country must call at Reading, with particular reference to *(a)* the Golden Hind and *(b)* the Cornish Riviera Express. [60183]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 21 March 2006]:* Reading is a significant rail interchange, and calls there for London to West of England trains enhance their value for money. The specification for the Great Western franchise aims to provide the best service for the greatest number of passengers across the franchise.

Transport Projects

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what scoring of projects has been undertaken by the Government Office of the South West in relation to *(a)* the building of the new Gloucester Parkway Station, *(b)* the improvements to the A417 between Brockworth and Cowley and *(c)* re-doubling the track between Kemble and Swindon. [63587]

Derek Twigg: The Department requires all proposed major schemes to undergo rigorous scrutiny before funding can be agreed.

The Department has an appraisal system that all major schemes need to complete before funding can be allocated. Government Office for the South West provides advice throughout the process.

The latest position on the schemes specified are as follows:

(a) The Gloucester Parkway Station scheme was submitted by Gloucestershire county council in July 2005. The Department is currently assessing the scheme and an announcement is expected later this year.

(b) This is a Highways Agency scheme that was included in the regional funding allocation advice to Ministers in January 2006.

(c) Network Rail is responsible for track improvements between Kemble and Swindon.

Transport Subsidies

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much has been spent on subsidies for *(a)* rail, *(b)* air and *(c)* bus travel in England in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [63503]

Derek Twigg: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given by the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State my hon. Friend the Member for Regent's Park and Kensington, North (Ms Buck), on 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1621–22W.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his answer of 13 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1891W, on West Midlands Passenger Transport Authority, how much of that bus subsidy is from his Department. [63579]

Dr. Ladyman: Between 1998–99 and 2004–05 the West Midlands Passenger Transport Authority was allocated by the Department a total of £3.9 million in the form of Rural Bus Subsidy Grant and awards under the Urban and Rural Bus Challenge competitions.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much subsidy for public transport was allocated by *(a)* Hampshire county council, *(b)* Portsmouth city council and *(c)* Southampton city council in each of the last five years in (i) cash and (ii) real terms. [64044]

Dr. Ladyman: The amount of subsidy allocated to public transport by these Councils is a matter for them.

Travel to School

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his Answer of 10 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1788W, on travel to school, what percentage of *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary school children travelled to school by (i) walking, (ii) cycling, (iii) bus, (iv) car and (v) another method in each year since 1997. [62629]

Dr. Ladyman: Data from the National Travel Survey on the percentage of trips in 1996–98 to 2004 made by children travelling to and from school by mode and age are given in the tables.

Trips to and from school[1] by main mode, 1996–98 to 2004, Great Britain

Percentage

	1996–98	*1997–99*	*1998–2000*	*Age 5–10 1999–01*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Walk[2]	55	53	56	54	51	53	50
Bicycle	—	—	—	1	1	1	1
Local/private bus	7	7	7	6	6	6	7
Car/van	36	38	36	39	41	39	41
Other	2	2	1	1	1	1	1
All modes	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Percentage

	1996–98	*1997–99*	*1998–2000*	*Age 11–16 1999–01*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Walk[2]	43	42	43	43	38	41	44
Bicycle	2	2	2	2	2	2	3
Local/private bus	32	32	32	32	33	32	29
Car/van	21	21	19	19	24	23	22
Other	3	3	4	4	3	3	3
All modes	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

[1] Trips of under 50 miles only.
[2] Short walks believed to be under-recorded in 2002 and 2003 compared with earlier years.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what percentage of *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary school children in (i) Southend, (ii) Essex, (iii) the Metropolitan police area of London and (iv) Hertfordshire travel to school by (A) foot, *(b)* bicycle (C) bus, (D) car and (E) other forms of transport. [64243]

Dr. Ladyman: Data from the National Travel Survey on the percentage of trips in 2002–04 made by children travelling to and from school by mode and age in Greater London (including City of London) are given in the table.

Percentage of trips to and from school[1] by age and main mode, Greater London, 2002–04

Percentage

	5 to 10 years	*11 to 16 years*
Walk	48	30
Bicycle	0	1
Car/van	41	20
Bus	8	39
Other	1	10
All modes	100	100

[1] Trips of less than 50 miles only.

Sample sizes are too small to give results for Essex, Hertfordshire or Southend-on-Sea, and are not available for the Metropolitan police area.

World Cup (Complimentary Tickets)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many complimentary tickets his Department has received for games taking place at the FIFA World Cup 2006 in Germany. [63897]

Derek Twigg: The Department and its Agencies have not received any tickets for the forth-coming FIFA World Cup in Germany.

World Heritage Sites

David Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which Minister in his Department has responsibility for issues relating to World Heritage sites. [63480]

Derek Twigg: Lead responsibility for policy on World Heritage sites rests with my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport works closely with relevant Government Departments on all issues affecting World Heritage sites. My right hon. Friend the

Secretary of State for Transport has responsibility for all forms of transport policy including issues concerning World Heritage sites which fall within the Department's policy remit, with the support of his ministerial team.

WORK AND PENSIONS

16 Hour Rule

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what recent representations he has received on the 16 hour rule; [62482]

(2) whether he plans to reform the 16 hour rule. [63278]

Mr. Plaskitt: I have received numerous representations in response to the Foyer Federation's 'Give us a chance' campaign. I have also received other correspondence and parliamentary questions about the 16 hour rule. In addition, I have accepted an invitation from the joint chairs of the all parliamentary group on foyers and on youth affairs to attend a meeting to discuss the 16 hour housing benefit rule. This provides both an opportunity to listen and advise what work is already in progress to identify how DWP and Jobcentre Plus can positively support people to study in order to improve their current educational attainment, leading to enhanced employment and career prospects.

Work to review the interaction between study rules and benefits is ongoing. One of the outcomes of the recent Social Exclusion report "Review of Financial Support, Supporting Young People to Achieve" is that from April 2006, if someone is in non-advanced education when they turn 19 they can continue to receive certain benefits, including income support, and therefore housing benefit, and education maintenance allowance until they have completed their current course of study or reach age 20.

This is clearly an improvement on the previous situation, but it is likely that there will still be some young people who have had to abandon their attempts to catch up on learning because they reach 20 before they have finished their course. Because of this, the Government are committed to keeping this new age limit under review. Additionally, we recognise that for some a different approach may be needed.

Consequently, from September as part of the new deal for skills we will be piloting in some Jobcentre Plus districts the effect of allowing low skilled jobseekers to take up full-time further education courses as a route into work when a lack of skills is considered to be a significant barrier.

Benefits

John Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in Easington constituency in receipt of benefits have access to a bank account. [62958]

Mr. Plaskitt: Information is not available in the format requested.

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many recipients of retirement pension in Edinburgh West constituency use Post Office card accounts. [64472]

Mr. Plaskitt: Information showing the number of DWP benefit and pension payment accounts paid by direct payment into a Post Office card account for each parliamentary constituency has been placed in the Library.

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in Edinburgh West constituency in receipt of benefits have access to a bank account. [64473]

Mr. Plaskitt: Information is not available in the format requested.

Child Support

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many parents with care who have *(a)* received and *(b)* applied for a Child Support Agency assessment are (i) not receiving maintenance and (ii) receiving less than £130 per week in benefit. [56979]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is the matter for the Chief Executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Hilary Reynolds:

In reply to your Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive. As the Chief Executive is unavailable, I am responding on his behalf.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many parents with care who have *(a)* received and *(b)* applied for a Child Support Agency assessment are (i) not receiving maintenance and (ii) receiving less than £130 per week in benefit.

At the end of December 2005, 1.5 million cases were registered with the Agency.

Of these, in 408,000 cases, the non resident parent had either made a payment via the Agency's collection service in the three months ending 31 December 2005, or a maintenance direct arrangement was in place.

739,000 cases have a maintenance assessment or calculation made.

Of these:

In 472,000 cases the calculation/assessment resulted in a nil liability, meaning that no maintenance was due;

In 130,000 cases payment was due via the Agency's collection service in the previous 3 months, but the non resident parent had not complied with this request;

In 136,000 cases a calculation or assessment that resulted in a positive maintenance liability (i.e they were due to pay maintenance) had been made, but the Agency had not yet requested payment from the non-resident parent in the 3 months ending 31 December 2005. Of these, 27,000 were new scheme applications still in the course of being processed.

At 31 December 2005 there were 300,000 applications still in the course of being processed, and had yet to receive a maintenance calculation or assessment. It should be noted that many of these cases will not progress to this latter stage of the process, as they may be closed, usually at the request of the parent with care, with the remainder being identified as being subject to a Reduced Benefit Decision; had Good Cause accepted; or actually being a change of circumstance in relation to an existing case rather than a new application.

In the 3 months ending 31 December 2005, in 61 per cent. of the 674,000 cases where a positive maintenance liability had been established, the non resident parent had either made a payment via the Agency's collection service, or a maintenance direct arrangement was in place.

Where the parent with care is on the old scheme and in receipt of Income Support or Jobseeker's Allowance (income based) the parent with care does not receive any of the maintenance paid, as it is retained by the State, and offset against expenditure on means tested benefits. We are not able to give a precise figure as to the number of the above cases in which this applies, due to limitations with currently available management information. We do know that around 80 per cent. of the total amount of maintenance collected by the Agency goes to the parent with care.

You also asked how many parents with care were receiving less than £130 per week in benefits. Information relating to the overall amount of social security benefits being received by CSA clients is not available.

Volumes of cases given in this response are rounded to the nearest thousand, which might mean that, due to rounding, components of the caseload might not sum to their respective totals.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his target is of the proportion of resident parents who should be receiving maintenance after applying to the Child Support Agency. [61856]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Hilary Reynolds:

In reply to your Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive. As the Chief Executive is unavailable, I am responding on his behalf.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what his target is of the proportion of resident parents who should be receiving maintenance after applying to the Child Support Agency.

Targets for 2006/07 were published in the Agency's annual Business Plan on 30th March.

The Agency has no target for the proportion of applications that should result in receipt of maintenance as described above. This is because, whether or not an application results in a positive maintenance liabilty being established is not an outcome which is wholly within Agency's control. In particular, prior to this point in the process, cases could either be closed at the request of the Parent with Care, be subject to a Reduced Benefit Decision, have had Good Cause accepted or be identified as being a change of circumstance in relation to an exisiting case.

Where a positive maintenance liability does exist, the Agency has a target that, by the 31st March 2007, 65 per cent. of such cases will either be in receipt of maintenance via the CSA collection service, or have a maintenance direct arrangement in place.

I hope you find this helpful.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many cases of maladministration the Parliamentary Ombudsman found in respect of the Child Support Agency in each year of the last five years; and in respect of how many of those she recommended that compensation be paid. [44233]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Hilary Reynolds:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive is unavailable, I am responding on his behalf.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many cases of maladministration the Parliamentary Ombudsman found in respect of the Child Support Agency in each year of the last five years; and in respect of how many of those she recommended that compensation be paid.

The information on special payments is not broken down in a way which identifies which were made as a result of a Parliamentary Ombudsman recommendation. To provide the precise information requested requires clerical examination of individual cases. The Agency is currently working with the Parliamentary Ombudsman to provide this information and will write to you separately as soon as it is available.

I hope you find this information helpful.

The table attached shows the available information.

	Number of complaints of maladministration upheld
2000/01	67
2001/02	42
2002/03	35
2003/04	20
2004/05	14

Note:

Figures for the years 2000/01 to 2003/04 are based on data published in the Parliamentary Ombudsman's annual reports for those years. The figures for 2004/05 are based on information held by the Department for Work and Pensions.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in what proportion of cases assessed on the new system of child support maintenance which had previously been assessed under a default maintenance decision the amount of child maintenance deemed to be owed in the final assessment was *(a)* higher and *(b)* lower. [52727]

Mr. Plaskitt *[holding answer 27 February 2006]:* The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive. He will write to the right hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Hilary Reynolds:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive is unavailable as he is communicating the Operational Improvement Plan to all Agency staff. I am responding on his behalf.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, in what proportion of cases calculated on the new system of child support maintenance which had previously been calculated under a default maintenance decision was the amount of child maintenance deemed to be owed in the final calculation *(a)* higher and *(b)* lower.

By December 2005, of those cases which had received a maintenance calculation following a previous calculation under a default maintenance decision (DMD):

21% had a maintenance calculation that was higher than the DMD.

60% had a maintenance calculation that was lower than the DMD.

8% had a maintenance calculation with the same value as that imposed under the DMD.

In 7% of cases, a maintenance calculation was performed in the same month as the DMD. Due to limitations with currently available management information it is not possible to ascertain if the maintenance calculation was higher or lower than the DMD.

In 4% of cases, limitations with the currently available management information mean that it is not possible to compare the value of the maintenance calculation with that of the DMD.

It should be noted that figures have been rounded to the nearest whole percent.

I hope you find this heipful.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether he will publish Sir David Henshaw's report on the redesign of the Child Support Agency before the summer 2006 recess; and if he will make a statement. [61859]

Mr. Plaskitt: Sir David Henshaw will deliver his findings to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions before the summer recess. It is the intention to publish Sir David Henshaw's report when a statement is made to the House.

National Insurance Numbers

Mr. Denham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on how many occasions in the last 12 months his Department checked the immigration status of applicants for national insurance numbers; and how many applications were refused as a result. [62274]

Mr. Plaskitt: Individuals entering the UK from abroad who require a National Insurance Number, must attend Jobcentre Plus for an Evidence of Identity interview. The interviewing process is primarily designed to guard against Identity fraud. If Jobcentre Plus becomes aware of immigration or right to work irregularities, it advises the Home Office Immigration and Nationality Directorate of this so that appropriate action can be taken. The number of cases referred to the Immigration and Nationality Directorate as 'potential immigration offenders' between 1 April 2005 and 28 February 2006 is 1,712.

Pathways to Work

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the proportion of pathways to work participants who would benefit from the condition management programme. [43142]

Margaret Hodge: Of all Pathways to Work participants who have accessed the Choices package, 42 per cent. are referrals to the Condition Management Programme (CMP).

Notes:

1. The statistics quoted in this response are taken from the Pathways to Work Evaluation Database.
2. Data is to October 2005.
3. The Pathways to Work database only holds information on the number of referrals to the Condition Management Programme (CMP), we cannot tell from our data whether the customer has gone on to start CMP. Other management information suggests that approximately 75 per cent. of CMP referrals result in a CMP start.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of talking therapists that will need to be recruited for a national roll-out of Pathways to Work, assuming that demand for the Condition Management Programme is at a level similar to the demand experienced in the pilot areas; and if he will make a statement. [59855]

Margaret Hodge: We recognise that for the success of our reforms, we need to ensure we have sufficient health professionals in a range of specialisation. We are currently creating a planning group to help identify likely requirements and potential solutions. The Department of Health, with whom we are working closely, are already looking at ways in which access to such therapies can be improved.

Post Office Card Account

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) for what reason he did not seek to negotiate *(a)* the contract with the Post Office on the card account and *(b)* a replacement product; [59005]

(2) what alternatives he has considered to the Post Office card account; and what estimate he has made of the income to be derived from them by rural sub-post offices. [59008]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Post Office card account contract is a finite contract, which ends in March 2010. The question of an extension or renegotiation, therefore, does not arise. It will be for Post Office Ltd. to bring forward proposals for new products and services. We are working with Post Office Ltd. with the best interests of our joint customers in mind.

Post Office Ltd. has already introduced one new savings account, and is developing other savings and banking products which are likely to be more attractive to many of its customers than the current Post Office card account. At this stage it is not possible to estimate how much income these new products might provide for rural sub-post offices.

There are already some 25 bank and building society accounts which can be used at Post Offices, with each transaction at the Post Office generating income for Post Office Ltd. We would like every customer of the Department who currently has a Post Office card account to do their banking at the Post Office if that is what they want.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the impact on those living in isolated villages in the Vale of York of the withdrawal of the Post Office card account in 2010. [59006]

Mr. Plaskitt: For customers, there is, in practice, no real difference in accessing money at the Post Office via a bank account compared to a Post Office card account. Customers can collect the same money, on the same day as they do now at the Post Office, by using a plastic card and a personal identification number.

Around 25 or so different accounts can currently be accessed at Post Offices as well as the Post Office card account, and we hope there could be more in the future. Post Office Ltd. has already introduced one new savings account, and is developing other savings and banking products which are likely to be more attractive to many of its customers than the current Post Office card account.

We want people to continue to access their cash at the Post Office by using a bank account there or new Post Office products, and we are working with Post Office Ltd. with the best interests of our joint customers in mind.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people used a Post Office card account to access *(a)* pension credit and *(b)* child benefit in each of the three years. [62867]

Mr. Plaskitt: Information available shows that there were 54,000 pension credit accounts being paid by direct payment into a Post Office card account at February 2004, 826,900 at February 2005 and 934,500 at February 2006.

Child benefit information is not included as it is the responsibility of Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs.

Note:
Figures are rounded to the nearest 100 and refer to pension credit accounts live and in payment on the specified date.

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what measures his Department employed at the time of the launch of the Post Office card account to alert *(a)* customers and *(b)* sub-postmasters to the fact that it was intended to be phased out in 2010. [63066]

Mr. Plaskitt: The contract for the Post Office card account was signed by DWP and Post Office Limited in March 2002. It was clear in the contract that Government funding for the Post Office card account would only continue until 31 March 2010.

As we were migrating customers from order books to Direct Payment we had to decide what information we provided customers with, and when, so that they could make informed choices about the accounts they wanted to use. Since the Post Office card account had a lifetime of seven years, our judgment was that this was a reasonably lengthy period for a financial product of this type and there was no need draw customers' attention to it at the outset.

Sub-postmasters are agents of Post Office Limited. Information provided to sub-postmasters is a matter for Post Office Limited.

Social Fund

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the real expenditure on the Social Fund was for each year from 1995–96; how much has been allocated for 2006–07 at 2004–05 prices; and if he will make a statement. [63373]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is in the tables.

Gross discretionary Social Fund expenditure

£ million

	Cash terms	Real terms
1995–96	401	502
1996–97	432	523
1997–98	462	543
1998–99	501	574
1999–2000	555	624
2000–01	601	666
2001–02	647	700
2002–03	654	686
2003–04	687	702
2004–05	699	699
2005–06	742	727

Gross discretionary Social Fund allocation

£ million

	Cash terms	Real terms
2006–07	842	805

Net discretionary Social Fund expenditure

£ million

	Cash terms	Real terms
1995–96	138	172
1996–97	133	161
1997–98	125	147
1998–99	139	159
1999–2000	129	145
2000–01	128	142
2001–02	145	156
2002–03	134	140
2003–04	158	161
2004–05	164	164
2005–06	194	190

Net discretionary Social Fund allocation

£ million

	Cash terms	Real terms
2006–07	298	285

Notes:
1. Figures are for Great Britain.
2. Real terms refers to 2004–05 prices.
3. Expenditure in real terms has been calculated using the Gross Domestic Product deflator published on the HM Treasury website. This incorporates outturn data to 2004–05 from the Office for National Statistics, last updated on 29 March 2006, and HM Treasury forecasts consistent with the Budget report 2006.
4. Expenditure and allocations have been rounded to the nearest £1 million.

Source:
DWP Social Fund Policy, Budget and Management Information System.

The gross discretionary social fund budget has benefited from extra AME funding of £90 million over the years 2003–04 to 2005–06, of which £60 million was invested in the national community care grants budget. The national community care grants budget for 2006–07 is over 45 per cent. higher in cash terms than in 1995–96 and 11 per cent. higher in real terms. Further AME funding totalling £210 million over the next three years 2006–07 to 2008–09 has been given to support changes to the national loans scheme.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Arts Council

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what groups have been funded by the Arts

Council of Northern Ireland in each of the Belfast parliamentary constituencies in each of the last five years; and what the level of funding was in each case. [60983]

Mr. Hanson: I have arranged for copies of the information to be placed in the Library of the House. It should be noted that a number of the organisations who have received funding cover more than one constituency.

Bail

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what percentage of *(a)* male and *(b)* female defendants charged with summary only matters received police bail in the latest year for which figures are available; [62531]

(2) what percentage of *(a)* male and *(b)* female defendants charged with summary only matters remained in custody pending resolution of their case in the latest year for which figures are available; [62533]

(3) what percentage of *(a)* male and *(b)* female defendants charged with offences triable either way received police bail in the latest year for which figures are available; [62534]

(4) what percentage of *(a)* male and *(b)* female defendants charged with offences triable either way remained in custody pending resolution of their case in the latest year for which figures are available; [62536]

(5) what percentage of *(a)* male and *(b)* female defendants charged with indictable only matters in the latest year for which figures are available (i) received police bail, (ii) did not receive police bail but subsequently received court bail and (iii) remained in custody pending resolution of their case. [62537]

Mr. Hanson: Until the new Causeway management information system is fully operational it is not currently possible to track defendants in the way requested without incurring a disproportionate cost. As a proxy measure it is however possible to say that of 2,724 discharges from remand in prison in 2005, the remand period ended with bail in 57 per cent. of cases.

Child Sex Abuse

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to his answer of 23 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 535W, on child sex abuse, how the Police Service of Northern Ireland will collate the cluster of allegations around particular individuals until a decision is made on the introduction of a new database. [63801]

Mr. Woodward: The Police Service of Northern Ireland has advised that offender clusters are currently tracked via the Integrated Crime Information System (ICIS).

Dissident Republican Paramilitaries

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 17 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 2591W, on dissident republican paramilitaries, what additional information the eighth report of the Independent Monitoring Commission provided him with that he was not in possession of on 11 January. [63444]

Mr. Woodward: In my answers to this question on 27 February and 16 March 2006, I advised you that the recently published IMC report indicated that there is evidence that dissident republican groups are attempting to recruit members. I based my information on the eighth IMC report which was published on 1 February 2006.

Electoral Fraud

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many individuals have been *(a)* charged and *(b)* convicted of electoral fraud arising out of the (i) 2005 local government elections, broken down by council area and (ii) 2005 Westminster elections, broken down by constituency. [61625]

Mr. Hanson: According to the Electoral Office of Northern Ireland's records one individual has been charged with Electoral fraud in relation to either the 2005 local government elections or the 2005 Westminster General Election. This was in the Coleraine Council area.

Parades

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many of the parades held in Northern Ireland on 17 March took place after the Parades Commission had indicated that discussions between organisers and those who had expressed reservations about the parades should take place. [61105]

Mr. Woodward: The Parades Commission urges the organisers of all sensitive or contentious parades to engage in dialogue with parties who may have expressed concerns over aspects of the parade. Parades marked contentious almost invariably result in the commission urging dialogue between relevant parties. As you know, contentious parades are set out on the commission's website.

Police Service (Disciplinary Actions)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many Police Service of Northern Ireland officers have been disciplined as a result of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland's report into the 2005 sectarian attack on members of the Royal Black Institution travelling by train. [63495]

Mr. Woodward: The Police Service of Northern Ireland has advised that to date no report or recommendations in respect of this incident have been received from the Police Ombudsman's office. No officers have therefore been disciplined as a result.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what discussions he has had with senior Police Service of Northern Ireland officers on ensuring that attacks similar to the one on members of the Loyal Orders travelling by train in Lurgan in 2005 do not occur. [63496]

Mr. Woodward: Translink was informed on 8 and 11 July 2005 that it was the view of the PSNI that, despite the planned policing operation, it was likely that attacks would be mounted upon the trains carrying Orangemen to and from Portadown. This view was based upon information received from the public and upon recent events. Translink was not advised to remove the trains as such a decision was for the company alone to make.

The hon. Gentleman will be aware that the Chief Constable of PSNI retains operational independence in all matters relating to police operations. Queries and complaints about police operations are a matter for the Police ombudsman.

Postal and Proxy Votes

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the percentage change was in the number of *(a)* postal and *(b)* proxy votes issued for the 2005 (i) local government and (ii) Westminster elections in Northern Ireland by comparison with each of the previous two comparable elections, broken down by parliamentary constituency. [61623]

Mr. Hanson: The following tables show the absent votes issued for the 2005, 2001 and 1997 local government and Westminster elections. They compare the percentage change for the years 1997–2005 and 2001–05, with the exception of the proxy figures for the 1997 Westminster elections as the Electoral Office for Northern Ireland does not hold these figures. Statistics for the local government elections have been kept in local government council areas as the information is not available in a parliamentary constituency format.

Westminster elections postal votes

	Postal votes issued			Percentage change	
Constituency	1997	2001	2005	1997–05	2001–05
Belfast, East	748	933	584	-21.93	-37.41
Belfast, North	656	738	570	-13.11	-22.76
Belfast, South	694	992	681	-1.87	-31.35
Belfast, West	687	609	743	8.15	22.00
East Antrim	559	738	622	11.27	-15.72
East Londonderry	1,750	1,954	1,647	-5.89	-15.71
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	4,927	4,668	4,559	-7.47	-2.34
Foyle	1,102	1,461	2,515	128.22	72.14
Lagan Valley	1,231	1,392	1,087	-11.70	-21.91
Mid-Ulster	3,609	3,114	2,891	-19.89	-7.16
Newry and Armagh	3,021	2,604	1,873	-38	-28.07
North Antrim	1,260	1,499	1,444	14.6	-3.67
North Down	819	935	727	-11.23	-22.25
South Antrim	654	873	711	8.72	-18.56
Strangford	1,057	1,129	861	-18.54	-23.74
Upper Bann	1,561	1,812	1,162	-25.56	-35.87
West Tyrone	3,062	3,431	2,962	-3.27	-13.67
Total	29,344	31,104	27,680	-7.25	-11.01

Westminster elections proxy votes

	Proxy votes issued		
Constituency	2001	2005	Percentage change
Belfast, East	224	71	-68.30
Belfast, North	395	185	-53.16
Belfast, South	205	113	-44.88
Belfast, West	385	316	-17.92
East Antrim	266	89	-66.54
East Londonderry	489	193	-60.53
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	1,116	1,052	-5.73
Foyle	620	554	-10.65

Westminster elections proxy votes

	Proxy votes issued		
Constituency	2001	2005	Percentage change
Lagan Valley	145	118	-18.62
Mid-Ulster	1,008	745	-26.09
Newry and Armagh	1,022	779	-23.78
North Antrim	278	270	-2.88
North Down	265	91	-65.66
South Antrim	329	114	-65.35
South Down	752	502	-33.24
Strangford	248	103	-58.47
Upper Bann	256	155	-39.45
West Tyrone	2,012	1,247	-38.02
Total	10,015	6,697	-33.13

Note:
1997 Proxy data not available

District council elections postal votes

	Postal votes issued			Percentage change	
District council	1997	2001	2005	1997–05	2001–05
Derry	1,219	1,461	2,512	106.07	71.94
Limavady	733	770	651	-11.19	-15.45
Coleraine	997	1,184	994	-0.3	-16.05
Ballymoney	396	408	472	19.19	15.69
Moyle	273	187	246	-9.89	31.55
Larne	203	302	232	14.29	-23.18
Ballymena	674	904	726	7.72	-19.69
Magherafelt	1,111	1,086	1,053	-5.22	-3.04
Cookstown	2,061	1,567	871	-57.74	-44.42
Strabane	1,307	1,315	1,086	-16.91	-17.41
Omagh	1,773	2,093	1,417	-20.08	-32.30
Fermanagh	3,399	2,835	2,195	-35.42	-22.57
Dungannon	2,431	2,296	2,096	-13.78	-8.71
Craigavon	1,155	1,206	778	-32.64	-35.49
Armagh	2,241	1,710	1,122	-49.93	-34.39
Newry & Mourne	2,331	1,628	1,436	-38.40	-11.79
Banbridge	1,323	1,185	832	-10.43	-29.79
Down	1,645	1,385	1,275	-37.11	-7.94
Lisburn	986	1,147	906	-8.11	-21.01
Antrim	376	474	340	-9.57	-28.27
Newtownabbey	394	589	520	31.98	-11.71
Carrickfergus	247	332	268	8.50	-19.28
North Down	590	816	634	7.46	-22.30
Ards	580	530	620	6.90	16.98
Castlereagh	364	678	493	35.44	-27.29
Belfast	2,180	2,756	2,153	-1.24	21.88
Total	30,989	30,844	22,159	-28.49	-28.16

District council elections proxy votes

	Proxy votes issued			Percentage change	
District council	1997	2001	2005	1997–05	2001–05
Derry	693	620	554	-20.06	-10.65
Limavady	198	265	93	-53.03	-64.91
Coleraine	297	224	100	-66.33	-55.36
Ballymoney	66	73	91	37.88	24.66
Moyle	107	63	92	-14.02	46.03
Larne	70	109	25	-64.29	-77.06
Ballymena	177	142	87	-19.77	-38.73
Magherafelt	791	434	459	-50.85	5.76
Cookstown	478	256	9	-79.50	-61.72
Strabane	762	801	505	-33.73	-36.95
Omagh	892	1,211	742	-16.82	-38.73
Fermanagh	807	762	876	8.56	14.96
Dungannon	966	668	309	-68.01	-53.74
Craigavon	266	187	132	-50.38	-29.41
Armagh	733	426	236	-67.80	-44.60
Newry and Mourne	1,198	950	826	-31.05	-13.05
Banbridge	202	121	68	-66.34	-43.80
Down	518	391	197	-61.97	-49.62
Lisburn	200	702	150	-25.00	-78.63
Antrim	127	183	22	82.67	-87.98
Newtownabbey	188	238	32	-82.98	-86.55
Carrickfergus	119	113	15	-87.39	-86.73
North Down	175	241	77	-56	-68.05
Ards	147	158	58	-60.55	-63.29
Castlereagh	97	155	73	-24.74	-52.90

District council elections proxy votes

District council	Proxy votes issued 1997	2001	2005	Percentage change 1997–05	2001–05
Belfast	710	1,039	583	-17.89	-43.89
Total	10,984	10,532	5,716	-47.96	-45.73

Poverty

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* children and *(b)* adults were living in poverty in each (i) Westminster constituency and (ii) district council area in the Province in the latest period for which figures are available. [62467]

Angela E. Smith: This information has been placed in the Library.

Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the current employer contribution rates to the Principal Civil Service pension scheme are; what assumed rate of return underlies those contribution rates; and what the contribution rate would be if the assumed rate of return was in line with current redemption yield on index-linked gilts. [61994]

Mr. Hain: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Cabinet Office on 29 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1031W.

Schools

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much money has been allocated for the development of curriculum materials for *(a)* Irish medium schools and *(b)* integrated schools by the Department of Education in each of the last 10 years. [54136]

Angela E. Smith *[pursuant to the reply, 1 March 2006, Official Report, c. 784W]:* I wish to clarify part of the answer.

I referred to a one-off allocation of £67,000 made by the Department in 2005–06 for Irish medium curriculum materials. This was in fact for Irish language materials for use in non-Irish medium schools.

Sentencing (Averages)

Sir Patrick Cormack: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average sentence passed for those convicted of offences connected with *(a)* extortion, *(b)* intellectual property crimes, *(c)* money laundering, *(d)* smuggling and *(e)* oils fraud in Northern Ireland was over the last five years. [63799]

Mr. Woodward: Table 1 provides the number sentenced to immediate custody for extortion, intellectual property offences, money laundering and smuggling and the average custodial sentence for each, for the calendar years 1999 to 2003. Convictions specifically for oils fraud cannot be separately identified but are incorporated within the smuggling category. There is no definitive list of offences falling within each of the groupings of interest, thus Table 1 has been footnoted to indicate the offences covered. Data beyond 2003 is currently not available. Figures are based on a principal offence rule.

Table 1: Number sentenced to immediate custody and average custodial sentence length in months—extortion, intellectual property offences, money laundering and smuggling in Northern Ireland 1999–2003

	Extortion[1]		Intellectual property offences[2]		Money laundering[3]		Smuggling[4]	
	Number sentenced (custody)	Average sentence length (months)	Number sentenced (custody)	Average sentence length (months)	Number sentenced (custody)	Average sentence length (months)	Number sentenced (custody)	Average sentence length (months)
1999	4	41	0	0	0	0	38	23
2000	14	32	2	3	0	0	62	24
2001	0	0	1	60	0	0	59	25
2002	9	39	0	0	1	12	39	22
2003	5	28	0	0	0	0	47	29

[1] Includes Blackmail (Theft Act (NI) 1969) and contributions towards acts of terrorism (Terrorism Act 2000, section 15).
[2] Includes offences under section 107 of the Copyright Designs and Patent Act 1988, and sections 92 and 94 of the Trademarks Act 1994.
[3] Includes offences under Proceeds of Crime legislation.
[4] Includes offences under section 170 of the Customs and Excise Management Act 1979 and possession of controlled drugs with intent to supply (Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 section 5(3)).
[5] Average sentence lengths rounded to nearest whole number.
Source:
NIO, Statistics and Research Branch

Smart Passes

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many senior citizen smart passes have been issued in Northern Ireland in the last 12 months. [63269]

Mr. Woodward: Translink has advised that, between 1 April 2005 and 31 March 2006 a total of 16,586 Senior SmartPasses were issued to senior citizens in Northern Ireland. Of these 11,530 were issued to first-time applicants and 5,056 replaced passes which were faulty, lost or stolen.

St. Patrick's Day

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the estimated total costs are of *(a)* travel, *(b)* accommodation and *(c)* other associated activity of those public representatives

and officials from Northern Ireland travelling to the United States for events at the White House around 17 March. [59874]

Mr. Hain: The following costs relate to expenses incurred in respect of the Secretary of State and officials from the Northern Ireland Office and the Devolved Administration attending events during the week of St. Patrick's Day. This included the NI Bureau breakfast which showcases investment opportunities in Northern Ireland to US businesses.

	Amount (£)
Travel	41,259.20
Accommodation	2,736.00
Other (including car hire)	1,765.00

Television Stand-by Switches

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what research has been undertaken on provision in televisions of automatic time controlled stand-by switches which revert to off. [62844]

Mr. Morley: I have been asked to reply.

Defra's Market Transformation Programme (MTP), which supports Government policy on sustainable products, is aware from discussions with industry that this functionality could be added to televisions (with the exception of IDTVs which require a degree of constant power) at a reasonable cost. However, there are currently no televisions available on the market which switch automatically from stand-by into off after a pre-set time.

The Government are committed to reducing the amount of power used by products when in stand-by mode. The new Eco-Design for Energy Using Products Framework Directive provides a route for setting mandatory standards for products and we are pressing for stand-by power to be a priority area for action. The MTP has also been working to promote other measures: for example, an EU-wide voluntary agreement means that the majority of new televisions sold in the UK now consume around 1 watt of power in stand-by mode rather than the 3–8 watts consumed by older models. Discussions are now under way to extend this agreement to cover other consumer electronics.

The Budget also announced a new initiative, in partnership with major retailers and the Energy Saving Trust, to introduce voluntary schemes in the retail sector which encourage the purchase of more energy efficient alternatives in consumer electronics.

World Heritage Sites

David Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland which Minister in his Department has responsibility for issues relating to World Heritage sites. [63476]

Angela E. Smith: My right hon. Friend, Lord Rooker and I have responsibilities for different aspects relating to Northern Ireland's only World Heritage site.

Lord Rooker, in his role as Minister of the Environment, has responsibility for management and conservation issues relating to the Giant's Causeway and Causeway Coast World Heritage site, which is the only such site, in Northern Ireland. In my role as Minister for the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, I am responsible for the development of new visitor facilities at the Giant's Causeway.

HEALTH

"Every Child Matters"

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance she has issued to primary care trusts about their responsibilities and priorities in implementing the Government's Every Child Matters policy; and if she will make a statement. [62688]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* The Every Child Matters: Change for Children programme is a joint programme between the Department and the Department for Education and Skills, which sets out the national framework for local change programmes to build services around the needs for children and young people. Since the launch of the programme in 2004, a range of documents have been published to support local delivery.

These include the "National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services" (2004), "Every Child Matters: Change for Children in Health Services" (2004), the "Children Act 2004", which provides the statutory framework underpinning the Every Child Matters programme (including "Statutory guidance on inter-agency co-operation to improve the wellbeing of children: children's trusts" (2005) and "Making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children" (2005)). Other publications include "Health and the Whole Child: What Children's Trusts mean for Health Professionals" (2006), "Pathways to Success" (2006) and "Joint planning and commissioning framework for children, young people and maternity services" (2006).

A range of exemplars have also been published, including asthma, acquired brain injury, autism and complex disability. The good practice guide "Transition: Getting it Right for Young People", was published in March 2006.

Chief executives in primary care trusts are alerted to relevant guidance published under the Every Child Matters programme through the Chief Executive Bulletin.

All guidance issued under the Every Child Matters programme are available on its website at www.everychildmatters.gov.uk.

Abortion

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many women seeking an abortion in England gave *(a)* Northern Ireland and *(b)* Republic of Ireland addresses in each year since 1980. [64018]

Caroline Flint: The information is shown in the table.

Number of abortions in England and Wales to residents of Ireland, 1980–2004

	Northern Ireland	Irish Republic
1980	1,565	3,320
1981	1,441	3,603
1982	1,510	3,653
1983	1,460	3,677
1984	1,530	3,946
1985	1,637	3,888
1986	1,724	3,918
1987	1,746	3,673
1988	1,815	3,839
1989	1,816	3,721
1990	1,855	4,064
1991	1,775	4,154
1992	1,794	4,254
1993	1,629	4,402
1994	1,678	4,590
1995	1,548	4,532
1996	1,573	4,894
1997	1,572	5,340
1998	1,581	5,891
1999	1,430	6,226
2000	1,528	6,391
2001	1,577	6,673
2002	1,391	6,522
2003	1,318	6,320
2004	1,280	6,217

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many abortions have been performed in *(a)* Great Britain and *(b)* Essex under the Abortion Act 1967 as amended by section 37 of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 1990; how many and what percentage of such abortions were performed (i) to save the life of the mother, and (ii) where the child would have been seriously handicapped. [64208]

Caroline Flint: The number of abortions performed in England and Wales on residents of England and Wales in the 37 years, 1968 to 2004 was 5.10 million. Of these 23,598 (0.5 per cent.) were performed under sections 1(l) *(c)* and 1(4) of the Abortion Act 1967. These are cases where the continuance of the pregnancy would involve risk to the life of the pregnant woman, greater than if the pregnancy were terminated, or where the termination is immediately necessary to save the life or to prevent grave permanent injury to the physical or mental health of the pregnant woman. 66,374 abortions (1.4 per cent. of the total) were performed under section l(l) *(d)* ; that there is a substantial risk that if the child were born it would suffer from such physical or mental abnormalities as to be seriously handicapped.

Due to boundary changes, it is not possible to give the total number of abortions performed in Essex in the years 1968 to 2004.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether it is her policy to promote *(a)* abortion and *(b)* the morning-after pill as a way to reduce the rate of teenage pregnancies; and if she will make a statement. [64016]

Caroline Flint: The teenage pregnancy strategy aims to help young people delay early sex through improved sex and relationships education and support for parents in discussing relationship and sexual health issues with their children. However, it is very important that teenagers who are sexually active have access to contraception, including emergency contraception, and sexual health advice to minimise the risk of pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections.

Health professionals provide contraception and advice on abortion to young people within an established legal framework which involves assessing the young person's competence to understand the choices they are making and encouraging them to talk to their parents.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent assessment she has made of the impact of the morning-after pill on the overall abortion rate in England; and if she will make a statement. [64017]

Caroline Flint: We are not aware of any studies which have been able to predict the effect the availability of emergency contraception through pharmacies or the national health service has on unintended pregnancy rates or abortions.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which organisations in the field of reproductive health are funded by her Department; how much her Department plans to give to each organisation in the next two years; whether account is taken of an organisation's position on abortion when allocating public funds; and if she will make a statement. [64368]

Caroline Flint: The Department funds the Family Planning Association and Brook. The Department will confirm their funding for the next two financial years shortly. When allocating funding account is taken of the extent to which organisations work to further the Department's health and social care objectives, including those for sexual and reproductive health.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the operation of statutory instruments *(a)* 1976/15 and *(b)* 1980/1724. [64369]

Caroline Flint: The statutory instruments 1976/15 and 1980/1724 were revoked and replaced by the Abortion Regulations 1991.

Administration Spending

Dr. Pugh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what average percentage of budget acute trusts spent on administration in 2004–05. [34202]

Jane Kennedy: In 2004–05 expenditure on administration by all national health service trusts in England as a percentage of total income was 7 per cent.

Animal Insulin

Jessica Morden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps have been taken to ensure the availability of animal insulin in light of the announcement by Novo Nordisk that they intend to discontinue supply. [61895]

Jane Kennedy: The other supplier of animal insulin to the United Kingdom, Wockhardt UK, has assured the Department of its commitment to continue the supply of its products. It has also given assurance that it will be able to meet any increased demand when Novo Nordisk's products are no longer available.

Audiology

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what *(a)* the three-month vacancy rate and *(b)* the three-month vacancy number was for audiologists (i) in England and (ii) in each hospital trust in March 2006; and if she will make a statement. [62626]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* The results from the 2006 vacancy survey have yet to be published. The latest published three-month vacancy rate for audiologists in England and in each hospital trust in March 2005 is available in the Library.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many qualified audiologists were employed *(a)* in England and *(b)* in each hospital trust in September 2005; and if she will make a statement. [62627]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* The results from the September 2005 census will be published on the 24 April 2006.

Data on the number of qualified audiology staff in post in England and in each hospital trust as at September 2004 has been placed in the Library.

Cancer Treatment (Children)

Mr. Vaizey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment her Department has made of the effect of the EU Clinical Trials Directive, and implementing UK legislation, on the development of treatments for children with cancer. [57783]

Jane Kennedy: The directive acknowledges the need for clinical trials involving children to improve the treatments available to them. In conjunction with the aims of the directive to protect trial subjects, particular emphasis is laid on the issue of informed consent for trials involving minors. The Government are committed to making an assessment of the effects of implementation of the directive as soon as reliable evidence is available. The Medicines and Health products Regulatory Agency, which acts as the licensing authority for all clinical trials within the directive's scope, has asked the United Kingdom clinical research collaboration to review the evidence to date, consider how to reduce any adverse regulatory impact, including the perceived extra bureaucracy involved, and agree plans for long-term monitoring. Additionally, Cancer Research UK and the national clinical research network have undertaken initial assessments of opinion about the effect of the directive on cancer clinical trials across the UK. Other assessments are being carried out at the European level with the Federation of European Cancer Societies.

Care Homes

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether she plans to introduce regulations obliging *(a)* general practitioners and *(b)* other health workers commissioned by a primary care trust who also have an equity interest in care homes to disclose those details to the trust. [48182]

Jane Kennedy: There are no present plans to make regulations on this matter.

Chronic Hepatitis B

Joan Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funding has been made available for research into the hepatitis B virus. [60235]

Jane Kennedy: The main agency through which the Government support medical and clinical research is the Medical Research Council (MRC). The MRC is an independent body funded by the Department of Trade and Industry via the Office of Science and Technology.

Expenditure by the MRC on research directly concerned with hepatitis B infection has been as follows:

£ million

	Amount
2001–02	1
2002–03	1.2
2003–04[1]	1.2

[1] Information in respect of later years is not yet available.

The research undertaken by the MRC on hepatitis generally and hepatitis C may also be of relevance.

The Department funds research to support policy and to provide the evidence needed to underpin quality improvement and service development in the national health service. The Department's national research programme spend since 2001 on projects related to hepatitis B has been £81,000.

Over 75 per cent. of the Department's total expenditure on health research is devolved to and managed by NHS organisations. Details of individual projects, including a number concerned with hepatitis B infection, can be found on the national research register on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/research.

Clinical Standards for Food, Fluid and Nutritional Care

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she will publish NHS draft clinical standards for food, fluid and nutritional care for public consultation. [64271]

Caroline Flint: 'Standards for Better Health', the national standards for the national health service published in July 2004, includes the following core standard.

C15. Where food is provided, health care organisations have systems in place to ensure that

patients are provided with a choice and that it is prepared safely and provides a balanced diet; and

patients' individual nutritional, personal and clinical dietary requirements are met, including any necessary help with feeding and access to food 24 hours a day.

The draft of 'Standards for Better Health' was publicly consulted on from February to May 2004.

Clinical Trials

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females took part in clinical trials in each year since 1996, broken down by health authority. [60848]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is not held centrally at present. The Government's new national health research strategy "Best Research for Best Health", published on 25 January 2006, included plans to strengthen the information systems that support health research.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what legislation governs clinical trials in hospitals in England and Wales; and if she will make a statement. [60927]

Jane Kennedy: The legislation that governs clinical trials of drugs is the Medicines for Human Use (Clinical Trials) Regulations 2004. The Medical Device Regulations 2002 govern the trials of medical devices. These regulations apply to trials conducted in hospitals as well as to trials conducted in units attached to hospitals or elsewhere. One requirement of the regulations governing clinical trials is that anyone conducting a trial does it in accordance with the conditions and principles of good clinical practice.

The Research Governance Framework for Health and Social Care (Department of Health, 2005) applies the same principles across all health and social care research which relate to the responsibilities of the Secretary of State for Health. A core standard for health care organisations is that they have systems to ensure the principles and requirements of this framework are consistently applied. National health service bodies have to take this standard into account in discharging their duty, under the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003, to put and keep in place arrangements for the purpose of monitoring and improving the quality of health care.

The clinical negligence scheme for trusts is a scheme established under the National Health Service and Community Care Act 1990 for meeting losses and liabilities of health service bodies in England and Wales. Health Service Guidelines HSG(96)48 set out the scope of NHS Indemnity, which includes the liability of NHS bodies for negligent harm to subjects of clinical research.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the hospitals in England in which clinical trials take place; and if she will make a statement. [60930]

Jane Kennedy: Clinical trials take place at all national health service hospital trusts in England with the exception of Calderstones NHS Trust.

The information requested is collected on a trust basis and not by individual hospital.

Colonoscopy

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what her Department's target waiting time is for an urgent colonoscopy. [48912]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 7 February 2006]:* There are no specific waiting time targets for urgent colonoscopies. However, where a patient needs an urgent colonoscopy following urgent referral by their general practitioner for suspected cancer, the whole patient pathway from referral to commencing treatment should not exceed 62 days.

Outside of the cancer pathway, by 2008, there will be a maximum 18-week pathway from referral to treatment. This will include time spent waiting for diagnostic tests.

Dentistry

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* adults and *(b)* children were registered with an NHS dentist in West Chelmsford constituency in 1997. [63321]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of adults and children registered with a national health service dentist in West Chelmsford Constituency as at 31 December 1997 is shown in the table.

	Number
Children	21,086
Adults	62,889
Total	83,975

Source:
Dental Practice Board

Departmental Policies

Emily Thornberry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will set out, with statistical information relating as directly as possible to Islington, South and Finsbury constituency, the effects on Islington, South and Finsbury of her Department's policies and actions since 2 May 1997. [60732]

Jane Kennedy: The Government have put in place a programme of national health service investment and reform since 1997 to improve service delivery in all parts of the United Kingdom. There is significant evidence that these policies have yielded considerable benefits for the Islington South and Finsbury areas.

For example:

At the end of January 2006, the number of people waiting more than six months for in-patient treatment within Islington Primary Care Trust (PCT) has fallen to zero from 479 in June 2002.

At the end of December 2005, the number of patients waiting over 13 weeks for out-patient treatment within Islington PCT has fallen to one from 1,413 in June 2002.

Figures for December 2005 show that all patients within Islington PCT were able to be offered an appointment with a general practitioner within two working days, an improvement from 69.7 per cent. in June 2002.

Islington PCT's financial allocation increased to £299 million for 2005–06, a real terms increase of 6.9 per cent. By 2007–08, the PCT's financial allocation will increase to £363.9 million.

Between September 1997 and June 2005, the number of consultants at Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Trust has increased from 137 to 224. The number of nurses increased from 784 in September 1997 to 1,101 in September 2004.

In the Islington local authority area, death rates from coronary heart disease per 100,000 in 1997 165.5 in 2004 154.1.

Five primary care premises in Islington have been identified for redevelopment through the Islington and Camden Local Improvement Finance Trust (LIFT) scheme. Islington and Camden was chosen as one of the first LIFT sites in the country because of the high health needs among the local people and because of the poor state of many primary care premises. The first two schemes have now achieved full business case approval

and work has started on site. This provides a unique opportunity to develop 21st century primary care premises in Islington and Camden both immediately and in the future.

Electricity Pylons

Willie Rennie: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment her Department has made of the possible health risks to *(a)* children, *(b)* the elderly and *(c)* those who have suffered cancer of residing near electricity pylons. [63405]

Caroline Flint: The Health Protection Agency's (HPA) radiation protection division has the responsibility for providing advice on exposure to electromagnetic fields (EMF). As part of its policy of ongoing evaluation of scientific evidence it reviewed its advice in 2004 on limiting exposure to EMF including that from electric and magnetic fields from power lines (extremely low frequency or ELF). The currently adopted restrictions on exposure are designed to prevent adverse health effects for members of the public of all ages and of varying health status. The HPA's advice is available on its website at www.hpa.org.uk/radiation

At the request of the Department, the HPA's radiation protection division addressed the issues of uncertainty in the science and aspects of precaution. The HPA's advice noted that an association between prolonged exposures to power frequency fields and childhood leukaemia has been found, the scientific reasons for which are presently uncertain. In the light of these findings and the requirement for additional research the HPA proposed that

> "the need for further precautionary measures should be considered by Government"

In response, the stakeholder advisory group on ELF EMF (SAGE) was set up to explore the implications for a precautionary approach and make practical recommendations for precautionary measures. SAGE is currently developing its advice and is expected to report later this year. Details of this process can be found on RK Partnership's website at: www.rkpartnership.co.uk/sage

Health Care (Patient Control)

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research her Department has commissioned on the relationship between the amount of control the individual patient has over his or her healthcare and the efficacy of that care. [58923]

Jane Kennedy: The Department funds research to support policy and to provide the evidence needed to underpin quality improvement and service development in the national health service and through its service delivery and organisation and health technology assessment programmes, has funded a number of projects of relevance to the hon. Member's question. These include:

A study of patients' and carers' views and choices in their use of primary care services;

A scoping exercise to identify the extent and nature of both current NHS policy and the literature concerned with patient choice and the organisation and delivery of health services;

A randomised controlled trial to assess the impact of a package comprising a patient-orientated, evidence-based self-help guidebook and patient-centred consultations on disease management and satisfaction in inflammatory bowel disease;

A systematic review and economic evaluation of the clinical and cost-effectiveness of patient education models for diabetes; and

A multicentre randomised controlled trial assessing the costs and benefits of using structured information and analysis of women's preferences in the management of menorrhagia.

Health Services (Gloucestershire)

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the proposed reductions in health services in Gloucestershire. [63778]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* It is the responsibility of the primary care trusts (PCTs) in Gloucestershire to commission the necessary national health service for the treatment and care of their local populations. Local PCTs have the local knowledge and expertise to plan and review services as necessary, and it is not appropriate for my Department to intervene.

The NHS is in receipt of record increases in resources. Funding of the NHS has increased from £34.7 billion in 1997–98 to £69.7 billion in 2004–05. By 2007–08 spending on the NHS will have increased to over £97 billion. With this level of investment all NHS bodies should be able to plan and achieve financial balance every year. However, NHS organisations need to continue to look at the way they provide services to ensure that they are delivering the best possible value for money. In some areas, they will need to make tough decisions to ensure funding is used in the best possible way.

Hospitals (Targets)

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to help hospitals failing to meet the Government's targets for *(a)* cancer, *(b)* MRSA infections and *(c)* waiting times. [32767]

Jane Kennedy: The NHS Cancer Plan sets out the Government's plans to reduce waiting times for diagnosis and treatment. A target of a maximum two-month wait from urgent general practitioner referral to first treatment for all cancer patients was put into place at the end of December 2005 and should be met for all cancer patients treated from 1 January 2006.

The quarter's data, for the period January to March 2006, will be used to assess performance against this target and will be available in June 2006. The 62-day target is challenging but has been achieved for breast cancer and for other cancers in other parts of the country. The national health service is working hard to ensure that this target will shortly be met for all cancer patients.

The national cancer waits project team are working with those trusts and health authorities who are finding it challenging to understand the pathways their patients experience, and who need to improve their services to deliver these targets. This work will continue until we are sure that the changes they are making are delivering, and are sustainable.

We have also made guidance available to cancer networks, trusts and clinical teams on the 10 "High Impact Changes" that will most help them to deliver cancer waiting times and improve the patients' experience and we are sharing examples of best practice.

We have set up a methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) improvement programme, with specialist teams providing tailored support for trusts that have significant challenge in meeting their target and are monitoring the trusts' performance. Work has begun with three trusts that were first to volunteer to pilot the support programme; Sandwell and West Birmingham, Northumbria, and Aintree NHS Trusts. These teams, which comprise a programme manager, analyst and specialists in infection control, will move on to support up to 17 further trusts during 2006–07. Selection will depend on progress towards the MRSA target and other factors. I will announce the additional trusts to join the programme at stages, during 2006.

The NHS now has an operating standard of six months for inpatient treatment. At the end of February 2006, less than 100 NHS patients were waiting more than six months for treatment. The Healthcare Commission is responsible for assessing NHS organisations against these standards annually and the Department will continue to scrutinise performance on waiting times, taking action through strategic health authorities if issues arise in relation to waiting times for patients.

Malignant Disease

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the contribution of *(a)* environmental factors and *(b)* longevity to the incidence of malignant disease; and if she will make a statement. [62162]

Caroline Flint: There are many different types of cancer, the causes of which are multifactorial rather than there being a single cause for any particular type of cancer, and this should be recognised. It is known that lifestyle factors such as smoking, consumption of alcoholic beverages, physical activity/obesity, and also occupational exposure to certain chemicals in the past, especially asbestos, have a major influence on cancer incidence. It is very difficult to estimate the burden due to environmental factors but some of the available data is summarised as follows.

Exposure to ionizing radiation is known to produce leukaemia and other cancers, although there is little direct data available on the burden of disease from this cause. Exposure to radon, a naturally occurring radioactive gas, is a cause of lung cancer and there is a markedly increased risk in smokers. It has been estimated that about two per cent. of cancer deaths in Europe may be due to radon.

Exposure to ultraviolet radiation from sunlight increases the risk of skin cancer. Skin cancer is one of the most common cancers in the United Kingdom and the incidence of the disease is rising rapidly. However, up to 80 per cent. of cases could be avoided.

There is little convincing evidence to indicate that environmental exposure to chemicals in the UK causes cancer. However, exposure to environmental tobacco smoke (passive smoking) is known to be associated with a 10 to 30 per cent. increase in lung cancer.

Additionally, dietary factors are estimated to account for approximately 30 per cent. of cancers in industrialised countries—making diet only second to tobacco as a preventable cause of cancer. In particular, obesity is associated with an increase in risk of some cancers such as colorectal and breast cancers while increasing the intake of fruit and vegetables and physical activity is associated with decreased risk.

Cancer is predominantly a disease of the elderly, with the incidence of the disease increasing markedly with age. Longevity of an individual is therefore associated with an increased risk of developing cancer, and the aging of the population is associated with an increasing number of cancer cases overall.

Medical Research

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* budget of the Medical Research Council and *(b)* the NHS research and development budget has been in each year since 1997–98 in (i) real and (ii) nominal terms. [63109]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is shown in the table.

£ million

	Medical Research Council		*NHS Research and Development*	
	[1]Cash	*[2]Real terms*	*Cash*	*[3]Real terms*
1997–98	289	347	426	511
1998–99	290	339	420	491
1999–2000	305	349	434	498
2000–01	319	361	448	507
2001–02	350	386	475	525
2002–03	372	398	506	542
2003–04	430	448	533	556
2004–05	458	468	601	614
2005–06	503	503	617	617

[1] figures for years to 2000–01 are cash based and for later years are expenditure based

[2] 2005–06 cash equivalent calculated using the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) deflator

[3] 2005–06 cash equivalent calculated using the GDP deflator

Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what average time it has taken for an application for *(a)* a new and *(b)* a variation of a medicine to be approved by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency. [49842]

Jane Kennedy: The most recent full-year figures for new medicines approval times by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) are for 2004–05. These show an average approval time, from receipt of the application to grant of the licence, of 288 calendar days. This period however includes the time taken by applicants to supply any necessary new or correcting information following the initial assessment

of their application. When this is taken into account the actual number of net working days taken by the MHRA reduces to an average of 122 days.

For the relatively small number of completely new medicines, for example those containing new drugs and with the potential for meeting unmet medical needs in major diseases, the MHRA, during the same period, has maintained its record of assessing these in under 40 days.

For all types of variations to product licences, whether straightforward or complex, and again in the most recent full year for which figures are available, 2004–05, the average time taken to approve, from receipt of the application to grant of the variation, was 67 calendar days. This includes time taken waiting for the company to provide any further information needed.

More recent figures show a lengthening of assessment and approval times. For example, for the first seven months of 2005–06 (April to October) the approval time for new product licences had increased to 153 net working days or 404 gross calendar days.

These exceed the MHRA's assessment and approval target times and it is well aware of the impact this is having on pharmaceutical company business. This lengthening of assessment and approval times has been caused by a combination of adverse factors including increases in workload, difficulties in recruiting professional assessment staff, especially medically-qualified staff, and transitional implementation problems during the introduction of a new information management system.

The MHRA is taking a number of steps to improve service levels. These include organisational restructuring, additional recruitment, re-training of staff, voluntary schemes for extended working hours, and information system performance enhancements.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the methods used by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency to approve new medicines. [49844]

Jane Kennedy: The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) approves new medicines for marketing in the United Kingdom and is required to follow procedures set out in European legislation. The basis of its licensing decisions is its assessment of the data provided by companies attesting to the quality, safety and efficacy of their new product. This assessment is carried out by professionally qualified and experienced staff in the fields of medicine, toxicology, pharmacy and other scientific disciplines relevant to the product under review. The MHRA is a benchmark agency within the European Community for the quality of its assessments and processes and is recognised as a leading player in European medicines licensing.

The MHRA assessment process and decision-making is supported by internationally recognised technical guidelines and, where necessary, by external expert advice.

The MHRA's business procedures are subjected to internal and external audit as part of its risk management and corporate governance procedures. The MHRA's directors and managers are required to keep their processes under constant review and to strive to make year-on-year efficiency and effectiveness improvements.

NHS Debt

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the level of pre-existing debt is within the NHS; what her Department's plans are for reducing it; and if she will make a statement. [61123]

Jane Kennedy: The overall audited net national health service deficit position for 2004–05 was around £250 million. This represents around 0.4 per cent. of overall NHS resources. At 2005–06 month six, the NHS was forecasting a net deficit of £620 million. This forecast deficit amounts to less than 1 per cent. of the funding available.

We are taking action with the minority of organisations that are underperforming to ensure that the position improves and financial balance is restored in the NHS by the end of 2006–07.

For the organisations with the biggest problems we have sent in financial and management specialists (turnaround teams) to help the organisations address their problems of poor financial management.

The turnaround teams will support the NHS in identifying opportunities to deliver services with greater cost-effectiveness and to make financial savings. They will help the local NHS ensure that the NHS delivers both its key targets and financial balance.

NHS Expenditure

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much the NHS has spent per head of the population in *(a)* Lancashire and *(b)* Ribble Valley in each year since 1997. [63198]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* The information is not available in the format requested. However, the following table shows expenditure per capita by all relevant health authorities, strategic health authorities (SHA) and primary care trusts (PCTs) within the current Lancashire and Cumbria SHA area.

Total expenditure per head by organisations within the Cumbria and Lancashire SHA area

	Expenditure (£)
1997–98	614.10
1998–99	679.92
1999–2000	819.63
2000–01	894.22
2001–02	1,021.73
2002–03	1,215.84
2003–04	1,277.22
2004–05	1,260.32

Notes:

1. Figures for 1997–98 to 2001–02 have been prepared using gross expenditure figures. Figures for 2002–03 and 2003–04 have been adjusted to eliminate expenditure which would be double counted where an authority acts as a lead in commissioning healthcare or other services.
2. The significant decrease in expenditure in 2004–05 is because student grants unit expenditure by the Cumbria and Lancashire SHA (£369 million was included in the authority's accounts in 2003–04) was transferred to the NHS Pensions Agency in 2004–05.

3. Data is shown from 1997–98 to 2004–05, which is the latest year for which information is available.
4. Expenditure is taken as the total expenditure of the strategic health authority, predecessor health authorities and PCTs within the SHA area.
5. Expenditure on general dental services and pharmaceutical services accounted for by the Dental Practice Board and Prescription Pricing Authority, respectively, are excluded. This expenditure cannot be included within the figures for the individual health bodies as they are not included in commissioner accounts.
Sources:
Audited accounts of health authorities 1997–98 and 1998–99
Audited summarisation forms of health authorities 1999–2000 to 2001–02
Audited summarisation schedules of primary care trusts 2000–01 to 2004–05
Audited summarisation forms of Cumbria and Lancashire SHA 2002–03 to 2004–05

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the expected *(a)* turnover, *(b)* fixed capital costs as a proportion of turnover, *(c)* fixed costs and *(d)* financial out-turn is for each NHS hospital trust for 2005–06. [62509]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested on turnover, fixed capital costs as a proportion of turnover and financial out-turn for 2005–06 for each national health service trust has been placed in the Library.

The turnover and forecast out-turn position for 2005–06, as submitted by both NHS trusts and primary care trusts at the mid-year point (month six), is available in the Library. Copies of this information is also available on the Department's website at:

www.dh.gov.uk/publicationsandstatistics/freedomofinformation/classesofinformation/fs/en

Obesity

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost to the national health service of weight loss surgery was in each year since 1997; and if she will make a statement. [63605]

Caroline Flint: Information on the cost of delivering weight loss surgery is not collected centrally.

Public Interest Reports

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) at what point and by whom it is determined in relation to any NHS body that a public interest report needs to be *(a)* compiled, *(b)* issued and *(c)* published; [63864]

(2) how many public interest reports have been issued across all NHS bodies, broken down by strategic health authority, in *(a)* 2002–03, *(b)* 2003–04, *(c)* 2004–05 and *(d)* 2005–06; [63865]

(3) which NHS bodies have had relevant public interest reports issued in the current financial year 2005–06 and in relation to which NHS bodies consideration is being given to the issuance of a public interest report in 2006–07. [63866]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* Auditors appointed by the Audit Commission to audit the accounts of national health service bodies have the discretionary power under section 8 of the Audit Commission Act 1998 to issue a report in the public interest.

Section 8 of the Act requires auditors in auditing the accounts to consider whether, in the public interest, they should report on any matter coming to their notice in the course of the audit, in order for it to be considered by the body concerned or brought to the attention of the public. The auditor can issue an immediate report if the public interest requires it, or can issue a report at the conclusion of the audit.

The Audit Commission issued revised guidance in 2004 to auditors on the circumstances when a Public Interest Reports (PIR) might be issued. The guidance requires auditors to consult on the draft report with the body, other local stakeholders (including the strategic health authority (SHA)), and any other interested parties. The Department is also given the opportunity to comment on the draft report. However, the decisions as to whether a public interest report should be issued, what it should say and when it should be issued, are made by the auditor.

The number of PIRs issued under section eight of the Audit Commission Act 1998, from 2002–03 to 2005–06, is shown in the following table.

SHA	*Number of PIRs issued*
2002–03	
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	1
West Yorkshire	1
2003–04	
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	1
2004–05	
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	1
North West London	1
Surrey and Sussex	1
West Yorkshire	1
2005–06	
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	4
Birmingham and the Black Country	1
Cheshire and Merseyside	1
County Durham and Tees Valley	2
Greater Manchester	1
Hampshire and the Isle of Wight	3
Kent and Medway	1
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	3
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	2
North West London	4
Shropshire and Staffordshire	1
South East London	1
Surrey and Sussex	2
Thames Valley	1

In 2005–06, the following NHS bodies were issued with PIRs under section eight of the Audit Commission Act 1998:

Cambridge City PCT and South Cambridgeshire PCT

Central Suffolk, Ipswich and Suffolk Coastal PCTs

Cheshire West PCT

Hampshire and Isle of Wight SHA

Hillingdon PCT

Hounslow PCT

Kennet and North Wiltshire PCT

Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust
New Forest PCT
North Somerset PCT
North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust
Queen Elizabeth Hospital NHS Trust
Royal West Sussex NHS Trust
Royal Wolverhampton Hospitals NHS Trust
Scarborough and North East Yorkshire NHS Trust
Selby and York PCT
Shrewsbury and Telford Hospitals NHS Trust
South Tees Hospitals NHS Trust
Southampton University Hospitals NHS Trust
Suffolk West PCT
Surrey and Sussex SHA
Thames Valley SHA
Trafford Healthcare NHS Trust
West Wiltshire PCT
Weston Area Health NHS Trust

In 2006–07, the following organisation was also issued with PIRs:

George Eliot Hospitals NHS Trust

The following organisations have received draft reports and the auditors are considering when/whether to issue them:

Dacorum PCT
Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust
Hertsmere PCT
Kensington and Chelsea PCT
St. Albans and Harpenden PCT
University Hospital of North Staffordshire NHS Trust
Watford and Three Rivers PCT
West Hertfordshire PCT

St. Richard's Hospital

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the reasons for the deficit at St. Richard's hospital, Chichester; and if she will make a statement. [63957]

Caroline Flint: Strategic health authorities (SHAs) are responsible for managing the financial position for their local health communities, which includes assessing the reasons for organisations incurring deficits. SHAs are charged with ensuring that every organisation achieves financial balance.

Royal West Sussex national health service trust was forecasting, at month six, a deficit of £16.7 million for the financial year 2005–06.

In order to assist the NHS organisations that have the greatest financial problems, the Secretary of State announced turnaround teams in a written ministerial statement on 1 December 2005.

The first stage of this is a baseline assessment, the aim of which is to ensure there is an agreed understanding of the local financial problem and that actions are in hand to address this. In this assessment, Royal West Sussex NHS trust was rated as needing urgent intervention to drive turnaround. In conjunction with the SHA, the team is agreeing a tailored package of turnaround support with the organisation.

Turnaround Teams

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the estimated cost is in the financial year ended 31 March *(a)* 2006 and *(b)* 2007 of the employment of turnaround teams and external accountancy and management advice for the 18 NHS trusts named in her announcement of 25 January 2006; [62889]

(2) what proportion of the estimated costs of the turnaround teams in the NHS in North Staffordshire will be borne by *(a)* the Department, *(b)* the Shropshire and Staffordshire strategic health authority and *(c)* the relevant NHS trusts; [62890]

(3) what the estimated costs are of the employment of turnaround teams in the NHS in *(a)* North Staffordshire and *(b)* the area of the Shropshire and Staffordshire strategic health authority. [62891]

Jane Kennedy: The turnaround teams were announced by the Secretary of State in a written ministerial statement on 1 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 35WS.

The first stage of this is a baseline assessment, the aim of which is to ensure there is an agreed understanding of the local financial problem and that actions are in hand to address this. University Hospitals of North Staffordshire NHS Trust, North Stoke primary care trust and Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust were included in the assessment. This was funded by the Department.

Following the assessment, the local NHS will identify the actions needed to return the organisations to financial balance and what tailored support is needed to support local management. The strategic health authority (SHA) provides advice and support to the procurement of support for the most challenged organisations, including University Hospitals of North Staffordshire NHS Trust and Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust. The costs of these are met locally but for each organisation, the Department has provided funding equivalent to the first three months of a turnaround director.

The Department has contracted for turnaround directors to work alongside the transition SHA leaders which in the case of Shropshire and Staffordshire, means across the West Midlands area.

The Department has a budget of £6 million for turnaround work in 2005–06 covering its work with all organisations in the turnaround cohort. The budget for 2006–07 has not yet been finalised.

The turnaround teams will be needed to the end of 2006–07, when it is expected that the NHS will have returned to financial balance.

Written Answers to Questions

Thursday 20 April 2006

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Energy Efficiency

13. **Mr. Rogerson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with the Deputy Prime Minister on improving the energy efficiency of households; and if she will make a statement. [63740]

Mr. Morley: I and my ministerial colleagues have had a number of discussions with the Deputy Prime Minister and his ministerial team on the energy efficiency of households and other related issues.

Single Farm Payments

14. **Miss McIntosh:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the oral answer from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of 9 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 941, on single farm payments, when the Parliamentary Under-Secretary became aware that it would not be possible to make the bulk of payments by the end of March. [63741]

Margaret Beckett: I and fellow Ministers were made aware of this on 14 March, which as the hon. Member will be aware led to the removal of the RPA Chief Executive on the 16 March and the appointment of Mark Addison as Acting Chief Executive.

Climate Change

15. **Tom Brake:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on her plans for meeting the target for carbon dioxide reduction by 2010. [63742]

18. **Dr. Cable:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the Government's UK carbon dioxide targets. [63746]

Margaret Beckett: The Government published the 2006 climate change programme on 28 March. The policies and measures in the programme are expected to reduce UK carbon dioxide emissions by 15 to 18 per cent. by 2010 compared with 1990 levels.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the climate change review. [63737]

Mr. Morley: A new climate change programme was published on 28 March. It will advance progress to tackle climate change domestically and to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions.

Flood Defences

17. **Norman Baker:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the provision of flood defences for Lewes. [63744]

Mr. Morley: Following the floods in 2000, the Environment Agency has completed a flood risk management strategy for the Sussex Ouse and £1.8 million has been spent on reducing flood risk in the Mailing area of Lewes. The Environment Agency Regional Flood Defence Committee is planning further works between the Phoenix Causeway and Cliffe Bridge and in the Cliffe cell.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the security of flood prevention in and around the Thames Estuary. [63747]

Mr. Morley: London and the Thames Estuary have one of the best tidal defence systems in the world, which provides a high standard of protection from flooding.

The Environment Agency is currently developing a major flood risk management strategy—Thames Estuary 2100—to look at how we can manage flood risk to London over the next 100 years, taking into account future predicted impacts of climate change.

Water Efficiency

20. **Ben Chapman:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to encourage greater water efficiency in the home. [63748]

Mr. Morley: We have established the new Water Saving Group with key water stakeholders, which has agreed and is making progress on a comprehensive action plan; we are going to consult in summer on regulatory changes to secure improved water efficiency in new housing; and all stakeholders are seeking to educate customers to act responsibly in the use of water.

Paul Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how her Department plans to improve water efficiency in housing growth areas. [63743]

Mr. Morley: We announced on 28 March that we will consult on proposals to mandate minimum standards of water efficiency in new housing, which will include new housing development in the four growth areas.

Milk Prices

21. **Mr. Evans:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the average farmgate price for milk was in 2005 and 1997. [63749]

Jim Knight: The average farmgate price for milk delivered in 1997 was 21.96 pence per litre, while in 2005, it was 18.46 pence per litre.

Recycling and Waste

22. **Mr. Mackay:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the performance of local councils in meeting their recycling and waste targets. [63750]

Mr. Bradshaw: Levels of recycling by local authorities have improved dramatically from the appalling record under the previous Conservative Government. In 1997 only 8 per cent. of household waste was recycled. This year we expect local authorities will achieve the target we set them of 25 per cent.—a more than trebling of recycling since Labour come to power.

Farm Incomes

23. **Anne Snelgrove:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the average level of farm income was in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2005. [63751]

Jim Knight: UK Total Income from Farming per full-time person equivalent was £12,500 in 2005 compared to £14,600 in 1997 (when expressed in real terms at 2005 prices).

CFC Recovery

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) how many licensed CFC recovery sites are still operational in the UK; and how many of these achieve greater than 300g of CFC recovery per domestic refrigerator or freezer; [63850]

(2) what the average CFC recovery level was per domestic refrigerator or freezer for each year since 2002. [63851]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* A number of facilities hold Waste Management Licences for the treatment of waste refrigerators. Not all licensed facilities are operational. Typically, there are a dozen specialist facilities recovering CFCs from domestic refrigerators. Some facilities also treat panels from commercial refrigeration equipment.

Operators of fridge treatment plants are not required to report CFC recovery on a grammes per fridge basis. CFC recovery data for 2005 is currently being assessed and collated and will be available to report to the European Commission by the reporting deadline of 30 June this year.

A detailed audit of fridge treatment facilities in 2004 concluded that the quantity of controlled substances recovered from the refrigerant and blowing agent equated to approximately 236g per fridge/freezer treated in England and Wales during 2003.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the UK's position in European CFC recovery league tables. [63852]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* Recovery of CFCs/HCFCs (chlorofluorocarbons/hydrochlorofluorocarbons) in the UK in 2004 (the last year for which figures are available) represented some 25 per cent. of the total CFC/HCFCs estimated to have been recovered in the EU. The UK figure also includes CFC/HCFCs recovered from imported waste refrigerators from elsewhere in the EU.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) how many tonnes of the CFCs recovered by the UK's licensed facilities have been *(a)* destroyed and *(b)* processed to render them harmless to the environment in each year since 2002; [63845]

(2) what amount of CFC was recovered from domestic and commercial appliances in each of the last 10 years; and what estimate she has made for 2006; [63846]

(3) how many tonnes of CFC were recovered in 2005; what estimate she has made of the amount which will be recovered in 2006; and if she will make a statement; [63848]

(4) what plans she has to address falling levels of CFC recovery in the UK. [63849]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* The following information is available on the recovery of chlorofluorocarbons (CFC) from all equipment:

	Tonnes
2002	387
2003	494
2004	427

The requirement to recover CFCs and other ozone depleting substances from domestic refrigerators did not come into force until 2002. Recovery levels were not reported or collated for any previous year. CFC recovery data for 2005 is currently being assessed and collated. This will be available in time to meet the European Commission's reporting deadline of 30 June.

It is not possible to know in advance the levels of CFC recovery from domestic or commercial refrigeration equipment in 2006. The amount available for recovery will be influenced by the number of fridges and freezers presented for treatment, the proportion that contained CFCs when manufactured, and the proportion of CFCs lost in use, storage or transit. Recovery figures for 2006 will be reported during 2007.

CFCs recovered at fridge treatment plants are converted/destroyed on site or sent to specialist facilities for destruction.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what guidance her Department has issued on the recovery of controlled substances in refrigerators and freezers; what assessment she has made of the impact of the guidance on CFC recovery rates in the UK; and if she will make a statement. [63847]

Mr. Morley: The Environment Agency and Scottish Environment Protection Agency "Guidance on the Recovery and Disposal of Controlled Substances Contained in Refrigerators and Freezers" was published in 2002. The Agencies intend to review this guidance when the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive is implemented.

The publication of guidance is only one factor which may influence the amount of CFCs recovered in the UK. Other major factors include the number of fridges and freezers presented for treatment, the proportion that contained CFCs when manufactured, and the proportion of CFCs that are lost in use, storage or transit.

Genetically Modified Foods

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent representations she has received on the cultivation of genetically modified foods; and if she will make a statement. [63624]

Mr. Morley: Over recent weeks Defra has received representations on various issues to do with GM crops. These include the coexistence of GM and non-GM crops, the ongoing WTO case on GMOs, and the use of Genetic Use Restriction Technologies (GURTs).

Scout Moor Windfarm

Janet Anderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of whether the development of the Scout Moor windfarm will meet the provisions of the Commons Bill in respect of the protection of and public access to common land. [63419]

Jim Knight: These applications are made under section 147 of the Inclosure Act 1845. Consideration is given under these provision to the effect of the exchange on the general public's legal right of access over the land. The future provisions in the Commons Bill are not relevant.

Water Industry Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the operation of section 76 of the Water Industry Act 1991. [64215]

Mr. Morley: Section 76 of the Water Industry Act 1991, allows water companies to ban or restrict the use of hosepipes to water private gardens or wash private motor cars. Powers can be used if a company believes there is a serious risk to the amount of water available for distribution to customers.

A water company imposing a ban or restriction has to give public notice before it comes into force, including details of when it will take effect. Anyone who contravenes a ban or restriction could be fined.

Water Leakage Rates

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what action has been taken to reduce leakage rates from water pipes in *(a)* Southend, *(b)* Essex, *(c)* the Three Valleys water area and *(d)* Hertfordshire. [64214]

Mr. Morley: Water companies are under a duty to develop and maintain efficient and economical water supply systems. Ofwat assesses their performance against leakage targets and reports progress each year.

The areas that you asked about are covered by three different water companies. In 2004–05, Essex and Suffolk Water, which cover areas *(a)* and *(b)* met their leakage target and operated below their Economic Level of Leakage (ELL), which is the level of leakage at which it would cost more to make further reductions than to produce water from another source. Three Valleys Water, which covers area *(c)* and part of area *(d)*, met their leakage target and operated at their ELL. Thames Water, which covers part of area *(d)*, reduced its overall leakage for the first time since 1999–2000, but failed its leakage target of 905 Megalitres/day by 10 Megalitres/day (1.1 per cent.).

It is the responsibility of Ofwat to set and enforce leakage targets. If necessary, Ofwat now has powers to fine companies for leakage failures.

TREASURY

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) when he will reply to the letter dated 14 February from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, with regard to Julie Reid; [62435]

(2) when he expects to answer the letter of 14 February from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, with regard to Mrs. C Hayes. [63930]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Paymaster General will reply to the right hon. Member very shortly.

QinetiQ

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what reasons underlay the decision by his Department not to adjust the estimated profile of repayments, when the revenue expected from the QinetiQ loan, as referred to in the National Audit Office Audit of Assumptions for Budget 2006, pages five and six, was not received in 2004–05. [63627]

Mr. Des Browne: The estimated profile of repayments on the Aquila Chertsey Loan Note was based on routine data supplied to HM Treasury. For the pre-Budget report 2005 this reflected the slippage out of 2004–05. HMT did not adjust the later years of the profile until MOD were able to confirm the repayments in 2005–06. This was done for Budget 2006.

TRANSPORT

Cycling

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many local authorities have included targets for cycling in their local transport plans; and what the targets are for each such authority. [63658]

Derek Twigg: The final second round Local Transport Plans, covering the years 2006–11, were received by the Department on 31 March and the process of assessment has only just commenced. Once this process has been completed, I will write to the hon. Member.

Dartford Crossing

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the income from user-charges for the Dartford crossing has been in each of the last five years; and how the surplus after operating costs have been deducted was spent. [64191]

Dr. Ladyman: Prior to 1 April 2002 the concessionaire operating the Dartford-Thurrock River Crossing retained all toll income.

Gross toll income received at the crossing for the year to 31 March 2003 amounted to £69.34 million. Under the provisions of the legislation applying to toll income at that time (the Dartford-Thurrock Crossing Act 1988) all revenue had to be used for the operation and maintenance of the crossing.

Under the provisions of the Transport Act 2000 a road user-charging scheme has been in operation at the crossing since 1 April 2003. The gross income received is as follows:

	£ million
2003–04	[1]68.12
2004–05	[1]69.02

[1] Includes rental income and/or interest received.

The accounts for the period from 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006 are being prepared and will be published in due course.

Under the Transport Act 2000, during the 10 year period which started when the scheme came into force, net proceeds may only be used for the purpose of directly or indirectly facilitating the achievement of any policies or proposals relating to transport. All net revenue from the charging scheme therefore accrues to the Department for Transport to support overall expenditure on transport projects.

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of *(a)* the number of accidents and *(b)* the congestion caused by vehicles queuing to pass through the toll booths at the Dartford Crossing. [64192]

Dr. Ladyman: The agents managing the day-to-day operations of the crossing review injury accident data obtained from the police, every six months and submit a report to the Highways Agency. From this report accident cluster sites are identified and studies commissioned to identify possible mitigating actions.

The layout of the toll plaza is not designed for free flow conditions, and the toll plazas perform an important safety role in controlling the volume of traffic and speed of vehicles both through the tunnels and away from the bridge.

The level of congestion at and around the Dartford Crossing is included in the baseline assessment of the Department for Transport's PSA reliability target.

Rail Services (Wales)

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many representations his Department has received on the First Great Western Trains December 2006 proposed timetable; and how many related to the proposed termination of the 1515 London Paddington to Swansea service at Cardiff. [60811]

Derek Twigg: The Department has received approximately 600 representations on the First Great Western's proposed timetable for December 2006. One was related to the proposed termination of the 15.15 Paddington to Swansea service at Cardiff.

WALES

Departmental Staff

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many and what proportion of *(a)* staff and *(b)* new staff employed in his Department in each of the last three years for which data are available were registered as disabled. [61388]

Mr. Hain: The Wales Office has a small number of staff with disabilities. For privacy reason the numbers are confidential, in line with guidance issued by the Cabinet Office which states that Departments are not required to provide figures on the number of disabled staff where it is less than five in the department.

Grievance Procedures

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales (1) how many grievance procedures have been initiated in his Department in each of the last three years; [63558]

(2) how many complaints of *(a)* bullying and *(b)* sexual harassment have been investigated in his Department in each of the last three years; and how many complaints have been upheld. [63559]

Mr. Hain: None.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Cricket

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what support her Department is providing for cricket in 2006–07; and if she will make a statement. [64522]

Mr. Caborn: The Government, through Sport England, continue to provide financial support to the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) to assist in the delivery of both the professional and amateur game.

Cricket is one of Sport England's 10 priority sports and they will be investing £8.5 million during 2006–07. Around £4 million will be provided directly to the ECB to support a number of initiatives including the ECB's four year strategic plan, PE School Sport and Club Links (PESSCL) strategy, Step Into Sport volunteer programme, UK Coaching Certificate programme and the hire of English Institute of Sport facilities. The remaining funding will be provided direct to the sport through schemes such as the Community Club Development Programme, Chance to Shine Programme, County Sports Partnership Funding and Community Funding, and through the National Sports Foundation.

Football (Homophobia)

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions she has had with football *(a)* authorities and *(b)* clubs on tackling homophobia. [64619]

Mr. Caborn: There has been no ministerial discussion with either the football authorities or clubs on tackling homophobia in football.

The Government believe that there is no place for homophobia in football or in wider society and we fully support the campaign being led by the Football Association against homophobic abuse in football in England.

Through their "Football For All" programme, the FA is publicly committed to making football inclusive and open to all and to eradicate homophobia in the sport through education, effective reporting structures and communication and awareness training.

Olympic Games

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what funding the Olympic Trust Fund will receive from *(a)* the Exchequer, *(b)* the National Lottery and *(c)* private sources; and if she will make a statement. [62943]

Mr. Caborn: The Government and the Lottery distributors have initially made £35 million available to establish the trust. We will be looking, over time, to attract significant funding from the private sector to support the trust's projects.

HEALTH

Dentistry

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she plans to make of the provision of national health service dentistry in areas where large numbers of dentists have not signed the new NHS dental contract; and if she will make a statement. [63567]

Ms Rosie Winterton: As of 1 April, primary care trusts (PCTs) have devolved responsibility and funding for the commissioning of primary dental services. This means that, if a dentist ceases to provide national health service dentistry, the resources will remain with the PCT to be re-invested in local dental services.

The dental reforms will give PCTs greater flexibility to develop services in ways that reflect the needs of their local populations.

The national implementation group that has been established to monitor the impact of the reforms will be able to review the experience of PCTs in re-commissioning services where it is necessary to do so.

Dorset and Somerset Strategic Health Authority

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much funding was allocated to Dorset and Somerset strategic health authority in each year since 2001. [64305]

Caroline Flint: The information in the following tables shows the funding allocation for health authorities and primary care trusts (PCTs) since 2001. From 2003, funding allocation was made to individual PCTs.

Revenue allocations to HAs in Dorset and Somerset strategic health authority 2001–02 and 2002–03

£000

	2001–02	2002–03
Dorset health authority	526,399	582,186
Somerset health authority	344,794	379,361
Dorset and Somerset SHA	871,193	961,547

Revenue allocations to PCTs in Dorset and Somerset SHA from 2003–04 to 2007–08

£000

	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08
Bournemouth Teaching	150,577	164,922	180,054	212,879	231,530
Mendip	83,263	91,525	100,068	121,820	135,946
North Dorset	75,209	81,940	88,946	106,648	116,559
Poole	147,167	160,339	174,048	206,103	223,879
Somerset Coast	116,393	127,991	140,301	175,041	195,512
South and East Dorset	132,472	144,375	156,956	188,073	205,872
South Somerset	124,979	136,164	147,807	176,117	192,456
South West Dorset	122,640	134,315	146,636	173,083	190,469
Taunton Deane	86,195	94,443	103,125	125,141	137,943
Dorset and Somerset SHA	1,038,896	1,136,014	1,237,940	1,484,905	1,630,168

General Practitioners

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* general practitioners and *(b)* NHS dentists there were per head of population in (i) England and (ii) Taunton constituency in each year since 1997. [64308]

Caroline Flint: Population data at constituency level is not available. The numbers of general medical practitioners (excluding retainers and registrars) and dentists per 100,000 population have been provided for England and Taunton Deane Primary Care Trust (PCT) are shown as follows.

General medical practitioners (excluding retainers and registrars)[1] per 100,000 population in England and the specified organisations, 1997–2004

	England	Taunton Deane PCT
1997	57.6	—
1998	57.9	—
1999	58.1	—
2000	58.1	—
2001	58.2	95.5
2002	58.8	71.2
2003	60.9	71.4
2004	62.9	73.6
2005	—	—

[1] General Medical Practitioners (excluding retainers and registrars) includes contracted general practitioners, GMS others and PMS others. Prior to September 2004 this group included GMS unrestricted principals, PMS contracted GPs, PMS salaried GPs, restricted principals, assistants; salaried doctors (Para 52 SFA), PMS other, flexible career scheme GPs and GP returners.

Source:
The Information Centre for Health and Social Care General and Personal Medical Services Statistics Office for National Statistics 2001 Population Census

General dental services and personal dental services: Number of dentists per 100,000 population in England and the specified organisations as at 30 September 1997–2005

	England	Taunton Deane PCT
1997	34.3	—
1998	35.2	—
1999	36.2	—
2000	36.9	—
2001	37.9	58.5
2002	38.2	56.8
2003	38.6	62.9
2004	39.4	63.2
2005[1,2]	41.7	69.8

[1] Official 2005 population data are not yet available. 2005 data have therefore been estimated using Office for National Statistics 2004 mid-year population estimates based on the 2001 census as these are the latest available.
[2] Estimate.

Source:
The Information Centre for Health and Social Care General and Personal Medical Services Statistics Office for National Statistics 2001 Population Census

Postgraduate Medical Education and Training Board

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the range of fees charged by the Postgraduate Medical Education and Training Board. [62566]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is shown in the table.

Service provided by the board	*Fee payable*	*Relevant article of the order*
Application for the award of a certificate of completion of training (CCT) in a speciality listed in schedule 3 to the order, including pursuant to the competent authority functions of the board	£500 £200 in respect of a re-submitted application or a review	Article 8(1), article 8(4) and article 20(3)(a)
Application for the award of a CCT in general practice	£500 £200 in respect of a re-submitted application or a review	Article 8(1) and article 8(4)
Application for a determination that training or qualifications, or both when considered together, are equivalent to a CCT in general practice, including issuing a statement of eligibility for registration if so requested	£950 £600 in respect of a re-submitted application or a review	Article 11(3) and article 11(7)
Application for a certificate of acquired rights to practise as a general practitioner	£250 £125 in respect of review	Article 12(3)
Application for a determination that an applicant has a particular expertise in a field within a speciality which is not made at the same time as an application referred to in entry 1, 2, 3, 6 or 7	£250	Article 13(4)(b) and (5)
Application for a determination that specialist training or specialist qualifications in a speciality listed in schedule 3 to the order, or both when considered together, are equivalent to a CCT in the speciality in question, including issuing a statement of eligibility for registration if so requested	£950 £600 in respect of a re-submitted application or a review	Article 14(4) and article 14(11)
Application for a determination that *(a)* specialist training undertaken or specialist qualifications awarded outside the United Kingdom in a medical speciality not listed in schedule 3 to the order; or *(b)* knowledge of or experience in a medical speciality derived from academic or research work has given a person a level of knowledge and skill consistent with practice as a consultant in the national health service including issuing a statement of eligibility for registration if so requested	£950 £600 in respect of a re-submitted application or a review	Article 14(5) and article 14(11)

Service provided by the board	*Fee payable*	*Relevant article of the order*
Application for a duplicate copy of any certificate issued by the specialist training authority (STA), the joint committee on postgraduate training in general practice (JCPTGP) or the board	£75	Article 24(1)
Application for a certificate relating to training in the UK in certain specialities	£150	Article 20(1)(b)
Application for a certificate to a person holding specialist qualifications not satisfying the requirements of the directive, awarded following training begun before the relevant date referred to in article 15(2), by the UK, or where the person holding that qualification has practised that speciality in the UK	£250	Article 20(3)(b)
Application for a certificate of fulfilment of directive training requirements in respect of qualifications which do not conform with the designations set out in the directive	£150	Article 20(3)(c)
Application to an appeal panel for the determination of an appeal against a decision of the board	£1,400 (written appeal) £2,100 (oral appeal)	Article 21(1)
Application for a certificate of completion of specialist training (CCST) in accordance with article 6 of the European Specialist Medical Qualifications Order (ESMQO) 1995 where a person has applied to the STA for a CCST and the application has not been determined before the relevant date (unless the fee prescribed by the STA has previously been paid to the STA in respect of that application)	£250	Paragraph 11(a) of schedule 8 to the order
Application for the determination of an appeal against a refusal by the board to award a CCST in accordance with article 13(1) of the ESMQO 1995	£700 (written appeal) £1,400 (oral appeal)	Paragraph 11(b) of schedule 8 to the order
Application for a determination of eligibility for entry to the specialist register in accordance with article 9(2) or (3) of the ESMQO 1995 where a person has applied to the STA and the application has not been determined before the relevant date (unless the fee prescribed by the STA has previously been paid to the STA)	£950	Paragraph 12(a) of schedule 8 to the order
Application for the determination of any appeal against a decision of the board under article 9(2) or (3) of the ESMQO 1995	£700 (written appeal) £1,400 (oral appeal)	Paragraph 12(b) of schedule 8 to the order
Application for the determination of an appeal against a decision of the STA, lodged before the relevant date, to be determined in accordance with the relevant article of the ESMQO 1995 (unless the fee prescribed by the STA has previously been paid to the STA in respect of that application)	£700 (written appeal) £1,400 (oral appeal)	Paragraph 14 of schedule 8 to the order
Application for a statement of training, qualifications and experience in respect of which a certificate has been issued by the board, the STA or the JCPTGP	£150	Article 24(1)

Sexual and Reproductive Health

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 27 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 805W on sexual and reproductive health, how many officials provide the secretariat for the advisory group; what the grade is of each is, and what the cost was to her Department in each year since 2003–04. [64206]

Caroline Flint: The secretariat for the Independent Advisory Group on Sexual Health and HIV is shared between vice chairs of the group, with support from the Department as required, mainly in facilitation of the quarterly meetings of the group.

The cost of the support from the Department is less that £15,000 per annum.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Citizens Advice Bureaux

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the effect of the closure of Citizens Advice Bureaux on local communities. [63275]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Department is not responsible for local Citizens Advice Bureaux each of which is an independent charity. The DTI provide £23.6 million in grant aid to Citizens Advice in 2005–06. The DTI has made no assessment of the effect of the closure of Citizens Advice Bureaux on local communities.

Energy Pre-Payment (Domestic Customers)

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will take steps to address the

additional charges levied on domestic energy customers using pre-payment meters; and if he will make a statement. [64229]

Malcolm Wicks: The charges applied to pre-payment meters reflect the additional costs of the meter itself and the infrastructure required to support it. Any enforced reduction in the charges applied to pre-payment meters would have to be cross-subsidised by other customers, including pensioners and the fuel poor, the majority of whom do not use pre-payment meters. Pre-payment tariffs of individual suppliers vary, and, where customers prefer to retain a pre-payment meter, they may be able to reduce their expenditure by switching supplier.

Fuel Poverty Initiatives

Mark Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of social programmes aimed at alleviating fuel poverty offered by the six major domestic energy supply companies; [63600]

(2) what role he expects the six major domestic energy supply companies to play in tackling fuel poverty, beyond their energy Efficiency Commitment Priority Group obligations; and if he will make a statement; [63601]

(3) what criteria are used by an energy supply company to class a tariff as a social tariff. [63602]

Malcolm Wicks: Each of the major domestic energy suppliers offer a number of programmes that assist vulnerable customers in various ways. The actual definition of a social tariff varies from company to company but is generally a lower price tariff directed towards a subset of vulnerable customers. It is for suppliers, not the Government, to design and set such tariffs.

Although information from individual suppliers about take-up of particular schemes is commercially confidential, an annex to the Government's UK Fuel Poverty Strategy Fourth Annual Progress Report, to be published later this year, will include information about the overall impacts of company schemes in 2004 and 2005. This will include information about actions companies have taken in 2004 and 2005 beyond their Energy Efficiency Priority Group obligations.

We continue to encourage energy companies to consider their most vulnerable consumers when considering price or service changes. I therefore welcome the trust funds and social tariffs announced, but continue to urge energy companies to do more.

Heating Fuel Costs

Willie Rennie: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry by how much the cost of heating fuel has changed in each year since 1997. [64422]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* Percentages real terms year-on-year price changes for those fuels used in the domestic sector are shown in the following table.

Year-on-year percentage price changes since 1997

	Fuel				
	Coal and smokeless fuels	*Gas*	*Electricity*	*Heating oils*	*Total fuel and light*
1996 to 1997	-2	-4	-8	-5	-6
1997 to 1998	-2	-6	-7	-19	-7
1998 to 1999	0	-3	-3	+10	-3
1999 to 2000	0	-4	-3	+39	-2
2000 to 2001	+2	0	-3	-5	-2
2001 to 2002	+2	+3	-3	-8	0
2002 to 2003	-1	-1	-2	+8	-1
2003 to 2004	+3	+5	+4	+12	+5
2004 to 2005	+8	+10	+7	+26	+11

Source:
Retail Price Index, Office for National Statistics

Home Computing Initiative

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions the Department has had with the Treasury on the abolition of Home Computing Initiative tax relief. [62453]

Alan Johnson *[holding answer 30 March 2006]:* My Department has had a number of discussions with the Treasury on Budget issues relevant to DTI, including the Home Computing Initiative.

Noise Induced Hearing Loss Claims

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much has been paid to *(a)* Beresfords, *(b)* UDM, *(c)* Vendside, *(d)* Wake Smith and *(e)* AMS Law for noise-induced hearing loss claims in each year since 2000; and what the average payment was in each case. [64452]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 19 April 2006]:* The costs payments made are set out in the table:

	Solicitor	*Solicitor payments made*	*Total solicitors costs (£)*	*Average (£)*
2000	Beresfords	61	52,330	858
2001	Beresfords	1,314	902,897	687
2002	Beresfords	411	287,524	700
2003	Beresfords	336	299,029	890
2004	Beresfords	437	544,608	1,246
2005	Beresfords	650	699,678	1,076
2006[1]	Beresfords	65	71,779	1,104
2000	UDM/Vendside[2]	1,222	684,846	560
2001	UDM/Vendside	2,757	1,666,900	605
2002	UDM/Vendside	2,130	1,327,737	623
2003	UDM/Vendside	793	602,626	760
2004	UDM/Vendside	833	667,124	801
2005	UDM/Vendside	1,150	951,274	827
2006	UDM/Vendside	424	356,483	841
2000	Wake Smith	1	1,500	1,500
2001	Wake Smith	15	16,032	1,069
2002	Wake Smith	6	5,768	961
2003	Wake Smith	2	1,868	934
2004	Wake Smith	20	59,336	2,967
2005	Wake Smith	16	3,321	2,708
2006	Wake Smith	1	2,000	2,000
2000	AMS Law	170	109,219	642
2001	AMS Law	97	62,195	641
2002	AMS Law	78	59,619	764
2003	AMS Law	46	37,946	825
2004	AMS Law	55	53,784	978
2005	AMS Law	34	29,512	868
2006	AMS Law	3	2,569	856

[1] 2006 figures reflect the position up to 16 April 2006

[2] The Union of Democratic Mineworkers register claims on behalf of their members. Vendside operate a claims handling company on behalf of the UDM and as such administration of claims is processed via Vendside Limited

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many claimants have been paid for noise-induced hearing loss in *(a)* Bassetlaw and *(b)* Nottinghamshire since 1999. [64453]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 19 April 2006]:* The number of claimants paid for noise-induced hearing loss since 1999 is 1,389 in Bassetlaw and 11,163 in Nottinghamshire[1].

[1] Nottinghamshire covers the constituencies of Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Broxtowe, Gedling, Mansfield, Newark, Nottingham East, Nottingham North, Nottingham South, Rushcliffe and Sherwood

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what agreements on costs have been reached for noise-induced hearing loss claims with *(a)* Beresfords, *(b)* Wake Smith, *(c)* AMS Law, *(d)* UDM and *(e)* Vendside; and when each agreement (i) began and (ii) will end. [64454]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 19 April 2006]:* The Department's agreement on costs for noise-induced hearing loss claims with Beresfords was reached in December 2000 and ended in March 2002. The current agreement with the UDM was reached in May 2003, is ongoing, and covers claims originating with the Union but submitted by either their claims handling company, Vendside, or the solicitors AMS Law. We do not have an agreement with Wake Smith.

Social Tariffs

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions *(a)* he and *(b)* his officials have had with representatives of gas and electricity supply companies on improving the information on social tariffs provided to customers. [64379]

Malcolm Wicks: DTI officials and I have regular contact with all of the major energy supply companies and their trade organisation, the Energy Retail Association, on a wide range of issues, including the introduction of social tariffs by energy companies. With DTI's encouragement, the energy suppliers established the Home Heat helpline, which, among other things, provides customers with advice on the most appropriate tariff, including information on social tariffs. It is for individual suppliers to determine how best to market their tariffs.

Telephone Preference Service Regulations

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many letters the Information Commissioner's Office has sent to date to *(a)* companies that have had in excess of 50 complaints made against them under telephone preference service regulations and *(b)* to companies breaching telephone preference service regulations. [62238]

Alun Michael: The Information Commissioner is responsible for administering the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003. Regulation 21 of these regulations relates to unsolicited direct marketing telephone calls. It should be note that complaints received by his office about breaches of Regulation 21 concern calls made to Telephone Preference Service (TPS) registered numbers and also organisation not to make marketing calls to that number.

Due to the nature of the casework management system used by the Information Commissioner's Office he is unable to identify companies about which more than 40 complaints have been received about alleged breaches of Regulation 21 and is therefore unable to identify how many letters have been sent to companies about which more than 50 such complaints have been received.

To date, the Information Commissioner has written to organisations in 1,754 cases regarding an alleged breach of Regulation 21.

So far the Information Commissioner has been able to deal with complaints relating to alleged breaches of Regulation 21 of the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003, through informal resolution with the organisations concerned. Information Commissioner has not needed to initiate formal enforcement action against any organisation for breaching Regulation 21. As most cases have been resolved at any early stage of their proceedings.

Telephone Service Providers

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many complaints about telephone cold calling were made against *(a)* the Labour party, *(b)* the Conservative party, *(c)* the Scottish National party and *(d)* the Green party since the introduction of the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) 2003; and on how many occasions the Information Commissioner has initiated formal action in response to these complaints. [61652]

Alun Michael: The Information Commissioner is responsible for administering the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003. Regulation 21 of these regulations relates to unsolicited direct marketing telephone calls. It should be noted that complaints received by his office about breaches of Regulation 21 concern not just calls made to Telephone Preference Service (TPS) registered numbers but also calls made to numbers where the subscriber has directly asked the calling organisation not to make marketing calls to that number. Also, Regulation 19 relates to the use of unsolicited direct marketing automated telephone calls.

The number of complaints about telephone cold calling made against the parties since the introduction of the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) in 2003 is as follows:

	Number
(a) Labour party	
Total Regulation 19 complaints	16
'Upheld' Regulation 19 complaints	0
Total Regulation 21 complaints	4
'Upheld' Regulation 21 complaints	0

	Number
(b) Conservative party[1]	
Total Regulation 19 complaints	5
'Upheld' Regulation 19 complaints	5
Total Regulation 21 complaints	8
'Upheld' Regulation 21 complaints	0
(c) Scottish National party[2]	
Total Regulation 19 complaints	5
'Upheld' Regulation 19 complaints	5
Total Regulation 21 complaints	0
'Upheld' Regulation 21 complaints	0
(d) Green party	
Total Regulation 19 complaints	0
'Upheld' Regulation 19 complaints	0
Total Regulation 21 complaints	0
'Upheld' Regulation 21 complaints	0
(e) Liberal Democrats	
Total Regulation 19 complaints	0
'Upheld' Regulation 19 complaints	0
Total Regulation 21 complaints	1
'Upheld' Regulation 21 complaints	0
(f) UKIP	
Total Regulation 19 complaints	0
'Upheld' Regulation 19 complaints	0
Total Regulation 21 complaints	0
'Upheld' Regulation 21 complaints	0
(g) Plaid Cymru	
Total Regulation 19 complaints	0
'Upheld' Regulation 19 complaints	0
Total Regulation 21 complaints	0
'Upheld' Regulation 21 complaints	0
(h) Respect	
Total Regulation 19 complaints	0
'Upheld' Regulation 19 complaints	0
Total Regulation 21 complaints	0
'Upheld' Regulation 21 complaints	0

[1] In 2005 the Information Commissioner issued one enforcement notice under Regulation 19 against the Conservative party.

[2] In 2005 the Information Commissioner issued one enforcement notice under Regulation 19 against the Scottish National party.

Note:

The term 'Upheld' also includes cases where the Information Commissioner decided that enforcement action was not appropriate even though there may have been some breach of the regulations.

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) against how many UK companies more than 50 complaints have been made under the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003; [61653]

(2) on how many occasions the Information Commissioner has taken against firms in breach of telephone preference service rules; and whether the Information Commissioner has taken action against firms about which he has received more than 50 complaints. [61654]

Alun Michael: The Information Commissioner is responsible for administering the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003. Regulation 21 of these regulations relates to unsolicited direct marketing telephone calls. It should be note that complaints received by his office about breaches of Regulation 21 concern calls made to Telephone Preference Service (TPS) registered numbers and also organisation not to make marketing calls to that number.

Due to the nature of the casework management system used by the Information Commissioner's Office he is unable to identify companies about which more than 40 complaints have been received about alleged breaches of Regulation 21 and is therefore unable to identify how many letters have been sent to companies about which more than 50 such complaints have been received.

To date, the Information Commissioner has written to organisations in 1,754 cases regarding an alleged breach of Regulation 21.

So far the Information Commissioner has been able to deal with complaints relating to alleged breaches of Regulation 21 of the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003, through informal resolution with the organisations concerned. Information Commissioner has not needed to initiate formal enforcement action against any organisation for breaching Regulation 21. As most cases have been resolved at any early stage of their proceedings.

Vibration White Finger

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many miners' claims for *(a)* vibration white finger and *(b)* chronic obstructive pulmonary disease have been pursued by solicitors through common law since 1999. [64439]

Malcolm Wicks: Since 1999, 178 vibration white finger and 25 chronic obstructive pulmonary disease claims have been pursued through common law.

DEFENCE

Courts Martial

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the average waiting time was for a case to go to court martial in the *(a)* Army, *(b)* Royal Navy *(c)* Royal Air Force in 2005. [57472]

Mr. Touhig *[pursuant to the reply, 13 March 2006, Official Report, c. 1945W]:* The following notes should have appeared after the list.

Notes:

1. Royal Navy figure shows the average delay between charge and appearing at court martial and the year in which court martial was convened.
2. Army figure shows the average delay between the date of the offence and appearing at court martial and the year in which the court martial was convened.
3. Royal Air Force figure shows the average delay between the point that the case papers are received by the Court Administration Unit (which administers arrangements for the court martial) to the trial date and appearing at court martial) and the cases that commenced in 2005.

Defence Intelligence and Security Centre

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the Government Departments which sent officials on courses run by the Defence Intelligence and Security Centre in 2004–05. [63393]

Mr. Ingram: The Defence Intelligence and Security Centre provides training primarily for the armed forces and the Ministry of Defence. In 2004–05, the following Government Departments sent officials on courses run by the Defence Intelligence and Security Centre:

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Home Office

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many US personnel are based at the Defence Intelligence and Security Centre. [63455]

Mr. Ingram: There are two US personnel based at the Defence Intelligence and Security Centre.

Qinetiq

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the terms were of the loan agreed with Qinetiq, referred to in the National Audit Office Audit of Assumptions for Budget 2006, pages five and six. [63628]

John Reid: The detailed terms of the loan are contained in the Aquila/Chertsey loan note, a copy of which will be placed in the Library of the House. Qinetiq's payments to the Ministry of Defence were staged in line with the sale receipts received. The loan has now been repaid in full.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the 'specific properties' were on which the Qinetiq loan referred to on page five of the National Audit Office Audit of Assumptions for Budget 2006 was secured. [63677]

John Reid: The properties were the sites at Aquila (Bromley) and Chertsey. Further details can be found in the Aquila/Chertsey Loan Note, a copy of which will be placed in the Library of the House.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the loan taken out by Qinetiq referred to in pages 5 and 6 of the National Audit Office Audit of Assumptions for Budget 2006 was first made public. [63678]

John Reid: The loan note was first made public during the Defence Select Committee evidence session of 21 January 2003 on the Qinetiq PPP, (para. 91 of the Defence Committee Minutes of Evidence of 21 January 2003 refers), as the note was to form part of the consideration for the sale of Qinetiq to Carlyle in February 2003.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what penalties were incurred by Qinetiq for failure to pay the 2004–05 repayments on the loan referred to on pages 5 and 6 of the National Audit Office's Audit of Assumptions for Budget 2006; [62398]

(2) what the timetable is for Qinetiq's repayment of the remaining £46 million of the loan referred to on page seven of the National Audit Office Audit of Assumptions for Budget 2006; [63626]

(3) for what reasons Qinetiq did not meet the expected timetable of repayments in 2004 for the loan note secured on the sale of 'specific properties', referred to on pages five and six of the National Audit Office Audit of Assumptions for Budget 2006. [63676]

John Reid *[holding answer 30 March 2006]:* There were no penalties, and no fixed term for the repayment of the loan referred to in the National Audit Office's Audit. This was the Aquila/Chertsey Loan Note, between the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and Qinetiq, which formed part of the receipt from the initial sale of a minority equity interest in Qinetiq to Carlyle in 2003. The loan note was secured against the sale of Qinetiq property at Aquila (Bromley) and Chertsey. No firm schedule of repayments could be laid down as the income from the sale was conditional on the achievement of various stages of planning permission, and so the Budget assumptions were based on estimates of time scales for this planning permission. These original estimates were not achieved, and hence payments to be made by Qinetiq to the MOD slipped.

The loan note has been repaid in stages with the bulk of the money, some £43.5 million being paid in September 2005, and the final outstanding amount, some £2.5 million being paid at the end of March 2006.

Macedonia

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the bid by Macedonia to join NATO; and if he will make a statement. [64488]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: I have been asked to reply.

The UK welcomes Macedonia's bid to join NATO. Macedonia is a member of NATO's Partnership for Peace and has a Membership Action Plan. We look forward to her eventual membership. But, as for all applicants, Macedonia must first meet the membership criteria in full. Good progress is being made in defence reform, although further work is needed. Political conditionality is also important. This includes full implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, and reform of the economy and the judiciary. The proper conduct of parliamentary elections later this year will be an important element in meeting the political conditionality requirements.

Nuclear Equipment (Waste)

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the total amount of waste produced by nuclear submarines and their reactors has been over the last 30 years. [63780]

Mr. Ingram: No central records are held on the total amount of waste produced by nuclear submarines and their reactors over the last 30 years. However, records held by individual sites in the UK involved in the nuclear submarine programme show that since 1988, the earliest date for which records are available, 3,344 m^3 of Low Level Radioactive Waste (before treatment and super-compaction) and 114 m^3 of Intermediate Radioactive Waste has been produced.

The "United Kingdom Radioactive Waste Inventory" to which the Ministry of Defence contributes provides periodic snapshots on all radioactive waste stocks, including levels of waste, location and whether the waste is held in temporary or permanent storage. The inventory has previously been published to show snapshots of waste stocks in 1984,1985,1986,1987,1988,1989, 1991,

1994, 1998 and 2001, and a copy of the most recent inventory, for 2004, is available on Nirex's website at http://www.nirex.co.uk/foi/ukinvent/.

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the total amount of waste produced from nuclear warheads that have been decommissioned has been over the last 30 years. [63781]

Mr. Ingram: The amount of waste arising specifically from the decommissioning of nuclear warheads is not recorded separately from waste arising from other phases of the programme. The information requested cannot therefore be provided.

Records of radioactive wastes for the totality of the nuclear warhead programme are published periodically by NIREX in the Nuclear Waste Inventory sponsored by DEFRA. The latest issue is dated 19 January 2006 and is available at http://www.nirex.co.uk.

Pensions

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer to question 61540, on pension rights, what employment status members of the reserve forces are classed as having. [64084]

Mr. Touhig: Members of the reserve forces are part of the armed forces of the Crown and the power to maintain them is found in section 1 of the Reserve Forces Act 1996. That Act provides a number of different forms of service which reservists may undertake. The conditions of service which reservists serve under reflect the form of service undertaken.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make it his policy to advise relatives of deceased armed services personnel to seek independent legal advice before signing pensions contracts; and if he will make a statement. [64040]

Mr. Touhig: Dependants of deceased service personnel do not have to sign a pension contract to receive death benefits from the armed forces pension schemes. The benefits are paid in accordance with the terms of the appropriate pension scheme. The only requirement is for the dependant to confirm they are an eligible beneficiary and to sign a claim form to that effect. The Ministry of Defence already advises in its explanatory armed forces pension booklets that, if individuals require financial or legal advice regarding pension matters, they should seek independent advice.

Submarines (Astute Class)

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects Astute class submarines *(a)* HMS Ambush and *(b)* HMS Artful to come into service. [64245]

Mr. Ingram: HMS Ambush is expected to enter service in 2010, and HMS Artful in 2012.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Renewable Energy

Mr. Andrew Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what renewable energy projects his Department is supporting in developing countries. [62475]

Mr. Thomas: DFID is committed to increasing access to reliable and affordable energy as an essential catalyst for reducing poverty and increasing economic growth in developing countries. We agree that renewable energy has an increasingly important role to play in helping developing countries make progress towards the Millennium Development Goals.

DFID is working with international networks such as the Global Village Energy Partnership (GVEP) and the EU energy initiative (EUEI) to promote access to affordable energy services, drawing on the full menu of technology options, including renewable energy.

DFID has supported the creation of a new €220 million EU energy facility, which will invite calls for proposals later this year. This grant fund aims to improve access to reliable and affordable energy, especially in Africa, and is encouraging viable renewable energy proposals.

We are also encouraging the World Bank and other development partners to give renewable energy greater attention as part of their efforts to improve access to energy.

The World Bank is scaling up its financial support for renewable energy and energy efficiency and announced in December 2005, a rise to $299 million for the year to June 2005, compared to an average of $209 million per annum over the previous three years. These figures exclude large hydropower projects and exceed the commitment they made in 2004 to increase their renewable energy and energy efficiency investments by 20 per cent. per annum over the next five years. We very much welcome this increased investment by the World Bank on clean energy.

DFID has provided around £3.4 million for renewable energy research projects in the last eight years. This was spent on the development and promotion of renewable energy, especially for rural communities. It has included a wide range of technologies such as wind, small hydropower, solar and biomass.

Sri Lanka

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what contribution the UK is making towards the efforts to destroy landmines in Sri Lanka. [63116]

Mr. Thomas: The United Kingdom is a major contributor to mine action in Sri Lanka. We have provided £1 million through the United Nations to support demining and mine awareness in conflict affected areas. A further £669,766 has been committed to two non governmental organisations (NGOs), the Mine Action Group and the HALO Trust, for mine action between 2004 and 2007.

The programmes, together with those from the wider international community, have been successful. Deaths from mines have been largely eliminated, although there are still a small number of casualties each year, especially in the far north of Sri Lanka. Nevertheless the Government estimate that some 700,000 to 1,000,000 mines remain to be cleared.

Given the dependence upon mines in militarily significant areas, it will be many more years before Sri Lanka will be landmine free, and before the Government will feel able to sign the Ottawa Treaty. The Government of Sri Lanka is planning to create within the Sri Lankan army, a national capability to pursue mine action work after 2008. DFID will review progress during 2007 and, in the light of this, consider further support.

World Cup (Complimentary Tickets)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many complimentary tickets his Department has received for games taking place at the FIFA World Cup 2006 in Germany. [63911]

Hilary Benn: None.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Media Briefing

Norman Baker: To ask the Leader of the House under what circumstances Ministers are permitted to release material to media outlets in advance of a statement being made to Parliament, when the House is sitting. [63155]

Mr. Hoon: Paragraph 7.1 of the Ministerial Code makes it clear that

> "When Parliament is in session, the most important announcements of Government policy should be made, in the first instance, in Parliament."

WORK AND PENSIONS

Financial Assistance Scheme

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the *(a)* average, *(b)* highest and *(c)* lowest payment made to individuals under the Financial Assistance Scheme has been; what the equivalent figures are for recipients living in Wales; and if he will make a statement. [64133]

Mr. Timms: The Financial Assistance Scheme will provide a qualifying member with assistance that will top up their scheme pension to a level broadly equivalent to 80 per cent. of their expected pension. Payments are subject to a de minimis level and a cap. Initial payments, when made, provide a top up to 60 per cent. of expected pension.

The following monthly payments have been made, before deduction of income tax.

	£
(a) average	190.34
(b) highest	629.84
(c) lowest	50.08

The equivalent figures for recipients living in Wales are

	£
(a) average	196.21
(b) highest	629.84
(c) lowest	50.08

Jobcentre Plus

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the *(a)* public, *(b)* private and *(c)* voluntary sector organisations which have contracts with Jobcentre Plus. [61415]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question asking if he will list the *(a)* public *(b)* private and *(c)* voluntary sector organisations which have contracts with Jobcentre Plus. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Information on contracts awarded prior to September 2005 is not broken down in the way in which you have requested and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost. However, I am able to provide a list of organisations to which Jobcentre Plus has awarded contracts since September 2005, broken down by legal status, and this is set out in the attached table.

I hope this is helpful.

Table of contracts let since September 2005 to organisations listed by legal status

Company name	*Legal status*
Cornwall College	Further Education College
Lauder College	Further Education College
New College Nottingham	Further Education College
Plymouth College of Further Education	Further Education College
Preston College	Further Education College
Stephenson College	Further Education College
York College	Further Education College
Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council	Statutory Body—Local Authority
Bolton Metropolitan Council	Statutory Body—Local Authority
East Lindsey District Council	Statutory Body—Local Authority
Halton Borough Council	Statutory Body—Local Authority
Northamptonshire County Council	Statutory Body—Local Authority
West Lothian Council	Statutory Body—Local Authority

Table of contracts let since September 2005 to organisations listed by legal status

Company name	*Legal status*
Blackburn and Darwen Primary Care Trust	Statutory Body—NHS
Remploy	Executive Non-Departmental Public Body
DASH Training Partnership	Partnership—Unlimited
Bradford Cathedral Centre Limited	Private Company (limited by guarantee)
Cheshire Deaf Society	Private Company (limited by guarantee)
Claverhouse Training	Private Company (limited by guarantee)
Connexions Staffordshire	Private Company (limited by guarantee)
Connexions West of England	Private Company (limited by guarantee)
CPR Regeneration	Private Company (limited by guarantee)
Derbyshire Chamber and Business Link	Private Company (limited by guarantee)
Ellingham Employment Services	Private Company (limited by guarantee)
Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities	Private Company (limited by guarantee)
Glasgow Mentoring Network	Private Company (limited by guarantee)
Highways to Opportunities	Private Company (limited by guarantee)
Instant Muscle	Private Company (limited by guarantee)
JHP Training	Private Company (limited by guarantee)
NECTA Ltd.	Private Company (limited by guarantee)
North East Chamber of Commerce	Private Company (limited by guarantee)
Northumberland Business Services	Private Company (limited by guarantee)
Nottingham Mencap	Private Company (limited by guarantee)
O-Regen	Private Company (limited by guarantee)
Pendle Re-Employment	Private Company (limited by guarantee)
Pentreath	Private Company (limited by guarantee)
Phoenix Enterprises	Private Company (limited by guarantee)
Quest For Economic Development Ltd.	Private Company (limited by guarantee)
Sabre Employment	Private Company (limited by guarantee)
Scout Enterprises (Western)	Private Company (limited by guarantee)
Support Training Ltd.	Private Company (limited by guarantee)
Sure Start North Prospect LARK Project	Private Company (limited by guarantee)
TBG Learning	Private Company (limited by guarantee)
The Mid Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Training) Ltd.	Private Company (limited by guarantee)
Training 2000	Private Company (limited by guarantee)
Training West Lancashire	Private Company (limited by guarantee)
Upturn Enterprises	Private Company (limited by guarantee)
West Cumbria Trades Hall Centre	Private Company (limited by guarantee)
Action for Employment	Private Company (limited by shares)
ATS	Private Company (limited by shares)
BTCV	Private Company (limited by shares)
Business Employment Services Training Limited	Private Company (limited by shares)
Care Training	Private Company (limited by shares)
Career Development Centre	3rivate Company (limited by shares)
CeeMac Projects UK	Private Company (limited by shares)
City and County Training Limited	Private Company (limited by shares)
Community Systems	Private Company (limited by shares)
Cullisvale Services	Private Company (limited by shares)
DHP Enterprise Limited	Private Company (limited by shares)
Easton Learning Centre	Private Company (limited by shares)
ERP Ltd.	Private Company (limited by shares)
Fern Training and Development	Private Company (limited by shares)
Hargreaves Training Services Ltd.	Private Company (limited by shares)
Inspire to Independence	Private Company (limited by shares)
Keeping It Simple Training	Private Company (limited by shares)
Kennedy Scott	Private Company (limited by shares)
Lake District Training Academy	Private Company (limited by shares)
Local Labour Initiative for Training and Enterprise (Llite) Limited	Private Company (limited by shares)
Management Introductions Ltd.	Private Company (limited by shares)
Manchester Training Ltd.	Private Company (limited by shares)
Newquay for Excellence Training	Private Company (limited by shares)
OTR	Private Company (limited by shares)
Pelcombe Limited	Private Company (limited by shares)
Personnel Evaluation Consultants Limited	Private Company (limited by shares)
Pertemps Mouzer	Private Company (limited by shares)
positive people	Private Company (limited by shares)
Reed in Partnership plc	Private Company (limited by shares)
Seetec	Private Company (limited by shares)
Shackleton Associates	Private Company (limited by shares)
Skills Training	Private Company (limited by shares)
Standguide Ltd.	Private Company (limited by shares)
Support into Work	Private Company (limited by shares)
The JGA Group	Private Company (limited by shares)
TNG Mentoring	Private Company (limited by shares)
TNG Workskills	Private Company (limited by shares)
Tony Walsh Associates	Private Company (limited by shares)

Table of contracts let since September 2005 to organisations listed by legal status

Company name	*Legal status*
Triage Central	Private Company (limited by shares)
Twin Training International	Private Company (limited by shares)
Wakefield Environmental Developments Limited	Private Company (limited by shares)
Working Links	Private Company (limited by shares)
WTCS	Private Company (limited by shares)
Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce	Private Body Under Royal Charter
BBC	Public Body Under Royal Charter
Tribal Group	Public Limited Company (PLC)
Aberdeen Foyer	Voluntary and Community Sector—Charity
Action for Blind People	Voluntary and Community Sector—Charity
Bootstrap Enterprises	Voluntary and Community Sector—Charity
DISC	Voluntary and Community Sector—Charity
East Lancashire into Employment	Voluntary and Community Sector—Charity
Eco Actif Services Social Enterprise	Voluntary and Community Sector—Charity
One Plus	Voluntary and Community Sector—Charity
PROSPECTS The National Autistic Society	Voluntary and Community Sector—Charity
Rainer City Training Solent	Voluntary and Community Sector—Charity
RNID	Voluntary and Community Sector—Charity
Rochdale Building Trades Agency	Voluntary and Community Sector—Charity
Royal Mencap Society	Voluntary and Community Sector—Charity
Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO)	Voluntary and Community Sector—Charity
Shaw Trust	Voluntary and Community Sector—Charity
Somerset Council for Christian Care	Voluntary and Community Sector—Charity
The Dyslexia Institute Ltd.	Voluntary and Community Sector—Charity
The Wise Group	Voluntary and Community Sector—Charity
YBT Trust	Voluntary and Community Sector—Charity

Pension Service

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether it is the policy of the Pension Service to refuse to accept telephone call claims for pension credit from citizens advice bureaux' advisers on behalf of clients. [64503]

Mr. Timms: The Pension Service welcomes calls from Citizens Advice Bureaux and any third parties acting on behalf of our customers. Third party callers are expected to confirm their client's security identity and their authority to speak on the client's behalf. Once this has been confirmed, the application is taken as normal.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Colin Worton

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the police handling of the Colin Worton case. [63445]

Mr. Hanson: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has reviewed Mr. Worton's case and taken account of the assessment made by the trial judge and the Police Ombudsman and has concluded that there is no evidence of serious default by the police. The Secretary of State has written to Mr. Worton advising him of the decision in his case.

Illegal Drugs

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 1 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 778W, on illegal drugs, how many of those convicted for drug-related offences served custodial sentences. [59610]

Mr. Hanson: The table provides the number of those convicted of drug-related offences who were sentenced to immediate custody from 2000 to 2003. Sentence data beyond 2003 are currently not available.

	2000	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Importing	1	0	0	0
Distributing	81	65	44	56
Other	41	23	22	23
Total	123	88	66	79

Source:
The Northern Ireland Office

IntertradeIreland

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will commission an independent review into the management and operation of IntertradeIreland. [58936]

Angela E. Smith: I am aware of recent anonymous allegations about the financial management and other matters in IntertradeIreland. The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, in conjunction with the Southern co-sponsor Department and the Board of IntertradeIreland, has already initiated urgent inquiries into the issues raised in the letter.

Saville Report

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when the Saville Report will be published. [64300]

Mr. Hanson: The independent Bloody Sunday Inquiry has informed me that they are now engaged in compiling their final report. Due to the vast amount of evidence that must be considered this is a very time

consuming process and it is difficult at this stage to be precise about when the report will be presented to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Acholi People

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps the Government are taking to assist the Acholi people of Uganda who have been internally displaced and are living in camps. [64029]

Ian Pearson: The Acholi are one of the biggest communities affected by the long-running and brutal conflict in northern Uganda. In some of the affected districts over 90 per cent. of the population are displaced by the conflict and in total 1.7 million Ugandans are living in camps for internally displaced people.

The Ugandan Government have primary responsibility to protect its citizens and to deal with the conflict and its humanitarian consequences. The UK has helped lead international efforts to address the underlying causes of the problems in northern Uganda and to provide humanitarian assistance to those affected, including the Acholi.

Over the last 12 months we have provided over £20 million in humanitarian assistance; this includes £10.7 million to the World Food Programme to provide food and £6.8 million to support a UN inter-agency programme to address health problems in the camps. We have recently agreed to channel an additional £4.9 million over two years to the United Nations Children's Fund's (UNICEF) programmes covering water and sanitation and the provision of emergency requirements, such as shelter and protection.

Arab League Summit

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the outcome of the recent Arab League summit in Khartoum; and if he will make a statement. [64489]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Arab League summit took place in Khartoum on 28–29 March. The summit covered a wide range of issues but focussed on the situation in Darfur and the Middle East Peace Process.

We welcome the focus of the recent Arab League summit on the situation in Darfur. It is important that the Arab League and its member states do all they can, in co-ordination with the rest of the international community, to help resolve the conflict in Darfur. In particular, we call on them to use their influence to press the Government of Sudan and the rebel movements to reach a peace deal by the deadline of 30 April as set by the African Union.

The Arab League's re-endorsement of the Beirut Declaration at the Arab summit in Khartoum is also a welcome step. We look forward to working with the Arab League, Israel and the Palestinian Authority towards a comprehensive, just and lasting peace based on a two state solution with Israeli and Palestinian states living side by side in peace.

Ascension Island

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions *(a)* he and *(b)* officials from his Department have had on the future of Ascension Island since 14 March 2006; and with whom the discussions were held. [63679]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has not held discussions on the future of Ascension Island since 14 March 2006.

Officials in London have met with the following interlocutors to discuss a range of issues related to Ascension Island:

21 March 2006

The Administrator of Ascension Island

A member of the public and constituent of Mr. Cable

22 March 2006

Representatives of the User Organisations on Ascension Island

(Permanent Joint Headquarters (Ministry of Defence), VT

Merlin, Government Communications Headquarters, Cable and

Wireless, Crown Counsel Designate, St Helena)

28 March 2006

Overseas Territories Department (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) internal meeting

29 March 2006

Managing Director and Director, Richard James International

30 March 2006

Director of Finance, Ascension Island

The administrator on Ascension Island met the US base commander and his immediate superior from Patrick air force base on 4 April 2006.

Belarus

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on how many occasions the UK Government has made representations to the Government of Belarus in the past 12 months regarding oppression of people on the grounds of religious belief in that country. [63268]

Mr. Douglas Alexander *[holding answer of 18 April 2006]:* The Government continues to raise human rights issues with the Belarusian authorities, both bilaterally and together with EU partners. During the past 12 months we raised the case of one Protestant church on four separate occasions and restrictions on freedom of worship in general on at least 12 occasions. Freedom of worship was also referred to in a resolution critical of Belarus' human rights record sponsored by the EU at the April 2005 UN Commission on Human Rights. Our ambassador in Minsk also met with leaders of churches under pressure from the authorities to hear their concerns.

Burma (IDPs)

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the number of internally displaced persons in Burma; and if he will make a statement. [64491]

Ian Pearson: It is estimated that there are at least 540,000 internally displaced persons in Burma, though detailed information is hard to obtain. We are aware of renewed large-scale displacements in northern Karen State. In addition to this, there are approximately 500,000 refugees in neighbouring countries. We continue to monitor the situation closely.

Falun Gong

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the treatment of Falun Gong prisoners in China; and what representations the Government has made to the government of China about the alleged practices at the Chinese Sujiatun camp. [64059]

Ian Pearson: We regularly raise human rights with the Chinese government, including the treatment of individual Falun Gong practitioners. Individual Falun Gong cases were raised with the Chinese government at the last round of the EU-China Human Rights Dialogue in October 2005.

The Government have seen no evidence to substantiate the reports circulating about the treatment of Falun Gong practitioners in Sujiatun camp. We have not made representations to the Chinese government about these reports. However, I raised concerns on 7 April with the Chinese government about the general practice of organ harvesting from death row prisoners and the trade in their organs.

The Government welcome the announcement by the Chinese Ministry of Health of a new regulation to come into effect on 1 July, to ban the sale of organs and introduce medical standards for organ transplants.

Foreign Policy Centre

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs for what purposes his Department provides funding to the Foreign Policy Centre; and how much has been provided in each year since 1997. [63247]

Mr. Straw: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has not provided any funding to the Foreign Policy Centre in this period. We define 'funding' as payments made to an organisation which are not in respect of goods or services that the organisation has or will be providing to the FCO, but are instead made to support the organisation in its work.

A number of payments have been made to the Foreign Policy Centre during this period, but all such payments have been for goods and/or services provided by this organisation. The following payments over £100 were made:

		£
2003	Consultancy Work	8,125
2003	Organising Consular Seminar	10,060
2003	Consultancy work for the Community Relations Unit	26,300
4 April 2004	Glasgow Discussion Sheets for Partnerships and Networks Development Unit (now UK Outreach)	2,500
7 July 2004	Part payment for organisation of a meeting at Ditchley Park	35,000
15 September 2004	Part payment for organisation of a meeting at Ditchley Park	35,000
27 January 2005	Chinese New Year Event List for Partnerships and Networks Development Unit (now UK Outreach)	3,950
29 January 2005	Africa List for Partnerships and Networks Development Unit (now UK Outreach)	3,950
25 February 2005	Part payment for organisation of a meeting at Ditchley Park	23,095
13 April 2005	Welsh List for Partnerships and Networks Development Unit (now UK Outreach)	3,950
30 October 2005	Contribution to the cost of design and production of 1,500 "Europe in a Global Age" pamphlets	1,615
17 March 2006	Payment for organising a foreign policy seminar	26,950

France (Rioting)

Stephen Hesford: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he has had discussions with the French Government about the recent riots. [64318]

Ian Pearson: No.

General Ratko Mladic

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the recent disclosure by the government of Serbia, that Serbian intelligence and army officials conspired to conceal the movements of General Ratko Mladic; and if he will make a statement. [64492]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: We have noted the public disclosure from the Supreme Defence Council in February, based on a military security service report, that elements of the Serbia and Montenegro military had sheltered Mladic until June 2002. The UK expects all those involved in sheltering Mladic to be fully investigated and prosecuted. Full co-operation with the International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia remains a fundamental requirement for Serbia and Montenegro to move closer to Euro-Atlantic integration.

Guatemala

Tom Levitt: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of *(a)* human rights and *(b)* the rule of law in Guatemala. [64510]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Human Rights situation in Guatemala has improved since the signing of the Peace Accords in 1996, following 36 years of conflict. However, we continue to be concerned by the growth of organised crime, the activities of gangs, called maras,

and widespread impunity which threaten the rule of law in Guatemala. We are also concerned by attacks on human rights defenders and the increase in violence against women.

Our Embassy in Guatemala City works closely with human rights organisations and will continue to press the Guatemalan authorities to implement in full the 1996 Peace Accords, investigate reports of human rights abuses thoroughly and tackle impunity.

Tom Levitt: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the likelihood of bringing to justice those responsible for mass killings in Guatemala in the 1980s; and if he will make representations to the government of Guatemala on this matter. [64511]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The signing of the Guatemalan Peace Accords in 1996 brought an end to 36 years of conflict. The Peace Accords provided a blueprint for the Guatemalan authorities to pursue a process of social reforms, including the capacity to bring those responsible for human rights abuses to justice.

Though we have noted the progress made by the Guatemalan government in implementing the Peace Accords, that progress is slow and there is still much to be done. Many perpetrators of human rights violations continue to escape justice due to a weak judicial system.

The United Kingdom will continue to encourage the Guatemalan government to implement in full the 1996 Peace Accords, which covers improvements to the Guatemalan Judicial System. We will continue to monitor the efforts made by the Guatemalan authorities to bring those responsible for human rights violations to justice.

Holy See (British Ambassador)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs who the British ambassador to the Holy See was in each year since 1983; what relevant specialist qualifications the present incumbent holds; and what the details of his career are to date. [64209]

Ian Pearson: Since 1983, the British ambassador to the Holy See has been:

1982–1985	Mark (later Sir Mark) Heath
1985–1988	David Lane
1988–1991	John Bradley
1991–1995	Andrew Palmer
1995–1998	Maureen MacGlashen
1998–2002	Mark Pellew
2002–2005	Kathryn Colvin
2005 to date	Francis Campbell

The ambassador to the Holy See needs to be a high-calibre individual, with proven political and strategic awareness, diplomatic and interpersonal skills, have an in-depth knowledge of Government, be able to deal with complex issues, be able to build effective and lasting relationships and be able to communicate in Italian and French to a high standard.

The present ambassador's particular knowledge and understanding of the mechanics of Government, his background in diplomacy, his experience outside the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), his work with faith organisations and civil society in the UK and internationally make him ideally placed to promote and develop the UK's International Priorities with regard to the Holy See. The details of the ambassador's career are:

Curriculum Vitae

Full name	Mr. Francis Martin-Xavier Campbell
Date of birth	20 April 1970
2005	Senior Policy Director, Amnesty International
2003–2005	1st Secretary, British Embassy to Italy
2001–2003	On secondment to No. 10 Downing street as Private Secretary to the Prime Minister
1999–2001	On secondment to No. 10 Downing street as Policy Adviser to the Prime Minister
1998–1999	European Enlargement Unit, FCO
1997–1998	On secondment to the European Commission—appointed to the EC Delegation at the UN in New York for the UK Presidency of the EU
1997	European Enlargement Unit, FCO
1996–1997	University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia (MA)
1994–1995	Katholieke University of Leuven, Belgium (MA)
1989–1992	Queen's University Belfast (BA)

Jericho Prison

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what observations in relation to *(a)* living standards for prisoners, *(b)* visits to prisoners and *(c)* locking of doors at night were made by the British Independent Monitors at Jericho Prison. [61002]

Dr. Howells: The monitors observed a set list of conditions to determine if the six detainees were secluded continuously. These conditions did not include examining the living conditions. The monitors observed the numbers of visitors, the time of the visits and if the visitors were searched. Monitors were unable to verify if all the doors were locked at night.

Joseph Kony

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether it is the policy of his Department to bring Joseph Kony before the International Crime Court. [64031]

Ian Pearson: Yes. The International Criminal Court (ICC) issued warrants for the arrest of five Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) commanders, including Joseph Kony, in October 2005. Responsibility to effect the arrest warrants lies in the first instance with the states on whose territory the five LRA commanders are believed to be, in this case Uganda, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

The UK is a strong supporter of the work of the ICC in its efforts to bring to justice the perpetrators of war crimes and crimes against humanity. We have stressed to the Governments of Uganda, Sudan and the DRC their obligations to detain the LRA commanders facing arrest warrants.

Kosovo

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent

assessment he has made of levels of ethnic tension in northern Kosovo between ethnic Serbs and Albanians; and if he will make a statement. [64490]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The situation throughout Kosovo remains tense but broadly stable as the United Nations-led final status process continues. I strongly condemn the criminal acts that have taken place in northern Kosovo in recent weeks. The Government fully supports the efforts of the Kosovo Police Service and the United Nations Mission in Kosovo to bring those responsible for such acts to justice.

The London Contact Group Ministerial statement of 31 January 2006 made clear that a final status settlement must be underpinned by principles that promote a multi-ethnic society. A copy of the statement has been placed in the Library of the House. In the context of the final status process we expect community leaders to continue to engage in creating a climate conducive to bridging the ethnic divide not only in northern Kosovo but the entire territory.

Lords Resistance Army

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the strength of the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda. [64030]

Ian Pearson: There are no authoritative figures available for the current operational strength of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). It is likely that the total number has declined in recent years and current estimates put the number of combatants in hundreds rather than thousands.

The largest concentration of LRA fighters is thought to be currently based in the Garamba National Park in north-eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. Elsewhere it is thought that the LRA has a presence in southern Sudan as well as northern Uganda, where it operates in relatively small groups and is highly mobile.

Pakistan

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the political situation in Pakistan; and if he will make a statement. [64072]

Dr. Howells: The political situation in Pakistan is continuously evolving. Despite occasional outbreaks of sectarian and other violence, the appalling bomb explosion in Karachi on 11 April being the most recent example, the country remains generally stable and Pakistan is an important partner for achieving UK strategic objectives. Officials in both London and Pakistan meet regularly with members of the Pakistani Government, opposition parties and members of civil society to ensure that we remain abreast of developments. We continue to work towards ensuring that the 2007 elections are both free and fair, thus helping Pakistan's return to full democracy.

Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what proportion of members of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme in his Department joined the scheme before the age of *(a)* 20, *(b)* 25, *(c)* 30, *(d)* 35, *(e)* 40, *(f)* 45 and *(g)* over 45 years old. [62015]

Mr. Straw: The information is not currently available as my Department would need to review its pension records manually and this would incur disproportionate cost. We are currently upgrading our IT systems and I will write to the hon. Member should this information become available.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Connexions

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many hits the Connexions website received in each month since its inception. [64200]

Maria Eagle: The Connexions Direct website www.connexions-direct.com was launched on 21 October 2002.

The following table details monthly visits to the Connexions Direct website.

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
January	—	19,073	99,752	146,769	381,864
February	—	16,505	92,186	164,107	316,642
March	—	18,813	103,461	197,030	441,149
April	—	14,373	83,947	167,301	—
May	—	19,637	129,148	153,722	—
June	—	29,211	156,422	166,868	—
July	—	25,774	162,993	170,891	—
August	—	57,110	160,564	181,128	—
September	—	67,625	210,081	217,232	—
October	486	72,587	136,361	227,723	—
November	9590	75,738	118,296	262,176	—
December	10,733	54,676	85,852	263,564	—
Total	20,809	471,122	1,539,063	2,318,511	

The following table shows the number of hits for the Connexions Card website from July 2002.

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
January	—	15,693	48,245	138,640	194,567
February	—	20,048	51,304	121,197	167,071
March	—	26,449	52,997	144,670	—
April	—	46,629	107,461	153,708	—
May	—	25,262	133,000	129,960	—
June	—	36,721	133,900	129,542	—
July	13,163	37,936	115,762	133,345	—
August	15,418	24,801	110,674	120,611	—
September	18,474	19,753	126,316	161,331	—
October	29,436	31,289	123,526	180,643	—
November	19,365	41,208	192,238	172,527	—
December	14,121	51,491	90,156	124,452	—

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when she will reply to the letter dated 23 February 2006 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Dr. Arnandi Ramamudthy. [62437]

Ruth Kelly: My apologies to the right hon. Member for the delay in responding to his letter. This was due to a technical systems problem with the Department's correspondence handling system. I replied to this letter on 19 April 2006.

Departmental Policies

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will set out with statistical evidence relating as closely as possible to West Lancashire constituency the effects in West Lancashire of changes to her Department's policies since 1997. [64235]

Maria Eagle: The West Lancashire constituency lies within Lancashire local authority. The most recent Key Stage 2 and GCSE and equivalent results showing information for pupils attending schools in West Lancashire are given in the following tables:

Key Stage 2 results of 11-year-old pupils attending schools in the West Lancashire constituency—Percentage of pupils gaining level 4 and above

	1997	2005	Percentage point improvement 1997–2005
West Lancashire			
English[1]	66	80	14
Maths[1]	70	77	7
National average			
English[2]	63	79	16
Maths[2]	62	75	13

[1] Parliamentary constituency figures are based only on all maintained schools(including City Technology Colleges and, from 2003, Academies) and from 2000 onwards have been adjusted in respect of pupils recently arrived from overseas.
[2] England figures are based on all schools and have not been adjusted in respect of pupils recently arrived from overseas.

GCSE and equivalents[1] results of 15-year-old pupils[2] attending schools in the West Lancashire constituency—Percentage of 15-year-olds gaining 5 + A-C and 5 + A*-G*

	1997	2005	Percentage point improvement 1997–2005
West Lancashire			
5 + A*-C	42.2	49.2	7.0
5 + A*-G	89.2	91.8	2.6
National average			
5 + A*-C	45.1	56.3	11.2
5 + A*-G	86.4	89.0	2.6

[1] From 2004 results incorporate GCSEs, GNVQs and a wide range of other qualifications approved pre-16. Prior to 2004 results are based on GCSEs and GNVQs only.
[2] As standard the results reported relate to pupils aged 15 at the start of the academic year, i.e. 31 August, and therefore reaching the end of compulsory education at the end of the school year.
[3] Parliamentary constituency figures are based only on all maintained schools (including City Technology Colleges and, from 2003, Academies) and from 2000 onwards have been adjusted in respect of pupils recently arrived from overseas.
[4] England figures are based on all schools and have not been adjusted in respect of pupils recently arrived from overseas.

At national level, standards have improved across all key stages. The Primary and Secondary National Strategies, together with the measures we have taken to help schools in the toughest areas are continuing to deliver better results.

Further information by constituency, is provided within the Department's 'In Your Area' website available at http://www.dfes.gov.uk/inyourarea. Where information is not available at the constituency level it has been provided at local authority level.

This website allows users to access key facts and local information about education and skills based on postcodes. The data available within the site offers comparisons between 1997 and the latest available year and covers five geographies. These are parliamentary constituency, ward, local authority district, local authority and Government office region. England figures are also provided. The information available within the website is grouped in a number of broad categories including literacy and numeracy at age 11, literacy and numeracy at age 14, GCSE and equivalent results, pupils with special educational needs, school initiatives, school workforce, school funding and resources, children's social services, early years, class sizes, post-16, higher education and adult education.

Additional information could be provided only at disproportionate cost. However, my Department is investigating ways in which we can disseminate more information about the effects of our policies at a local level.

Education Finance

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average expenditure on education per pupil was in the *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary sector in (i) Southend and (ii) Essex local education authority in each year since 1976. [64253]

Jacqui Smith: The following tables contain the information requested:

Education expenditure[1] per pupil, 1992–93 to 2004–05, cash terms figures as reported by local authorities[2] as at 11 April 2006

£ per pupil

Essex local authority (pre local government reorganisation on 1 April 1998)[2]

	School based expenditure per pupil[3]			Combined local authority and school based expenditure per pupil[3]		
	Primary	Pre-primary and primary	Secondary	Primary	Pre-primary and primary	Secondary
1992–93	n/a	1,480	2,340	n/a	1,590	2,700
1993–94	n/a	1,690	2,410	n/a	1,780	2,790
1994–95	n/a	1,740	2,320	n/a	1,850	2,880
1995–96	n/a	1,760	2,340	n/a	1,910	2,870
1996–97	n/a	1,790	2,470	n/a	1,950	3,080
1997–98[7]	n/a	1,740	2,580	n/a	1,910	3,260

On the 1 April 1998 Essex local authority was reorganised and split into Essex, Southend and Thurrock local authorities. The unit costs for Essex and Southend local authorities are provided in the following table:

Essex local authority (post local government reorganisation)[2]

£ per pupil

	School based expenditure per pupil[3,4]			*Combined local authority and school based expenditure per pupil*[5]		
	Primary	*Pre-primary and primary*	*Secondary*	*Primary*	*Pre-primary and primary*	*Secondary*
1998–99[7]	n/a	1,950	2,690	n/a	2,140	3,330
1999–2000[8]	1,970	1,970	2,730	2,110	2,180	2,950
2000–01	2,240	2,250	2,860	2,390	2,460	3,090
2001–02	2,460	2,480	3,190	2,600	2,730	3,430
2002–03	2,570	n/a	3,270	n/a	n/a	n/a
2003–04	2,750	n/a	3,560	n/a	n/a	n/a
2004–05[9]	2,900	n/a	3,780	n/a	n/a	n/a

Southend local authority[2]

£ per pupil

	School based expenditure per pupil[3,4]			*Combined local authority and school based expenditure per pupil*[5]		
	Primary	*Pre-primary and primary*	*Secondary*	*Primary*	*Pre-primary and primary*	*Secondary*
1998–99[7]	n/a	1,870	2,580	n/a	2,000	3,210
1999–2000[8]	2,040	2,040	2,740	2,140	2,200	2,890
2000–01	2,220	2,230	2,980	2,320	2,410	3,150
2001–02	2,530	2,560	3,170	2,700	2,850	3,420
2002–03	2,590	n/a	3,370	n/a	n/a	n/a
2003–04	2,730	n/a	3,700	n/a	n/a	n/a
2004–05[9]	2,860	n/a	3,810	n/a	n/a	n/a

n/a = Figures are not available.

[1] The expenditure data to 1998–99 are drawn from the annual 'RO1' spending returns which local authorities submitted to the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions (now the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister). Figures for 1999–00 to 2001–02 are drawn from Section 52 (Table 3) Outturn statements which local authorities submitted to the DfES. Figures for 2002–03 onwards are taken from the recasted Section 52 (Table A) Outturn statements. The change in sources is shown by the blank rows.

[2] Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) took place on the 1 April 1998. What was previously defined as Essex local authority pre LGR was split into Essex, Southend and Thurrock local authorities for the start of the 1998–99 financial year.

[3] School based expenditure includes only expenditure incurred directly by local authority schools. This includes the pay of teachers and school-based support staff, school premises costs, books and equipment, and certain other supplies and services, less any capital items funded from recurrent spending and income from sales, fees and charges and rents and rates. This excludes the central cost of support services such as home to school transport, local authority administration and the financing of capital expenditure. The pupil data are drawn from the DfES Annual Schools Census adjusted to be on a financial year basis.

[4] From 2002–03 the school based expenditure calculation is broadly similar to the calculation in previous years. However, 2001–02 and earlier years includes all premature retirement compensation (PRC) and Crombie payments, mandatory PRC payments and other indirect employee expenses, while from 2002–03 only the schools element of these categories is included. In 2001–02 this accounted for approximately £70 per pupil of the England total, while the schools element of these categories accounted for approximately £50 per pupil of the England total in 2002–03. Also, for some LAs, expenditure that had previously been attributed to the school sectors was reported within the LA part of the form from 2002–03 and would therefore be excluded, though this is not quantifiable from existing sources.

[5] Combined local authority and school based expenditure includes all expenditure on the education of children in local authority maintained establishments and pupils educated by the authority other than in maintained establishments. This includes both school based expenditure and all elements of central LA expenditure except youth and community and capital expenditure from revenue (CERA). From 2002–03 onwards, certain elements of central local authority expenditure cannot be attributed to a particular phase of education and consequently a sector breakdown is no longer available. Pupil figures include all pre-primary pupils, including those under 5s funded by the authority and being educated in private settings (only available from 1999–00), pupils educated in maintained mainstream schools and any other local authority maintained pupils. All pupil numbers are adjusted to be on a financial year basis.

[6] Expenditure was not distinguished between the pre-primary and primary sectors until the inception of Section 52 for financial year 1999–00.

[7] Spending in 1997–98 reflects the transfer of monies from local government to central government for the nursery vouchers scheme. These were returned to local government from 1998–99.

[8] The expenditure data for 1999–00 onwards reflect the return of grant maintained schools to local authority maintenance.

[9] 2004–05 data is subject to change by the local authority.

Note:

Figures are rounded to the nearest £10.

GCSEs

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of pupils achieved *(a)* one or more A* to C, *(b)* five or more A* to C and *(c)* five or more A* to G grades at GCSE in (i) England, (ii) Somerset and (iii) Taunton constituency in each year since 1997. [64349]

Jacqui Smith: The following table shows the percentage of pupils achieving one or more A* to G grades and one or more A* to C grades. Constituency level figures for pupils achieving one or more A* to C grades at GCSE can be provided only at a disproportionate cost.

Percentage of 15-year-old pupils[1] achieving one or more GCSEs or equivalents[2] at the grades listed

	A*to G			A*to C		
	England[3]	Somerset local authority[4]	Taunton constituency[4,5]	England[3]	Somerset local authority[4]	Taunton constituency
1997	92.3	95.9	95.8	70.5	75.5	n/a
1998	93.4	96.7	97.2	71.4	77.1	n/a
1999	94.0	96.9	97.5	72.6	78.0	n/a
2000	94.4	96.8	96.6	73.6	79.0	n/a
2001	94.5	97.2	97.2	74.0	79.1	n/a
2002	94.6	97.3	98.6	75.2	79.0	n/a
2003	94.8	96.0	96.9	75.6	79.2	n/a
2004	95.9	96.0	95.8	75.8	71.8	n/a
2005	96.4	96.9	97.1	77.5	71.6	n/a

[1] Aged 15 at the start of the academic year (i.e. 31 August).
[2] From 1997 includes GNVQ equivalences and from 2004 all other equivalences approved for use pre 16.
[3] England figures include all schools, including independent schools, hospital schools and PRUs.
[4] LA and constituency level figures only cover maintained schools.
[5] Pupils attending schools located in Taunton constituency.

The following table shows the percentage of pupils achieving five or more A* to G grades and five or more A* to C grades.

Percentage of 15-year-old pupils[1] achieving five or more GCSEs or equivalents[2] at the grades listed

	A*to G			A*to C		
	England[3]	Somerset local authority[4]	Taunton constituency[4,5]	England[3]	Somerset local authority[4]	Taunton constituency[4,5]
1997	86.4	92.5	91.2	45.1	48.9	46.1
1998	87.5	92.3	89.7	46.3	51.2	49.4
1999	88.5	93.7	93.4	47.9	52.7	51.6
2000	88.9	93.4	91.8	49.2	55.3	55.0
2001	88.9	93.0	90.7	50.0	54.7	57.6
2002	88.9	92.7	94.1	51.6	54.8	58.8
2003	88.8	90.3	89.5	52.9	54.9	59.3
2004	88.8	90.1	89.2	53.7	56.4	58.3
2005	89.0	91.0	90.5	56.3	56.5	61.2

[1] Aged 15 at the start of the academic year (i.e. 31 August).
[2] From 1997 includes GNVQ equivalences and from 2004 all other equivalences approved for use pre 16.
[3] England figures include all schools, including independent schools, hospital schools and PRUs.
[4] LA and constituency level figures only cover maintained schools.
[5] Pupils attending schools located in Taunton constituency.

Higher Education

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people under the age of 30 were participating in higher education in each year since 1995; how many are expected to do so in each year to 2015; and what these figures represent as a proportion of the relevant age cohort. [62728]

Bill Rammell: The Higher Education Initial Participation Rate (HEIPR) is the measure that the Department uses to assess progress in participation. The HEIPR time series is available for 1999/2000 to 2004/05 and is shown in the following table.

HEIPR for English-domiciled first time participants in HE courses at UK higher education institutions and English further education colleges 1999/2000 to 2004/05

	Academic year					
	1999/2000	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05[1]
HEIPR (Percentage)	41	42	42	43	42	42
Initial entrants (Thousand)	246	249	255	268	269	271

[1] Provisional.

Source:
Statistical First Release 14/2006: Participation Rates in Higher Education: Academic Years 1999/2000 to 2004/2005 (provisional).

The Department's expenditure plans allow for a continuing increase in HEIPR in the period to 2007–08, but we do not publish forecasts for individual years as these depend on the Spending Review settlements.

Our target remains to make progress towards a 50 per cent. participation rate by 2010, and we believe that progress will be made. There are a number of things that will help including continuing progress in attainment at age 18; the opening up of vocational routes into higher education, and the closer co-operation between universities and further education colleges we signalled in the recent FE White Paper; the new "train to gain" projects for employer-led higher education, and a continuing expansion of foundation degrees; and the package of support for part-time study that we announced last autumn.

House of Lords

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether any *(a)* employee of her Department, *(b)* person engaged by her Department as a consultant and *(c)* paid adviser to her Department is a member of the House of Lords; and if she will make a statement. [52892]

Bill Rammell: The Department does not employ any member of the House of Lords directly. Information about consultants and advisors to the Department is not collected centrally and can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Pathfinder Schools

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what resources have been allocated to support Pathfinder schools in each of the next five years; [50252]

(2) how much has been awarded to Pathfinder schools in each of the past two years, broken down by local authority. [50253]

Jacqui Smith: The following table shows for each local authority the amount of money allocated to pathfinder projects in schools in the last two years. The figures shown for Building Schools for the Future pathfinder schools for 2005–06 are the amounts notified to local authorities and schools, but will be spent over the next three years. Information on resources for other Pathfinder schools over the next five years is not currently available.

Funding for Pathfinder schools 2004–05 and 2005–06

£

Local authority	*Enterprise learning pathfinders*	*Key stage 2 language pathfinders*	*Diversity pathfinders*	*Total 2004–05*	*2005–06 Building schools for the future pathfinder projects*
Greenwich	130,000	0	0	130,000	[1]213,025,000
Hackney	185,000	0	0	185,000	—
Hammersmith	18,000	0	0	18,000	—
Lambeth	15,000	0	0	15,000	—
Lewisham	10,200	0	0	10,200	[2]98,985,000
Tower Hamlets	210,500	0	0	210,500	—
Wandsworth	75,000	0	0	75,000	—
Westminster	67,828	0	0	67,828	—
Barking	0	88,150	0	88,150	—
Barnet	38,000	0	0	38,000	—
Bexley	3,500	0	0	3,500	—
Brent	36,200	0	0	36,200	—
Bromley	116,571	0	0	116,571	—
Croydon	50,000	0	0	50,000	—
Enfield	0	100,000	0	100,000	—
Haringey	72,000	0	0	72,000	—
Havering	11,000	0	0	11,000	—
Hounslow	110,940	0	0	110,940	—
Merton	24,000	0	0	24,000	—
Newham	64,500	0	0	64,500	—
Redbridge	63,400	0	0	63,400	—
Richmond upon Thames	0	159,165	0	159,165	—
Birmingham	150,000	96,400	0	246,400	—
Coventry	35,720	86,000	0	121,720	—
Dudley	92,904	0	0	92,904	—
Solihull	46,024	0	0	46,024	—
Walsall	24,300	0	0	24,300	—
Knowsley	223,310	48,351	0	271,661	—
Liverpool	59,900	0	0	59,900	—
St. Helens	146,000	0	0	146,000	—
Sefton	23,000	0	0	23,000	—
Bury	390,500	67,180	0	457,680	—
Manchester	90,000	0	0	90,000	—
Oldham	0	122,500	0	122,500	—
Rochdale	25,000	0	0	25,000	—
Trafford	69,600	0	0	69,600	—
Wigan	67,100	0	0	67,100	—
Barnsley	20,000	0	0	20,000	—
Doncaster	34,200	0	0	34,200	—
Rotherham	94,000	0	0	94,000	—

Funding for Pathfinder schools 2004–05 and 2005–06

£

Local authority	Enterprise learning pathfinders	Key stage 2 language pathfinders	Diversity pathfinders	Total 2004–05	2005–06 Building schools for the future pathfinder projects
Sheffield	[illegible]	0	0	8,820	—
Bradford	112,500	0	0	112,500	[3]116,873,000
Calderdale	47,500	0	0	47,500	—
Leeds	18,375	0	0	18,375	—
Wakefield	41,335	0	0	41,335	—
Newcastle upon Tyne	25,000	0	0	25,000	—
North Tyneside	63,160	80,354	110,000	253,514	—
South Tyneside	168,000	0	0	168,000	—
Bath and NE Somerset	40,500	0	0	40,500	—
City of Bristol	59,000	0	0	59,000	[4]158,298,000
North Somerset	46,500	0	0	46,500	—
Hartlepool	22,000	0	0	22,000	—
Middlesbrough	5,000	0	0	5,000	—
Stockton-on-Tees	40,150	0	0	40,150	—
Kingston-upon-Hull	76,770	0	0	76,770	—
East Riding of Yorkshire	0	63,227	0	63,227	—
North Yorkshire	52,000	0	0	52,000	—
York	33,500	0	0	33,500	—
Bedfordshire	30,000	0	0	30,000	—
Derbyshire	401,145	0	0	401,145	—
Bournemouth	19,850	0	0	19,850	—
Durham	157,000	0	0	157,000	—
Darlington	32,500	0	0	32,500	—
East Sussex	12,900	0	0	12,900	—
Brighton and Hove	57,111	141,587	0	198,698	—
Hampshire	327,550	106,763	0	434,313	—
Portsmouth	70,000	0	92,250	162,250	—
Leicestershire	123,500	0	0	123,500	—
Stoke-on-Trent	40,000	0	0	40,000	—
Wiltshire	91,490	0	0	91,490	—
Swindon	4,000	0	0	4,000	—
Slough	40,000	0	0	40,000	—
Wokingham	23,000	0	0	23,000	—
Cambridgeshire	37,448	0	0	37,448	—
Peterborough	392,800	0	0	392,800	—
Cheshire	32,070	0	0	32,070	—
Halton	150,000	0	0	150,000	—
Warrington	29,000	0	0	29,000	—
Plymouth	42,000	0	0	42,000	—
Essex	448,821	0	0	448,821	—
Southend-on-Sea	159,792	0	0	159,792	—
Thurrock	51,900	0	0	51,900	—
Worcestershire	40,100	0	0	40,100	—
Kent	161,025	0	0	161,025	—
Lancashire	126,817	132,216	0	259,033	—
Blackburn with Darwen	50,300	0	0	50,300	—
Blackpool	33,144	0	0	33,144	—
Nottinghamshire	110,481	98,500	0	208,981	—
Nottingham City	185,500	0	0	185,500	—
Telford and Wrekin	115,000	0	0	115,000	—
Cornwall	420,500	0	0	420,500	—
Cumbria	159,000	0	0	159,000	—
Gloucestershire	20,425	0	0	20,425	—
Hertfordshire	148,100	0	0	148,100	—
Lincolnshire	168,840	0	0	168,840	—
Norfolk	13,500	0	0	13,500	—
Northamptonshire	21,178	0	0	21,178	—
Northumberland	304,010	0	0	304,010	—
Oxfordshire	9,500	0	0	9,500	—
Somerset	105,400	0	0	105,400	—
Suffolk	265,000	0	0	265,000	—
Surrey	5,000	0	0	5,000	—
Warwickshire	154,994	0	0	154,994	—
West Sussex	20,350	0	0	20,350	—
Total	9,165,348	1,390,393	202,250	10,757,991	587,181,000

[1] Includes £116 million Private Finance Initiative credits.
[2] Includes £58 million Private Finance Initiative credits.
[3] Includes £110 million Private Finance Initiative credits.
[4] Includes £151 million Private Finance Initiative credits.

School Performance Tables

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) when it was decided to remove the schools performance tables for the years prior to 2001 from her Department's website; [64273]

(2) if she will restore the performance tables for the years prior to 2001 to her Department's website; [64274]

(3) for what reasons the schools' performance tables for the years prior to 2001 were removed from her Department's website. [64275]

Jacqui Smith: It has not been possible to access the Achievement and Attainment Tables prior to 2001 from the Department's website because of a technical problem. In the interim anyone wishing to obtain the data can do so by contacting the Public Enquiry Unit. However, we expect the Tables prior to 2001 to be made available on the website again by mid May.

School Trusts

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether the liability for paying contractors will remain with the local education authority in cases where schools becoming trusts are part of private finance initiative schemes. [64254]

Jacqui Smith: Yes. It is the local authority which signs the contract with the private sector PFI contractor and which therefore is liable for the payment of the unitary charge for the length of the contract. Schools will remain liable for the agreements they have made with the authority for contributing to the unitary charge. The governing body of each school included in a PFI contract must sign such an agreement before the PFI contract' can be signed. This commitment does not change if the school changes status.

Schools (Southend, West)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of children attending schools in Southend West constituency come from outside the borough; and how many children who live in Southend West constituency attend a school in another local authority area. [64366]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested has been provided in the following table:

Movement of pupils[4] in Southend West constituency and Southend-on-Sea local authority

	Number of pupils attending schools in Southend West constituency	*Number of pupils attending schools in Southend West constituency who reside outside of Southend-on-Sea LA*	*Percentage of pupils attending schools in Southend West Constituency who reside outside of Southend-on-Sea LA*	*Number of pupils residing within Southend West constituency*	*Number of pupils residing within Southend West constituency who attend schools outside of Southend-on-Sea LA*	*Percentage of pupils residing within Southend West constituency who attend schools outside of Southend-on-Sea LA*
Primary[1]	5,064	166	3.3	5,681	171	3.0
Secondary[2]	5,797	1,306	22.5	4,807	992	20.6
Special[3]	321	69	21.5	121	15	12.4
Total	11,182	1,541	13.8	10,609	1,178	11.1

[1] Includes middle deemed primary
[2] Includes secondary and middle deemed secondary.
[3] Includes special and non-maintained special.
[4] Includes pupils aged 5 to 15 years, solely registered or main registration of dually registered pupils, excludes boarders
Source:
Annual Schools Census 2005

Secondary Transfer Appeals

Mr. Love: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of secondary transfer appeals were *(a)* lodged, *(b)* heard and *(c)* successful in (i) inner London, (ii) each outer London borough and (iii) England in 2004–05. [64088]

Jacqui Smith: The latest available information on appeals lodged by parents against non-admission of their children to maintained Secondary schools is shown in the table. Information on appeals relating to 2004–05 will be available in June.

Appeals lodged by parents against non-admission of their children to maintained secondary schools 2003/04, by local education authority and Government Office Region in England

			Secondary				
				Appeals heard		*Appeals decided in parents' favour*	
		Number of schools admissions[1]	*Admission appeals lodged by parents*[2]	*Number*	*Percentage*[3]	*Number*	*Percentage*[4]
	England	688,020	64,940	46,240	71	16,260	35
	London	90,120	12,690	9,040	71	1,400	15
	Inner London	28,560	4,110	3,220	78	420	13
202	Camden	2,140	230	120	51	10	10
201	City of London	[5]—	[5]—	[5]—	[5]—	[5]—	[5]—
204	Hackney	1,660	250	200	80	50	23
205	Hammersmith and Fulham	1,360	210	190	91	10	3
309	Haringey	2,500	250	110	45	20	19
206	Islington	1,880	220	130	59	30	20

Appeals lodged by parents against non-admission of their children to maintained secondary schools 2003/04, by local education authority and Government Office Region in England

		Secondary				
			Appeals heard		Appeals decided in parents' favour	
		Number of schools admissions[1]	Admission appeals lodged by parents[2]	Number	Percentage[3]	Number	Percentage[4]
207	Kensington and Chelsea	800	110	90	86	10	10
208	Lambeth	1,870	170	150	85	20	12
209	Lewisham	2,500	610	480	79	80	16
316	Newham	4,040	1,010	900	89	120	13
210	Southwark	2,130	260	210	81	30	15
211	Tower Hamlets	3,380	160	130	83	30	21
212	Wandsworth	2,400	290	210	74	20	8
213	Westminster	1,910	350	310	88	10	3
	Outer London	61,560	8,590	5,820	68	980	17
301	Barking and Dagenham	2,460	570	350	61	60	16
302	Barnet	4,270	860	570	67	140	24
303	Bexley	3,710	500	350	71	90	25
304	Brent	3,300	280	230	83	20	7
305	Bromley	4,090	410	180	44	20	9
306	Croydon	4,310	380	280	74	60	20
307	Ealing	3,200	520	400	78	60	15
308	Enfield	4,400	1,110	650	59	110	17
203	Greenwich	3,350	560	350	63	80	23
310	Harrow	2,390	230	150	66	20	12
311	Havering	3,340	610	470	77	80	17
312	Hillingdon	3,960	240	140	57	20	13
313	Hounslow	3,470	610	300	49	30	10
314	Kingston upon Thames	1,960	180	150	86	20	12
315	Merton	1,930	170	90	52	30	29
317	Redbridge	4,080	370	360	98	60	16
318	Richmond upon Thames	1,650	270	200	74	40	21
319	Sutton	3,050	340	230	68	30	13
320	Waltham Forest	2,640	400	370	91	40	11

[1] Includes all pupils, irrespective of age, who joined a school at any time during September to January of the relevant academic year.
[2] Findings from a consultation indicate that the total number of appeals lodged by parents against non-admission of their children could be misleading. Some appeals are resolved before they reach a panel hearing (a place at an alternative school is accepted after an appeal has been lodged; the same parent can lodge appeals for more than one school but will not pursue them all). The number of appeals heard by an appeal panel is deemed to be the more reliable and critical indicator.
[3] Number of appeals heard by a panel expressed as a percentage of the number of appeals lodged by parents.
[4] Number of appeals decided in favour of the parents expressed as a percentage of the number of appeals heard by a panel.
[5] Not applicable. No schools of this type.

Note:
Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10. There may be discrepancies between the sum of constituent items and totals as shown.
Source:
Annual Schools Census

Student Plagiarism

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many cases of serious plagiarism by under-graduate and post-graduate students were reported in the latest academic year for which data are available, broken down by university; and how many students had their degree consequently *(a)* withheld and *(b)* withdrawn. [64929]

Bill Rammell: This information is not held centrally. We recognise that plagiarism is a serious matter but higher education institutions as autonomous bodies are responsible for detecting plagiarism and determining what disciplinary action to take. The Quality Assurance Agency's Code of Practice and the Joint Information Systems Committee provide advice and guidance to institutions on dealing with this issue.

Truancy

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what assessment she has made of truancy levels in schools in *(a)* Hull North constituency, *(b)* Kingston upon Hull and *(c)* England; [64099]

(2) how many hours of school were missed due to truancy in each academic year between 1997 and 2005 in *(a)* Hull North constituency, *(b)* Kingston upon Hull and *(c)* England. [64101]

Jacqui Smith: The Department does not hold data on the number of hours of school missed due to truancy or the levels of truancy. In 2005, the proportion of half day sessions missed due to unauthorised absence (of which truancy forms a part) in maintained primary schools in Kingston upon Hull North Constituency was 0.60 per cent. and for maintained secondary schools 1.31 per cent. For Kingston upon Hull local authority 0.57 per cent. of half days were missed in primary schools and 2.78 per cent. in secondary schools. The comparative figures for England were 0.43 per cent. for primary schools and 1.23 per cent. for secondary schools. In September 2005, the Government announced a drive against pupils with high unauthorised absences in 146 secondary schools

which account for 1 in 5 of all instances of unauthorised absence across the country. We have now extended this to cover 198 secondary schools and an estimated 13,000 pupils. This drive will provide an intensive package of support and challenge to these pupils and their families.

University Principals

John Penrose: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether *(a)* the Government or *(b)* any of its agencies have power to direct the governing body of (i) a university to dismiss a vice-chancellor or (ii) a college of higher education to dismiss a principal. [64462]

Bill Rammell: All universities and colleges of higher education are legally independent corporate bodies. Therefore, neither the Government nor any of its agencies have the power to direct the governing body of such an institution in any of its internal affairs, including dismissal of staff.

Youth Opportunity Fund

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the resources to be made available to West Lancashire District Council under her Youth Opportunity Fund initiative. [64227]

Maria Eagle: The Youth Opportunity Fund (YOF) and the Youth Capital Fund (YCF), which was also announced in the 'Youth Green Paper: Youth Matters', were allocated to local authorities from April 2006. The funds are designed to enable local authorities to develop new approaches to strategic investment in youth facilities, particularly in deprived neighbourhoods. Extra resource was made available for the YOF and YCF in the Chancellor's pre-Budget report in December 2005. A total of £115 million is available for both funds over 2006–08.

The allocation for both funds for Lancashire local authority is £657,899 a year for two years for the Youth Opportunity Fund and £569,031 a year for two years for the Youth Capital Fund. The funds are ring fenced and can only be spent on activities and facilities that young people want.

Each local authority is responsible for disseminating the funds within in its area. Therefore, I am unable to provide information about the amounts allocated below local authority level to show the funding for West Lancashire district council.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Carbon Dioxide Emissions

Norman Baker: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate his Department has made of the carbon dioxide emissions resulting from *(a)* new house-building and *(b)* the retrofitting and reuse of buildings; and if he will make a statement. [55797]

Yvette Cooper *[holding answer 3 March 2006]:* In support of the Government response to the Barker Review of Housing Supply, the department has carried out Sustainability Impact Study. This study includes an assessment of the embodied energy associated with new house building and of the energy used within new homes. A report of the findings of this study was published in December 2005 and is available on the ODPM website.

The BRE's Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) can be used to rate the environmental impact of building materials used and to assess the amount of carbon dioxide emitted in use for new and refurbished buildings.

Council Tax

Anne Milton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many properties in *(a)* Guildford, *(b)* Waverley and *(c)* Surrey are eligible for a 50 per cent. council tax rebate. [64352]

Mr. Woolas: There were 30 properties in Guildford, 115 properties in Waverley and a total of 1,901 properties in the 11 local authorities in Surrey that were eligible for a 50 per cent. council tax discount as at 19 September 2005.

The figures are as reported by local authorities to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister on the CTB1 and CTB1(S) forms.

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the *(a)* average and *(b)* band D council tax was in each local authority in Yorkshire in (i) 2002–03 and (ii) 2006–07. [64319]

Mr. Woolas: Details of the council tax levels in each local authority in Yorkshire in 2002–03 and 2006–07 are published on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website. The details can be found under "Information For Taxpayers" at "Council Taxes" at: http://www.local.odpm.gov.uk/finance/ct.htm. This includes the average council tax per property and the average band D council tax.

Haven Gateway

Mr. Carswell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what percentage of the total amount of public money spent on the Haven Gateway Partnership up to 31 March 2006 was spent on *(a)* direct and indirect salaries, *(b)* public relations and communications, *(c)* capital infrastructure and *(d)* consultancy fees; and how much public funding has been allocated to the Partnership to 31 March 2006. [64265]

Alun Michael: I have been asked to reply.

Since its formation in May 2001 until 31 March 2006, the Haven Gateway Partnership has, received £1.641 million of funding to support its role as a Sub Regional Economic Partnership. As a percentage of this funding the expenditure breakdown is as follows: 20.5 per cent. on salaries, 18.4 per cent. on public relations and communications, 32.3 per cent. on capital infrastructure and 2.8 per cent. On consultancy fees.

Housing Act

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) if he will make a statement on the role of

NowMedical in determining the vulnerability of those applying as homeless under part VII of the Housing Act 1996; [32540]

(2) whether the Homelessness and Housing Support Directorate has encouraged local authorities to use NowMedical to determine the vulnerability of those applying as homeless under part VII of the Housing Act 1996; [32541]

(3) if he will commission research into the accuracy of decisions being made by private companies providing paper-based assessments of the vulnerability of homeless applicants. [32542]

Yvette Cooper: It is for local housing authorities to satisfy themselves whether individual housing applicants may be owed a duty under part 7 of the Housing Act 1997, and, if so which duty. As part of this, they will need to decide whether an applicant who is eligible for assistance has a priority need for accommodation. In cases where the applicant may have a priority need because of vulnerability due to a medical condition, the authority, may wish to seek a specialist medical opinion to help inform their decision, and should have regard to any medical or social services advice obtained. We have no plans to commission research into the accuracy of such advice at present.

Officials in the Homelessness and Housing Support Directorate work with local authorities to encourage good practice on preventing and administering homelessness. This includes sharing information on a wide range of specialist advisory services which other authorities have found useful. In providing this factual information, officials are advised to avoid making recommendations of any kind, and to stress that it is for authorities to decide which services to use and which providers to employ. Where an authority seeks specialist advice from any organisation to assist in making such decisions, they will need to satisfy themselves that the advice is soundly-based and reliable. Whatever advice is received the ultimate decision on vulnerability must rest with the local authority.

Applicants have the right to request an authority to review certain decisions, including a decision that the applicant does not have priority need because he or she is not vulnerable. If they are dissatisfied with a decision on review (or a review decision is not made within the prescribed time scale) they have the right to appeal to the county court on a point of law.

Housing

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the capital receipts from the sale of local authority housing stock in Tamworth were in each of the last 10 years; and what proportion of this income was *(a)* received by the borough council and *(b)* passed to his Department. [42075]

Yvette Cooper: Capital receipts from the sale of local authority housing stock, as reported by Tamworth are tabled immediately as follows. The receipts are net of discounts and are from Right to Buy and other sales to sitting tenants and owner occupiers.

Local authority housing capital receipts: Tamworth

Financial year	*Capital receipt (£)*
1995–96	1,255,000
1996–97	1,398,000
1997–98	2,894,000
1998–99	1,972,000
1999–2000	3,160,000
2000–01	2,640,000
2001–02	4,176,000
2002–03	7,586,000
2003–04	10,333,000
2004–05	7,055,000

Source:
P1AB returns from local authority to ODPM

Until 1 April 2004, with-debt local authorities were required to set-aside a proportion of their total housing receipts for repayment of debt. The amount of total housing receipts for both dwelling and non-dwelling disposals is given in the following table, along with the amount set-aside from those housing receipts. In April 2004 the set-aside regime was replaced by pooling in order to address the fact that the distribution of receipts was widely unequal across the country. Neither set-aside or pooling separately identify the amount set-aside or pooled from specific types of receipt.

Financial year	*Housing capital receipts (£000)*	*Set-aside/ pooled (£000)*	*Percentage set-aside/ pooled*
1995–96	1,367	1,008	74
1996–97	1,489	1,103	69
1997–98	4,264	2,197	52
1998–99	1,999	1,486	74
1999–2000	3,151	2,352	75
2000–01	2,629	1,951	74
2001–02	4,357	3,184	73
2002–03	7,600	11,951	26
2003–04	10,343	[1]—	n/a
2004–05	7,106	5,230	74

[1] No data

The proportion of the housing capital receipt that a local authority retains is not simply the gross receipt less the set-aside or pooling liability. Local authorities may reduce the value of the capital receipt by, for instance, the cost of the administration fees involved in the disposal of the asset or other costs, for instance improvements to the asset in the preceding years, before calculating their set-aside or pooling obligation. Hence in the table above the amount retained will not be gross receipts less set-aside or pooled amount but rather gross receipts less deductions (for which we have no data) less set-aside or pooling obligations.

Since 1997 the Government have consistently invested more in housing than they have received in pooled receipts. In 2004–05 the amount paid to Government from all housing receipts (not just Right to Buy) was £1.7 billion. The amount invested in housing was £4.1 billion ie almost two and a half times the amount received in receipts. The ratio is expected to increase substantially in the future.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the capital receipts from the sale of local authority housing stock in Islington for each of the last

10 years; and what proportion of the income was *(a)* received by the borough council and *(b)* posted to his Department. [39924]

Yvette Cooper: Capital receipts from the sale of local authority stock, as reported by Islington are tabled as follows. The receipts are net of discounts and are from Right to Buy and other sales to sitting tenants and owner occupiers.

Capital receipts: Islington

Financial year	*Capital receipt (£)*
1996–97	8,006,000
1997–98	10,723,000
1998–99	12,522,000
1999–2000	n/a
2000–01	n/a
2001–02	45,619,000
2002–03	48,362,000
2003–04	52,350,000
2004–05	n/a

n/a = not available
Source:
P1AB returns from local authority to ODPM

Until 1 April 2004, with-debt local authorities were required to set-aside a proportion of their total housing receipts for repayment of debt. The amount of total housing receipts for both dwelling and non-dwelling disposals is given in the following table, along with the amount set-aside from those housing receipts. In April 2004 the set-aside regime was replaced by pooling in order to address the wide inequality in receipts between areas. Neither set-aside or pooling separately identify the amount set-aside or pooled from specific types of receipt.

Financial year	*Housing capital receipts (£000)*	*Set-aside/ pooled (£000)*	*Percentage set-aside/ pooled*
1996–97	10,375	7,062	68
1997–98	14,339	10,084	70
1998–99	21,717	12,606	58
1999–2000	34,519	22,427	65
2000–01	47,900	29,598	62
2001–02	63,775	36,930	58
2002–03	68,730	29,598	43
2003–04	80,202	[1]—	n/a
2004–05	90,560	48,316	54

[1] No data

The proportion of the housing capital receipt that a local authority retains is not simply the gross receipt less the set-aside or pooling liability. Local authorities may reduce the value of the capital receipt by, for instance, the cost of the administration fees involved in the disposal of the asset or other costs, for instance improvements to the asset in the preceding years, before calculating their set-aside or pooling obligation. Hence in the table above the amount retained will not be gross receipts less set-aside or pooled amount but rather gross receipts less deductions (for which we have no data) less set-aside or pooling obligations.

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Parliamentary Questions

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he will reply to Question *(a)* 32540, *(b)* 32541 and *(c)* 32542 from the hon. Member for Norwich, North tabled on 23 November 2005. [49230]

Yvette Cooper: I have answered the hon. Member's questions today. I apologise for the delay in replying.

Planning Inspectorate

Mr. Chope: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make it the policy of the Government that there should be a public and open register of the qualifications, experience and training of members of the Planning Inspectorate. [62852]

Yvette Cooper *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* Although not currently made available in a register or list, the Inspectorate provides details of individual Planning Inspectors' qualifications and previous experience when requested. Following an analysis of requests received under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Inspectorate is considering how best to make more information about Inspector recruitment, relevant qualifications and training and the decision-making process more widely available.

There are no plans to publish details of the qualifications, experience or training of the Inspectorate's administrative staff.

Regional Government

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what powers county councils have to hold a local referendum on a local issue across the county area; and which tier of government would pay for the cost of the referendum. [62293]

Mr. Woolas: Any local authority may hold a consultative referendum on matters relating to services provided in pursuance of the authority's functions, expenditure on such services, or any other matter which relates to the authority's power to promote the well-being of its area.

The tier of local government which holds a referendum would meet the cost of that referendum.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Electoral Reform

James Duddridge: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what options she is considering for the introduction of *(a)* electronic and *(b)* internet-based measures to reform the electoral process, broken down by stage of the electoral process; and if she will make a statement. [53886]

Bridget Prentice: We are considering how modern technology can be used to support and develop the electoral process. This could include registration, voting

itself and the counting of ballots. Pilots to occur at the May 2006 local elections will include e-counting and the use of electronic electoral registers to support our investigation of how such technology might be employed in the future. Information Technology may also be valuable in providing information to voters during an election period and between elections to promote and facilitate democratic engagement and participation.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Car-jacking

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will introduce legislation to provide for the specific offence of car-jacking; and if he will make a statement. [64213]

Hazel Blears: The Government have no plans to introduce a specific offence of car-jacking. We are satisfied that car-jacking would inevitably involve the commission of one or more serious criminal offences. The exact charge would depend on the circumstances of the particular case, but the following offences are relevant:

Robbery contrary to section eight of the Theft Act 1968, for which the maximum custodial sentence is life imprisonment.

Taking a conveyance without authority contrary to section 12 of the Theft Act 1968, for which the maximum custodial sentence is six months.

Aggravated Vehicle Taking contrary to section 12A of the Theft Act 1968, for which the maximum custodial sentence is two years, or 14 years where a death occurs.

Kidnapping, a common law offence for which there is no limit fixed for the period of imprisonment.

Chewing Gum

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many fines have been issued to the public by the police for chewing-gum related offences in 2006; and how many were issued in the last 10 years. [63098]

Hazel Blears: Chewing-gum related offences are classified as littering offences and Fixed Penalty Notices are issued by local authority officials. Records of Fixed Penalty Notices issued to the public by local authority officials for littering offences are not notified to the Home Office.

Counter-terrorism (Canary Wharf)

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what *(a)* operations and *(b)* investigations (i) were undertaken and (ii) are being conducted related to the alleged attempted attack on Canary Wharf on 23 November 2004. [64387]

Hazel Blears: It is our policy not to comment on the details of alleged attempted terrorist attacks in the UK. These are operational matters for the police service.

DNA Database

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what percentage of the population of West Lancashire the police hold a record on their DNA database. [64121]

Hazel Blears: It is not possible to provide the information requested for West Lancashire as the DNA subject sample records held on the National DNA Database (NDNAD) relate to police force area, not local authority area, but some data is available for Lancashire. Data from Census 2001 indicates that the population of Lancashire is 1,134,976. At the end of February 2006, there were 90,405 individuals with a profile on the NDNAD taken by Lancashire police.

These individuals would have been arrested, detained in a police station and had a DNA sample taken in Lancashire, but would not necessarily be resident in Lancashire. Using the previous figures, the percentage of persons who have a profile on the NDNAD taken by Lancashire police relative to the population of Lancashire is 7.9 per cent.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the merits of establishing an independent body, with ethical and lay input, to oversee the working of the National DNA Database; and if he will make a statement. [64173]

Hazel Blears: The Government recognises the need for, and is committed to establishing, arrangements for ethical review of the policy and decision-making of the National DNA Database Board through an ethics committee. The Government believe that independent ethical advice and input is necessary to ensure that appropriate account of a wide set of views, and protection of individual rights, is retained in the decision-making of the Board.

Mr. Leigh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have samples on the National DNA Database who have not been *(a)* charged with and *(b)* convicted of an offence. [59533]

Hazel Blears: Data are not readily available on the number of persons who have a DNA profile on the database who have been charged with, convicted of or acquitted of an offence. This data are not held on the National DNA Database (NDNAD), but can be obtained from the Police National Computer (PNC). There is an electronic link between PNC and the NDNAD which transmits certain information only. Home Office officials are working with colleagues in the Police Information and Technology Organisation (PITO) which is responsible for PNC and with police service staff to develop a process to routinely report this and other statistical information that is held on either NDNAD or PNC. This work is under way and I will write to the hon. Member as soon as the work has been completed.

Graffiti Removal Notices

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many graffiti removal notices have been issued in England since 2003. [64057]

Hazel Blears: Section 48–52 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 which introduced Defacement Removal Notices nationwide came into force on 6 April 2006. Since the 6 April the Home Office has not received any details of Defacement Removal Notices being issued.

Identity Cards

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make it his policy to provide the Information Commissioner with comprehensive powers to check the data protection compliance of the National Identity Card Scheme. [62560]

Andy Burnham: The Identity and Passport Service complies with the Data Protection Act, and this will continue once ID cards are issued, and the register is operational. The Information Commissioner is already responsible for ensuring compliance with the Data Protection Act, and he will continue to exercise this function in respect of the Identity and Passport Service. The Information Commissioner therefore has the power to ensure that the Identity Card Scheme complies with the Data Protection Act, and does not require further powers in order to carry out this function.

Indefinite Leave to Remain

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications for indefinite leave to remain under the provisions of the European Community Association Agreement there have been since February 2005; and how many have been completed. [64046]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* Since February 2005, IND has received 2,577 applications for indefinite leave to remain under the European Community Association Agreements. Following resumption of consideration of this ECAA category on 14 February 2005, some 850 have been completed of which 109 relate to applications received since February 2005. This information is provisional management information and may be subject to change.

Inmate Repatriations

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) if he will list the *(a)* occasions, *(b)* destinations, *(c)* prisons and *(d)* prison governor grade staff who have replaced prison officer grades in accompanying inmate repatriations outside the United Kingdom in each of the last five years; [63352]

(2) for what reasons and in what circumstances prison governor grade staff would accompany inmate repatriations outside the United Kingdom; and if he will make a statement. [63353]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information is only available for the last two years since the creation of a dedicated repatriation group. In the last two years four governor grades have been involved in travelling abroad to escort repatriated prisoners back to the United Kingdom. One governor travelled to Japan, two to Australia, and one to Antigua making three occasions. All were governor grades from Wandsworth, which is the prison dedicated to repatriation cases. All occasions were in 2004–05.

These cases represent only a small percentage of the total number of repatriations.

The governor at Wandsworth operates the policy that governor grades should take part in repatriations only when there is an overriding operational reason to do so.

Motoring Offences

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of *(a)* males and *(b)* females who have received a fixed penalty for committing an offence under Section 14(3) of the Road Traffic Act 1988 *(a)* once, *(b)* twice, *(c)* three times and *(d)* four times and over; and if he will make a statement. [64024]

Hazel Blears: The information requested is not available.

National Offender Management Service

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the lines of accountability are under the National Offender Management Service in Wales for the delivery of the reducing reoffending action plan. [49058]

Fiona Mactaggart: The reducing reoffending action plan applies to England but the principles and broad approach to reducing reoffending is taken into account in 'Joining Together in Wales: an Adult and Young People's Strategy to Reduce Re-offending'. The strategy was published jointly between the Welsh Assembly Government and the Home Office and, following the outcome of the consultation, there will be a joint action plan to reflect the roles and responsibilities in Wales of the Welsh Assembly Government and the National Offender Management Service.

Otley Police Station

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what guidance he has given to West Yorkshire police on the provision of 24-hour helpdesk services at Otley police station; [64406]

(2) what assessment he has made of the effects that the proposed closure of the 24-hour helpdesk at Otley police station will have on the residents of Otley, with particular reference to those without adequate access to public transport necessary to reach easily the nearest police station. [64408]

Hazel Blears: The management of the police estate and allocation of resources are matters for each police authority and the chief officer, who are responsible for assessing local needs. The ownership of police stations is vested in the local police authority, not the Home Office. Their use is a matter for local decisions.

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what factors underlay the decision to close the 24-hour helpdesk at Otley police station. [64407]

Hazel Blears: The management of the police estate and allocation of resources are matters for each police authority and the chief officer, who are responsible for assessing local needs. The ownership of police stations is vested in the local police authority, not the Home Office.

Their use and disposal are a matter for local decisions. West Yorkshire police have informed me that research has been commissioned to investigate the number of visitors attending every front counter help desk in their force area. Decisions to close helpdesks or reduce hours of opening have been taken after consideration of the results of this research.

Prisons

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 12 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 490W, on the Prison Service, what proportion of the prison population has no recorded religious beliefs; and how many prisons have a multi-faith chaplaincy team that *(a)* includes and *(b)* does not include a representative of non-religious beliefs. [64076]

Fiona Mactaggart: At the end of February 2006, 32 per cent. of prisoners in prison establishments in England and Wales were recorded as having no religious affiliation. Chaplaincy teams include chaplains from a range of faith traditions depending on need and local circumstances. They would not normally include a representative of non religious beliefs. Chaplaincy teams provide pastoral support to prisoners and staff of all faiths, and none. Prisons provide a range of other support services and activities for those who do not wish to avail themselves of chaplaincy services.

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 8 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 557W, on prison food, what steps his Department has taken to ensure that only halal meat is served to Muslim prisoners in all Prison Service establishments. [64077]

Fiona Mactaggart: Prisons are required to offer a multi-choice menu. When a halal meat or poultry menu is offered, an alternative non-halal meat or poultry choice must be provided and clearly identified on a published menu.

Probation Service

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many complaints have been made about *(a)* Essex and *(b)* Southend probation services in each year since 1997; and how many of those complaints have been upheld in each year. [48870]

Fiona Mactaggart: A National Complaints Procedure, agreed by the Secretary of State, enables local probation areas to handle complaints. Unresolved local complaints are escalated to the independent Prison and Probation Ombudsman. The following table lists complaints made against Essex Probation and the number upheld in each year from 2001. Information is not available for the Southend probation service.

The following table shows the numbers of complaints received in total by Essex probation area since 1 September 2001 for each completed time period. The figures contain both formal and informal complaints. The number upheld column refers to the number of complaints where the area has accepted validity in the complaint and action has been taken. The following figures are not comparable to the figures collected by the independent Prison and Probation Ombudsman.

	Number received	*Number upheld*
September 2001-March 2002	8	1
April 2002-March 2003	23	2
April 2003-December 2003	24	2
January 2004-December 2004	21	3
January 2005-December 2005	13	2

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people in *(a)* England and Wales and *(b)* Lancashire were returned to prison after violating their probation conditions in each year since 2000. [61330]

Hazel Blears *[holding answer 27 March 2006]:* The table shows the number of recalls to custody for the whole of England and Wales, for each fiscal year since 1 April 2000 to 31 March 2005. The figures include recalls of those released on the Home Detention Curfew Scheme. The information is not broken down by county and to do so would incur disproportionate cost.

	Total number of recalls
2000–01	3,182
2001–02	5,086
2002–03	8,388
2003–04	11,215
2004–05	11,081

Schools (Sexual Harassment)

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many sexual harassment cases have been recorded in secondary schools in *(a)* Romford, *(b)* Havering, *(c)* Greater London and *(d)* England and Wales in each of the last 10 years. [62979]

Bill Rammell: I have been asked to reply.

The Department for Education and Skills does not record the information that you have requested.

Serious Organised Crime and Police Act

Martin Linton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many protests have been granted permission by the police under the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 since it came into force. [64833]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Commissioner of the Metropolis is responsible for the day-to-day operational management of the force. I have passed your question to him and asked him to respond to you directly. I will arrange for a copy of the reply to be placed in the House Library.

Vandalism

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many instances of vandalism were reported in *(a)* Southend and *(b)* Essex in each year since 1990. [64365]

Hazel Blears: The requested information is given in the tables. Offences of vandalism are recorded within the criminal damage group classification. Crime statistics

for Southend are recorded at Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) level; and for the offence of criminal damage are available from 2000–01 to 2004–05.

Table 1: Recorded offences of criminal damage—1990 to 1997

Number

Period	*Southend CDRP*	*Essex police force area*
1990	—	14,265
1991	—	15,631
1992	—	16,959
1993	—	17,293
1994	—	17,968
1995	—	18,286
1996	—	20,381
1997	—	18,845

Note:
The data in this table is prior to the introduction of the revised counting rules for recorded crime, which came into effect on 1 April 1998. Therefore, these figures are not directly comparable with those for later years.

Table 2: Recorded offences of criminal damage—1998–99 to 2001–02

Number

Period	*Southend CDRP*	*Essex police force area*
1998–99	—	18,834
1999–2000	—	21,766
2000–01	3,277	24,673
2001–02	3,267	26,990

Note:
The data in this table is prior to the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard. These figures are not directly comparable with those for later years.

Table 3: Recorded offences of criminal damage—2002–03 to 2004–05

Number

Period	*Southend CDRP*	*Essex police force area*
2002–03	3,598	30,337
2003–04	4,210	34,253
2004–05	4,308	32,406

Note:
The data in this table takes account of the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard in April 2002. These figures are not directly comparable with those for earlier years.

Violent Crime

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 12 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 838–9W, on violent crime, if he will break down the information provided in the categories of *(a)* other assault and *(b)* other violence against the person, including the number of rapes. [46010]

Fiona Mactaggart: In the period January 1999 to December 2005 the National Offender Management Service has been notified of three rapes committed while the offender was subject to the HOC scheme. To break down further the cases listed under the categories of other assault and other violence against the person would incur disproportionate cost.

Wandsworth Council

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was provided to Wandsworth council to tackle antisocial behaviour in the last year for which figures are available. [64134]

Hazel Blears: A wide range of funding streams across government have a positive impact on tackling antisocial behaviour at a local level. For example, Neighbourhood Renewal programmes which focus on the most deprived areas and give practitioners and local communities a real opportunity to turn their neighbourhoods around; the Department for Education and Skills (DFES) through their work on schools and parenting contribute to preventing problems escalating and ensuring families get the support they need.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and their work in tackling litter and fly tipping which can often blight neighbourhoods where antisocial behaviour and crime can take hold; and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) who provide the opportunity to divert young people from the destructive and damaging involvement in antisocial behaviour.

The Departmental for Constitutional Affairs (DCA) also contributes to ensure a swift and effective criminal justice system for dealing with the perpetrators of anti-social behaviour activity. In relation to specific Home Office funding to tackle anti-social behaviour in the last two financial years we have allocated £25,000 to every CDRP in both England and Wales to fund an antisocial behaviour co-ordinator. This amounts to £9.4 million per annum. Funding for 2005–06 was part of the Safer, Stronger Communities Fund (SSCF) and this arrangement will continue for the next two years (2006–07 and 2007–08).

Written Answers to Questions

Monday 24 April 2006

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Asda

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on what date meetings have taken place between her Department and representatives of Asda, including Asda's parent company, Wal-Mart, in the last 12 months; and if she will list the participants. [59959]

Jim Knight: Given the very wide range of goods and outlets involved, the retail sector is affected by more regulations than any other sector. Consequently, major retailers will have regular contact with many departments and may also be involved in working and consultative groups. To list every meeting would involve disproportionate cost, so the following information relates to key meetings only.

In the last 12 months, meetings between DEFRA officials and Asda/Wal-Mart took place on 22 July 2005, 11 November 2005, 8 February 2006 and 3 March 2006. In addition, a meeting with DEFRA Ministers took place on 8 December 2005. Data privacy legislation makes it inappropriate to list the participants in those meetings.

Biological Diversity

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the conclusions of the eighth Conference of Parties on Biological Diversity. [64043]

Jim Knight: The eighth Conference of Parties to the CBD was held in Curitiba, Brazil from 20–31 March 2006. I attended the High Level Segment (HLS) from 26–28 March. During this period I co-hosted, with the Brazilian Deputy Environment Minister, Claudio Langone, a breakfast with business representatives attended by over 40 Ministers. I also had bilateral discussions with other Ministers and met representatives of UK stakeholders.

The COP adopted decisions on over 30 issues, including a new work programme on island biodiversity, and gave new impetus to capacity building for implementation of the convention in developing countries. Other key outcomes included:

an agreement to analyse and explore options for preventing and mitigating impacts of activities on deep seabed genetic resources in areas beyond national jurisdiction

a renewed call for urgent action to tackle destructive fishing practices

an invitation to the UN General Assembly to follow up work on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction, including assessing the need for an implementing agreement under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea

a decision on access and benefit sharing of genetic resources to progress rapidly the negotiation of an international regime, with a view to completing the work before the 10th Conference of the Parties in 2010

the adoption of a global framework of targets and indicators to be reviewed after 2010 which will provide for a structured assessment of the 2010 biodiversity target

actions to engage business in minimising the impact of its activities on biodiversity

a number of actions relating to climate change and biodiversity including follow up with other biodiversity conventions

recognition of the need to consider biodiversity in development-planning systems including poverty reduction strategies

recommendation of approaches to addressing gaps in the international regime for tackling invasive alien species

a streamlined and outcome orientated approach to national reporting which will support future editions of the global biodiversity outlook

strengthened activities in the forest work programme relating to Sustainable Forest Management (SFM), Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) and a precautionary approach to the use of GMO trees

a decision on agricultural biodiversity including elements on food and nutrition, soil biodiversity and Genetic Use Restriction Technology (GURTS) which reaffirmed the precautionary approach to GURTS taken in decision V/5, adopted in 2000.

Pollution

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the levels of *(a)* carbon dioxide emissions and *(b)* greenhouse gas emissions were in the UK in each year since 1990; what the percentage change was in each year on (i) 1990 and (ii) 1997 levels; and what the breakdown in each year in emissions was between (1) industry, (2) transport, including separately *(A)* cars, *(B)* planes, (3) households, (4) the commercial sector, (5) the service sector and (6) other sources. [64384]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 20 April 2006]:* UK net emissions of carbon dioxide—all sources minus all sinks—and total greenhouse gas emissions for 1990–2004 are presented in the table, along with the percentage change for each year compared to 1990 and 1997. The data exclude emissions from the overseas territories that are associated with the UK's ratifications of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol. The sector breakdown is consistent with that presented in the UK's climate change programme published in March 2006. Total UK greenhouse gas emissions from international aviation are also shown, but do not contribute towards the UK total in accordance with international guidelines.

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Million tonnes carbon equivalent (MtC)								
CO_2 net emissions (total sources minus total sinks)	161.5	163.3	158.7	154.6	152.5	149.9	155.8	149.6
Total GHG net emissions	209.0	210.1	203.3	197.6	194.7	191.9	198.1	191.9
Percentage change from 1990 for CO_2	—	1.1	-1.7	-4.2	-5.6	-7.2	-3.5	-7.4
Percentage change from 1997 for CO_2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Percentage change from 1990 for all GHGs	—	0.6	-2.7	-5.5	-6.8	-8.1	-5.2	-8.2
Percentage change from 1997 for all GHGs	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total GHG sector emissions								
Energy Supply	74.4	74.3	71.3	66.0	63.2	63.1	63.4	58.9
Business	57.5	56.9	53.8	52.8	53.8	52.5	53.6	53.2
Transport	34.1	33.7	34.0	34.4	34.5	34.3	35.7	36.1
Road transport	30.4	30.1	30.5	31.0	31.2	31.0	32.3	32.8
Domestic aviation	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4
Domestic	22.2	24.6	23.9	24.9	23.7	22.5	25.6	23.8
Public	3.7	3.9	4.1	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.9	3.8
Other sources	17.0	16.8	16.2	15.7	15.9	15.9	16.0	16.0
International aviation	4.3	4.3	4.7	5.0	5.2	5.5	5.9	6.2

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
CO_2 net emissions (total sources minus total sinks)	150.1	147.5	149.0	153.1	148.6	151.7	152.6
Total GHG net emissions	190.0	180.3	180.5	182.6	177.1	178.8	178.9
Percentage change from 1990 for CO_2	-7.1	-8.7	-7.7	-5.2	-8.0	-6.0	-5.6
Percentage change from 1997 for CO_2	0.3	-1.4	-0.4	2.4	-0.6	1.5	2.0
Percentage change from 1990 for all GHGs	-9.1	-13.7	-13.6	-12.6	-15.3	-14.4	-14.4
Percentage change from 1997 for all GHGs	-1.0	-6.1	-6.0	-4.9	-7.7	-6.8	-6.8
Total GHG net emissions							
Energy Supply	59.3	55.8	58.2	60.7	60.2	61.6	61.4
Business	51.2	45.1	43.8	43.1	38.4	38.7	38.7
Transport	35.9	36.2	36.0	35.9	36.7	36.9	37.4
Road transport	32.7	33.0	32.9	32.9	33.7	33.7	34.0
Domestic aviation	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
Domestic	24.6	24.4	24.6	25.6	25.2	25.1	25.3
Public	3.5	3.5	3.2	3.4	2.9	2.9	2.9
Other sources	15.6	15.3	14.7	13.8	13.8	13.6	13.2
International aviation	7.0	7.6	8.3	8.1	8.0	8.2	9.1

Sources:
Agriculture, forestry and land management

Farming

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the total number of farms in *(a)* England, *(b)* the South West, *(c)* Somerset and *(d)* Taunton constituency. [64066]

Jim Knight: Based on data from the June 2005 agricultural survey, the number of registered agricultural and horticultural holdings is as follows:

	Number
(a) England	195,908
(b) South West	49,714
(c) Somerset constituency	8,551
(d) Taunton constituency	1,915

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with the banking industry on the provision of financial support to farmers who do not receive single farm payments by the end of March. [58353]

Jim Knight: My noble Friend Lord Bach met the British Bankers Association and other representatives of the major lending banks on 30 March to discuss the situation of farmers awaiting payment under the single payment scheme.

After the meeting, the following joint statement was issued:

"We have agreed that we will continue to work closely together in ensuring that farmers awaiting payment are offered support and help wherever possible. We recognise that these are difficult times for many farmers and that a flexible approach on all sides is required.

Lord Bach confirmed the new steps being taken by the RPA to speed up the validation and authorisation of payments, which the banks welcomed.

The banks re-emphasised that no viable business is being refused additional financial support and, as a result, no viable businesses are failing because of uncertainty about the payments timetable."

Traveller-related Crime

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with the Home Office on Traveller-related crime in rural areas. [64728]

Jim Knight: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) is the lead Department for issues relating to Gypsies and Travellers, and DEFRA welcomes its work on a range of initiatives, including provision of sites and law enforcement.

There are regular discussions between DEFRA and the Home Office at official and ministerial levels about all aspects of crime in the rural community. Our

discussions cover all those living in rural areas—both the travelling and the settled communities. For example, DEFRA is working with colleagues across government on a Home Office initiative to reduce hate crime.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Crown Prosecution Service

Vera Baird: To ask the Solicitor-General whether he plans to provide Crown prosecutors with electronic equipment to enable them to update the case management system at court as recommended in the National Audit Office report, HC 798 2005–06. [64862]

The Solicitor-General: The National Audit Office recommended that prosecutors should use palmtops to update the case management system while they are presenting cases at court. The Crown Prosecution Service is exploring the practical and technical issues raised by the recommendation. The CPS is making better use of information technology through the COMPASS programme and the COMPASS case management system. Prosecutors at most magistrates courts have access to information technology and the case management system.

Vera Baird: To ask the Solicitor-General what steps he plans to take to improve the way in which the Crown Prosecution Service prepares and brings cases to court in order to achieve better value for money from magistrates court hearings. [64888]

The Solicitor-General: The Crown Prosecution Service welcomed the recommendations contained in the recent National Audit Office report on the effective use of magistrates court hearings by the CPS. The CPS is already taking forward work on the recommendations, which focus on improving joint working with other criminal justice agencies, maintaining proper oversight of cases, and making more prosecutor time available for review and preparation. By their nature, each of the NAO recommendations is aimed at improving value for money.

Many of the recommendations go with the grain of performance improvement activity already in train, both internally within the CPS and externally with other criminal justice partners. Chief Crown Prosecutors continue to take the lead at a local area level in setting up arrangements with the police and courts to improve the efficiency of prosecution of magistrates court cases—for example, optimising the deployment of designated caseworkers at the magistrates court, a more focused approach to case progression, and an internal CPS structural exercise seeking to get the best match between the size of police divisions and magistrates court catchment areas in order to develop a more efficient model of CPS administration for standard application across all operational units and provide proper oversight of cases.

Vera Baird: To ask the Solicitor-General what steps he plans to take to improve the Crown Prosecution Service's performance in ensuring that trials and hearings in magistrates courts go ahead at the time allocated. [64889]

The Solicitor-General: The Crown Prosecution Service is involved at a local and national level in a number of projects and programmes to improve the effectiveness of trials and other court hearings. The CPS has contributed to the successful roll-out of the "Effective Trial Management Programme" across all 42 areas and to a continuing reduction in the number and proportion of ineffective trials.

More recently, the CPS has been contributing to a review of the magistrates court led by Lord Justice Thomas, the Senior Presiding Judge, which is focused on streamlining cases through magistrates courts. The CPS is playing an active part in this project, part of the "Criminal Justice, Simple, Speedy, Summary Initiative", recently announced by the Lord Chancellor.

Due to performance improvement flowing from the joint police/CPS charging initiative, and changes to the process applied by the court at the start of proceeding, it is intended that many more cases will be ready to proceed at the first hearing. This will rely on the right charge having been preferred; victim and witness needs assessments having been undertaken; witnesses' dates to avoid having been obtained should they be required to give evidence; any special measures having been identified; and advance information having been served on the defence and the court.

The revised process is about to be trialled at four magistrates court centres, prior to wider roll-out, following evaluation. The process should incentivise the guilty defendant to enter a plea at the earliest possible stage. In those cases where the defendant intends to contest the allegations, the process should also enable the court to isolate the triable issues with the parties and adjourn the case for trial, with the shared expectation that it will proceed to trial on the date fixed without further adjournment.

Vera Baird: To ask the Solicitor-General if he will make a statement on the report by the National Audit Office (HC 798 2005–06) that £24 million of losses occasioned in the magistrates courts in 2005 were caused by the Crown Prosecution Service. [64890]

The Solicitor-General: The National Audit Office report estimated that ineffective trials and hearings cost the criminal justice system £173 million. Of that sum it is suggested that the CPS was responsible for £24 million, the defence for £96 million, the police for £24 million, the courts for £21 million and the police and the CPS together for a further £8 million. Criticisms about the CPS's management and handling of cases are being addressed. The NAO found examples of good practice and the recommendations will help improve performance. The CPS is working with the police and the courts to improve performance in magistrates courts. The proportion of ineffective trials has declined from 31 per cent. in 2002 to 21 per cent. in September 2005.

Public Prosecution Service (Northern Ireland)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Solicitor-General how many people are employed by the Public Prosecution Service in Northern Ireland; and how many are expected to be employed by the end of 2006. [65407]

The Solicitor-General: The Public Prosecution Service currently has some 450 staff. By August 2006 it is expected that the number of staff will increase to 500 as new accommodation in Belfast becomes available. In 2007, when the service is fully operational throughout Northern Ireland, it is expected that the number of staff will be in the region of 600.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Solicitor-General what steps are being taken to ensure that there will be a reasonable cross-section of the community at large in each of the regional offices of the Public Prosecution Service in Northern Ireland. [65408]

The Solicitor-General: All staff for the Public Prosecution Service are recruited by the Northern Ireland Civil Service. Recruitment is on merit and carried out through open competition in accordance with fair employment and equal opportunities best practice and guidance as issued by the Northern Ireland Civil Service Commissioners.

WALES

Climate Change

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how the proposals to deliver Government strategies to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change as set out in the United Kingdom Climate Change programme, Cm 6764, will be implemented in Wales. [64302]

Mr. Hain: The Government and the devolved administrations published an updated UK climate change programme on 28 March. It proposes a range of measures to take forward our national response to climate change. These include supporting increased generation from renewable sources, encouraging the installation of energy efficiency measures in households, providing more reliable consumer product information, supporting more sustainable transport choices, introducing higher standards for efficiency in buildings and financing energy efficiency measures for public sector organisations.

The Welsh Assembly Government's environment strategy for Wales and its accompanying action plan, to be published shortly, will provide further details of steps to be taken to address climate change in Wales.

Departmental Websites

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will list *(a)* the websites operated by his Department and *(b)* the reports placed on the internet in March 2006, indicating in each case whether paper copies were also made available. [65198]

Mr. Hain: The Wales Office operates www.walesoffice.gov.uk and its parallel Welsh language site www.swyddfa.cymru.gov.uk

No reports were placed by the Wales Office on the internet in March 2006.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Business Links

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how his targets on diversity and equality apply to contractors to the Business Links scheme. [63108]

Alun Michael: As from April 2005, responsibility for the local delivery of Business Link services was transferred from the Small Business Service to the regional development agencies. Regional development agencies are independent bodies. As scheduled bodies under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, the public sector race duty requires regional development agencies to have a duty to make race equality a central part of their functions. Similar duties are being introduced for gender and disability.

Business Incorporation

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the forms required to start a business in *(a)* 1990 and *(b)* 2005. [64174]

Barry Gardiner: To incorporate a company in 1990 applicants had to file the following forms and documents on paper with Companies House:

Form 10—statement of first directors and secretary and intended situation of registered office

Form 12—declaration of compliance

Memorandum of Association

Articles of Association

The same information had to be filed in 2005.

Not all businesses choose to incorporate. For example, sole traders and partnerships do not have to complete these forms.

Over 85 per cent. of companies are now incorporated electronically. The electronic process can take a matter of minutes and costs £15; the equivalent paper service cost £50 in 1990.

Computer Access (Disadvantaged Groups)

Peter Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans he has to bring forward schemes to assist disadvantaged groups to gain access to computers; and what involvement he anticipates the private sector will have in the delivery of these schemes. [63835]

Alun Michael: Discussions are already taking place between my Department, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and other Government Departments on addressing the important issue of digital inclusion.

The Government digital strategy, "Connecting the UK", sets out a number of actions that contribute to digital inclusion and encourage and facilitate participation in a digital society. We need to now find workable solutions for those hard to reach groups that most need assistance.

This is quite clearly a complex question and I believe the appropriate approach is to engage with all the relevant stakeholders, including those representing excluded and vulnerable groups, before arriving at conclusions about the best way forward.

Conditional Fee Agreement Regulations 2000

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether reference has been made to the Serious Fraud Office about breaches of section 4(2)c of the Conditional Fee Agreement Regulations 2000. [64514]

Malcolm Wicks: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave him on 6 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1154W.

Contracts (Voluntary Sector)

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many contracts are let by his Department to voluntary sector organisations; of those how many are let on an annual basis; and of those how many had received finalised contracts for 2006–07 by 31 March. [63213]

Alan Johnson: This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Correspondence

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he expects to reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Maldon and East Chelmsford of 20 December 2005 on behalf of Ms Michelle Langton of Galleywood, Chelmsford. [63771]

Alan Johnson: My hon. Friend the Minister for Employment Relations responded to the hon. Member on 16 January 2006.

Defence Export Services Organisation

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what percentage of the staff of the Defence Export Services Organisation are engaged in facilitating sales to *(a)* Israel and *(b)* Saudi Arabia; and if he will make a statement. [64465]

Mr. Ingram: I have been asked to reply.

The Defence Export Services Organisation implements Government policy in respect of supporting legitimate defence exports by industry to a range of countries, including Israel and Saudi Arabia. Export licensing policy requires the Government to take into account concerns that proposed defence exports might be used for internal repression or international aggression, risks to regional stability, or other considerations.

Currently, less than 1 per cent. of DESO staff are engaged in export-related business to Israel and around 40 per cent. to Saudi Arabia. The latter figure includes staff in the Saudi Project Office who undertake a range of tasks principally associated with the performance of existing contracts.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many and what proportion of *(a)* staff and *(b)* new staff employed in (i) his Department and (ii) each of the agencies for which he has responsibility were registered as disabled in each of the last three years for which data are available. [61386]

Alan Johnson: The Cabinet Office collects and publishes annually statistical information on the civil service by Department. These include data on the number of staff in departments who have declared a disability.

The latest available information at April 2004 is available in the Libraries of the House and on the civil service website at the following addresses:

http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management/statistics/publications/xls/disability_apr04_4nov04.xls

for data relating to 1 April 2004, and

http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management/statistics/archive/index.asp

for previous reporting periods.

Between 1 April 2003 and 1 March 2006, 2.6 per cent. of new staff employed by DTI chose to declare a disability. Declaration of a disability is voluntary.

Information is not available for DTI agencies and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Astronomy Projects

Robert Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what is the cost to *(a)* the UK and *(b)* each participating country of the (i) EU Extremely Large Telescope project and (ii) design study for the EU ELT project; which agency is responsible for the UK's contribution to the costs of the project; and if he will make a statement on the progress of the project. [62416]

Barry Gardiner: The Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council is responsible for UK participation in astronomy research projects.

The international astronomical community is currently reviewing options for the building of an extremely large telescope with a diameter of between 40 and 60 metres. The total cost of a European ELT project would be about €750 million. The UK would have access to this ELT through its membership of the European Southern Observatory.

The share of costs in the project is still to be finally determined, but if it is funded through the ESO subscription the UK's share of the costs would be about 20 per cent.

The design study required for the European ELT project involves 30 organisations from 11 countries, and a total of €30 million has been provided for this phase of the project. This includes €12 million from the 30 organisations involved in the project, of which PPARC is investing a total of €2.4 million (spread over four years until 2008–09), €9.5 million from ESO, and €8.5 million from the European Union. It is not possible to give a more detailed breakdown of the investments made by each of the countries involved in the project.

Entrepreneurs (South-West)

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will break down by city in the south west the figures produced for the percentage of would-be entrepreneurs aged 16 to 24 years and 16 to 64

years in the south west as set out in the Small Business Service Household Survey of Entrepreneurship 2003. [63366]

Alun Michael: A breakdown of the Small Business Service Household Survey of Entrepreneurship 2003 results by city is not possible since there are too few interviews in many cities to provide statistically reliable estimates.

However, the percentages of would-be entrepreneurs for the whole of the south west, and for all of England, are available.

Of those aged 16 to 24 years in the south west Government Office region, it is estimated that 19 per cent. are would-be entrepreneurs, compared with an England average of 14 per cent.

Of those aged 16 to 64 years in the south west Government Office region, it is estimated that 11 per cent. are would-be entrepreneurs, the same as the England average of 11 per cent.

EU Social Chapter

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) if he will list the occasions on which the UK has voted against the adoption of measures under the social chapter of the treaty on European Union since 1997; [63855]

(2) if he will list the directives and regulations with which the UK must comply in order to meet the requirements of the social chapter of the treaty on European Union; [63856]

(3) if he will list the statutory instruments that have given effect to the directives and other EU legislation passed in consequence of the adoption of the social chapter of the treaty on European Union; [63857]

(4) if he will list the changes to *(a)* working hours, *(b)* holidays, *(c)* maternity and paternity leave and *(d)* other terms and conditions of employment resulting from the UK's adoption of the social chapter of the treaty on European Union. [63858]

Mr. Sutcliffe: In 1991, in what was then the social chapter, the EU provided for member states to reach agreement on certain aspects of social policy. In 1997 the UK ended its opt out from the social chapter, which was then fully incorporated into the Amsterdam treaty in June 1997, coming into force in May 1999.

Since 1997 the Government have not voted against the adoption of any measures introduced as a result of the social chapter.

Directives introduced as a result of the social chapter, UK implementing legislation, and their effect are:

The burden of proof in cases of discrimination based on sex directive

Implemented in the UK by the Sex Discrimination (Indirect Discrimination and Burden of Proof) Regulations 2001. These provide that once a prima facie case has been made in an employment tribunal claim, the burden of proof is placed on the defendant (usually the employer) who will need to demonstrate that sex discrimination has not occurred.

The part-time workers directive

Implemented in the UK by the Part-time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000. These provide for entitlement of part-time workers to the same pro-rata terms and conditions of employment as full-time workers;

The fixed term work directive

Implemented in the UK by the Fixed-term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002. These provide equal treatment and prevent abuse of fixed term contracts;

National information and consultation directive

Implemented in the UK by the Information and Consultation of Employees Regulations 2004. These provide for new minimum standards for workforce consultation and involvement in firms with 50 or more employees;

Parental leave directive

Implemented in the UK by the Maternity and Parental Leave etc. Regulations 1999. These provide for parents to have the right to 13 weeks unpaid leave at the birth or adoption of a child;

European Works Council directive

Implemented in the UK by the Transnational Information and Consultation of Employees Regulations 1999. These require companies with at least 1,000 employees in total across the member states and at least 150 workers in each of two or more of those member states, to establish structures for consulting workers on issues that affect them.

Directive amending the 1976 directive on equal treatment for men and women in employment and vocational training

This directive incorporates European Court of Justice case law and strengthens the principle of equal treatment and the way it works in practice. Implemented in the UK by the Employment Equality (Sex Discrimination) Regulations 2005, these amend the Sex Discrimination Act and Equal Pay Act in respect of employment and vocational training.

Consumer Protection (Holidays)

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he has taken to ensure that British holidaymakers are able to seek some form of financial redress in appropriate instances where travellers are not undertaking a traditional package holiday; and if he will make a statement on the responsibilities of travel operators providing non-package holidays to ensure that compensation is made available for customers in the event of problems with that provision. [64395]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992 (SI 1992/3288) place certain liabilities on businesses which fall within the regime for the proper performance of the contract, and requires them to provide sufficient evidence of security for the refund of money and repatriation in the event of insolvency. The regulations apply to businesses which organise, or sell, or offer to sell, at an inclusive price a pre-arranged combination of at least two of the following elements: travel; accommodation; and, other tourist services.

The regulations implement the Package Travel Directive (90/314/EEC) which is one of eight consumer facing directives currently undergoing review by the European Commission. We have not yet received any proposals for change to this directive from the Commission.

Holidaymakers who choose to make their own arrangements for travel and accommodation as separate items do not benefit from the provisions of the regulations, as there is no third party putting together a package of arrangements for them. However, those individual businesses with whom the holidaymaker contracts for services are obliged to meet their contractual obligations to the holidaymaker in the normal manner.

The Air Travel Organisers Licence (ATOL) scheme provides financial protection for package holiday travellers, including protection against airline bankruptcy. ATOL does not cover independently booked flights. For these flights, several airlines have agreed voluntary repatriation measures to ensure that stranded passengers are returned home at moderate cost. As regards refunds, several airlines now offer insurance against insolvency, and include notices on their websites highlighting the benefits of such insurance. The Government have also recently stressed the need for travellers to take out insurance against a range of misfortunes or expenses which can occur abroad.

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much was spent by consumers on *(a)* package holidays and *(b)* non-package holidays in each of the last 20 years. [64394]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Office for National Statistics holds records of the type requested in respect of overseas visits by UK residents only, for the years 1993 to 2004 inclusive. These are reproduced in the following table. I am not aware of any similarly extrapolated figures for package and non-package trips by UK residents within the UK.

International passenger survey
UK residents visits abroad (holidays only)—1993 to 2004

		Visits (thousand)	*Spending (£ million)*
1993	Independent	11,533	3,803
	Non-independent (package)	13,600	5,256
1994	Independent	12,096	4,032
	Non-independent (package)	15,092	5,994
1995	Independent	12,641	4,258
	Non-independent (package)	15,166	6,167
1996	Independent	12,864	4,617
	Non-independent (package)	13,901	5,993
1997	Independent	13,745	4,897
	Non-independent (package)	15,393	6,210
1998	Independent	14,869	5,582
	Non-independent (package)	17,437	6,913
1999	Independent	15,946	6,610
	Non-independent (package)	19,077	7,945
2000	Independent	16,630	7,161
	Non-independent (package)	20,055	8,623
2001	Independent	18,039	7,934
	Non-independent (package)	20,631	9,384
2002	Independent	19,264	8,846
	Non-independent (package)	20,638	9,730
2003	Independent	21,683	10,138
	Non-independent (package)	19,515	9,649
2004	Independent	23,109	10,850
	Non-independent (package)	19,803	10,303

Source:
International Passenger Survey, Office for National Statistics

Home Computing Initiative Scheme

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many small businesses enrolled in the Home Computing Initiative Scheme in each year since 1999, broken down by region. [64164]

Alun Michael *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* I am unable to provide a statistical breakdown of how many small businesses enrolled in the Home Computing Initiative Scheme in each year since 1999 or by region because this information is not available. However, recent figures provided by the Office of Trading tell us that nearly 4,000 approvals or HCI Group Directions under s101 (8) Consumer Credit Act (CCA) 1974 had been issued by OFT since January 1999. We are unable to break this list down by region or by size of business.

ICSTIS

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many fines were imposed by ICSTIS in each of the last five years; what the maximum fine imposed during each of the last five years was; and what the total value of fines imposed by ICSTIS has been to date. [64396]

Alun Michael: ICSTIS's current method of providing statistics on fines goes back to 2001. The table provides figures back to 2001.

Fines issued

	Number of fines	*Maximum fine imposed (£000)*
2001	142	100
2002	214	75
2003	211	75
2004	155	100
2005	145	100

The total value of fines imposed from 2001–05 was £9,456,800.00.

Invoicing

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the practice of naming individual company directors of small and medium sized businesses on invoices for the provision of goods and services to circumvent the protection of being a company limited by guarantee; and what powers companies have to require invoices to be directed to the company rather than individual directors. [63438]

Alun Michael: I have made no such assessment.

Section 349 of the Companies Act 1985 provides that the company's name must appear on its invoices.

Section 305 of the Companies Act 1985 provides that either all, or none, of the directors' names must appear on business letters where the company's name appears.

Both of these provisions apply to both companies limited by shares and by guarantee.

Minimum Wage

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the

number of people in *(a)* England, *(b)* the South West, *(c)* Somerset and *(d)* Taunton constituency who are earning less than the minimum wage. [64070]

Mr. Sutcliffe: For England there are approximately 1 million employees earning under the national minimum wage, and for the south west approximately 110,000 (the data come from ASHE 2005)

We are able to provide figures only for government regions and not constituencies.

Noise-induced Hearing Loss (Mining)

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the total value is of cost payments that have been refused for noise-induced hearing loss claims to his Department due to breaches of section 4(2)c of the Conditional Fee Agreement Regulations 2000. [64516]

Malcolm Wicks: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave him on 6 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1156–57W.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what *(a)* average and *(b)* range of costs have been paid for miners' noise-induced hearing loss claims by his Department in each year since 1999. [64441]

Malcolm Wicks: Solicitors costs paid in miners' hearing loss claims since 1999 are as follows.

	Solicitor payments made	*Total solicitors costs (£)*	*Average (£)*	*Min[1] (£)*	*Max[2] (£)*
1999	499	394,329	790	85	15,198
2000	4,082	2,875,714	704	17	26,203
2001	8,534	6,152,368	721	11	9,382
2002	5,261	3,880,791	738	20	11,500
2003	3,371	2,773,995	823	3	8,000
2004	3,197	3,684,052	1,152	12	17,537
2005	4,132	4,884,638	1,182	17	10,020
2006	1,052	1,321,832	1,256	11	6,465
Total	30,128	25,967,721	862	—	—

[1] The lowest costs are part-payments of expenses with remainder recovered separately.
[2] The highest costs paid each year relate to claims pursued though litigation.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry in how many claims to his Department by solicitors for miners' hearing loss an amount has been paid in costs for *(a)* work done by Melex Ltd., *(b)* fees to Vendside Ltd., *(c)* barristers' fees, *(d)* insurance premiums and *(e)* claimant loan interest costs. [64442]

Malcolm Wicks: There have been 10,376 noise induced hearing loss claims submitted by the UDM/Vendside since January 1997, for which costs have been paid to Vendside in 9,389 totalling £6.3 million.

The remaining information is not readily available. Miners' hearing loss claims are not schemed so solicitors' costs for each claim are dealt with on their own merits. Concerns relating to particular aspects of the costs would be raised as part of the negotiations on the appropriate level of costs for any given claim.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry in how many claims to his Department by solicitors for miners' hearing loss an amount has been paid in costs for a referral fee to Beresfords solicitors, where a solicitor other than Beresfords has submitted the claim. [64443]

Malcolm Wicks: This information is not readily available. Miners' hearing loss claims are not schemed so solicitors' costs for each claim are dealt with on their own merits. However, we would not generally pay such a referral fee.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the average *(a)* settlement and *(b)* costs paid for miners' noise-induced hearing loss cases has been in each year since 1999. [64445]

Malcolm Wicks: Compensation and costs paid for miners' hearing loss claims since 1999 are set out in the table:

£

	Average damages	*Average solicitors costs*
1999	2,293	790
2000	2,357	704
2001	2,394	721
2002	2,286	738
2003	2,007	823
2004	2,392	1,152
2005	2,173	1,182
2006	2,070	1,256

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry in what percentage of noise-induced hearing loss cases disputed due to breaches of rule 4(2)c of the Conditional Fee Agreement Regulations 2000, what percentage of cases included a disbursement payment to *(a)* Vendside, *(b)* Beresfords solicitors, *(c)* Melex Ltd., *(d)* Dr. Yeoh, *(e)* NIG, *(f)* Composite Legal Expenses and *(g)* Bank of Scotland. [64512]

Malcolm Wicks: This information is not readily available. Miners' hearing loss claims are not schemed so solicitors' costs for each claim are dealt with on their own merits. Concerns relating to a breach of regulation 4 of the conditional fee regulations would be raised as part of the negotiations on the appropriate level of costs for any given claim.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many costs payments are being negotiated for noise-induced hearing loss claims to his Department due to breach of section 4(2)c of the Conditional Fee Agreement Regulations 2000; and how many involve Beresfords solicitors. [64513]

Malcolm Wicks: This information is not readily available. Miners' hearing loss claims are not schemed so solicitors' costs for each claim are dealt with on their own merits. Concerns relating to a breach of regulation 4 of the conditional fee regulations would be raised as part of the negotiations on the appropriate level of costs for any given claim.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many individual claimants have been informed by his Department that their case is being delayed due to negotiations over costs payments for noise-induced hearing loss to his Department due to breaches of section 4(2)c of the Conditional Fee Agreement Regulations 2000. [64515]

Malcolm Wicks: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave him on 6 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1153–54W.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many costs payments have been refused to solicitors for noise-induced hearing loss claims to his Department due to breach of section 4(2)c of the Conditional Fee Agreement Regulations 2000 in *(a)* 2005 and *(b)* 2006. [64517]

Malcolm Wicks: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave him on 6 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1156–57W.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many costs payments have been refused to *(a)* Beresfords solicitors, *(b)* Bakewell solicitors, *(c)* Heptonstall solicitors, *(d)* Brown and Co. solicitors, *(e)* Ollerenshaw solicitors and *(f)* UDM/ Vendside for noise-induced hearing loss claims to his Department due to breach of section 4(2)c of the Conditional Fee Agreement Regulations 2000. [64518]

Malcolm Wicks: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave him on 9 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1731W.

Postal Services

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much post was *(a)* undelivered and *(b)* lost in each of the last five calendar years. [64010]

Barry Gardiner: This is an operational matter for Royal Mail plc. Adam Crozier, the chief executive, has been asked to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make it his policy to link increases in postal charges to the performance of Royal Mail; and if he will make a statement. [65018]

Barry Gardiner: Under the Postal Services Act (PSA 2000) the Government introduced a strong regulator, Postcomm, to monitor Royal Mail's performance against agreed quality of service targets and to manage postal charges under price controls, which are subject to public consultation.

Export Licences

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the export licences granted for the supply of *(a)* communication and *(b)* technical components to the United States for incorporation into Predator Unmanned Aerial Vehicles since 2000. [64360]

Malcolm Wicks: Information on the exporter, end-user and expected end-use of the exports in question is commercially confidential and as such is exempt from disclosure.

The Government publish information on export licences granted by destination, including for transfers to the United States, in its Annual Reports on Strategic Export Controls, available from the Libraries of the House. The Government also publish quarterly licensing and performance information on the Export Control Organisation website, www.dti.gov.uk/export. control. Relevant entries in these reports include components for unmanned air vehicles, components for military aero-engines, components for military aircraft communications equipment, components for military navigation equipment and components for military radar.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the export licences for components for use in Predator Unmanned Aerial Vehicles granted to Radstone Technology plc. since 2000. [64361]

Malcolm Wicks: Information on the Government's individual export licensing decisions is commercially confidential and I am therefore neither able to confirm nor deny whether Radstone Technology plc has been granted any export licences for components for Predator Unmanned Aerial Vehicles since 2000.

The Government publish information on export licences granted by destination, including for transfers to the United States, in its Annual Reports on Strategic Export Controls, available from the Libraries of the House. The Government also publish quarterly licensing and performance information on the Export Control Organisation website, www.dti.gov.uk/export. control. Relevant entries in these reports include components for unmanned air vehicles, components for military aero-engines, components for military aircraft communications equipment, components for military navigation equipment and components for military radar.

Regional Selective Assistance

Mr. Illsley: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether it is his policy that *(a)* the use of best available techniques and *(b)* compliance with the integrated pollution prevention and control regime (i) is and (ii) should be a condition of the award of regional selective assistance for industrial developments. [64143]

Alun Michael: The use of best available techniques and compliance with the integrated pollution prevention and control regime (IPPC) is not a condition of the award of assistance for industrial developments, as industry should be meeting all relevant regulatory obligations including IPCC as a matter of course.

From 1 April 2004 in England the Regional Selective Assistance scheme was re-launched as the Department of Trade and Industry's Selective Finance for Investment business support product. Support, which is discretionary, normally takes the form of a grant, which helps to fund new capital investment projects that lead to sustainable improvements in productivity, skills and employment. All applications are judged against specific product criteria, which include: need, eligibility, productivity, skills, job creation or safeguarding, viability, quality, national and regional benefit and additionality.

Sellafield

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much and what types of *(a)* additional hazardous waste and *(b)* spent nuclear fuel was discovered at Sellafield recently; and if he will make a statement. [64316]

Malcolm Wicks: Work at the Sellafield plant continues in order to gain a full understanding of the nature and extent of hazardous waste on the site. Recent detailed examination of one particular part of the Sellafield complex, the B30 pond, has shown that the volume of sludge is approximately 1,200 cubic metres, which is around 20 per cent. higher than previously thought. There has been no discovery of additional spent nuclear fuel.

A full inventory of the type and amount of nuclear waste in the UK is published by Nirex in conjunction with Defra and is available on their website.

Sunday Working

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent representations he has received from trades unions on the level of pay to shop workers working on Sundays. [64008]

Mr. Sutcliffe: We have been asking for views on the impact of further relaxation of the restrictions on Sunday shopping. USDAW (Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers) and the GMB (Britain's General Union) have both responded with reference to the level of pay for shop workers on Sundays.

USDAW and the GMB are intending to publish their responses to the DTI's review on their respective websites: www.usdaw.org.uk and www.gmb.org.uk In addition, their officials will be happy to be contacted directly to discuss their evidence.

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the extent to which those who work on Sundays are paid extra; what trends in the level of payment his Department has identified; and if he will make a statement. [64009]

Mr. Sutcliffe: In January, we appointed independent consultants, Indepen, to produce an economic cost-benefit analysis of the impact of further relaxation of the restrictions on Sunday shopping. As part of this analysis they are researching Sunday premium payments for retail workers. We will publish Indepen's economic cost-benefit analysis in due course.

Tidal Energy

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate the Department has made of the price per kilowatt hour of electricity produced from *(a)* tidal lagoon and *(b)* multi-pooled tidal lagoon schemes; and if he will make a statement. [64417]

Malcolm Wicks: In common with other forms of energy generation the cost of energy from a tidal generating station will vary on a case-by-case basis.

Between 1978 and 1994 the Government supported the most comprehensive programme of research and development on tidal energy in the world at an overall cost in excess of £20 million. These studies considered schemes at a number of potential sites, the largest being in the Severn Estuary. The results of the Severn study were reported in Energy Paper 57 HMSO 1989 (ISBN 0 11 412952 5). The unit cost of generation for the Severn scheme was estimated to be 7.5p/kWh at a discount rate of 8 per cent. (based upon 1994 prices).

The most recent study of the Severn scheme carried out by the Severn Tidal Power Group (available at www.dti.gov.uk/energy/renewables/publications/Severnbarrage.shtml) estimated the unit cost of generation to be 6p/kWh (capital and operating cost).

The DTI has previously commissioned an independent assessment of a proposed tidal (single) lagoon scheme in Swansea Bay. That assessment suggests the unit cost of generation to be around 16p/kWh at a discount rate of 8 per cent.

TRANSPORT

A3 Hindhead

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what cost-benefit analysis he has made of *(a)* delays to date and *(b)* possible future delays in implementing the A3 Hindhead improvement scheme; [64725]

(2) what assessment has been made of the impact on the environmentally sensitive areas of the *(a)* Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, *(b)* Devil's Punch Bowl Site of Special Scientific Interest and *(c)* environmentally sensitive areas of Hindhead Common if a decision to progress the A3 Hindhead improvement scheme were not made in spring 2006; [64836]

(3) what assessment he has made of the potential impact on the number of accidents on the A3 if the A3 Hindhead improvement scheme were not to be progressed as soon as possible. [64838]

Dr. Ladyman: It would not be appropriate to comment on these issues while the inspector's report and recommendations remain under consideration following the public inquiry on the scheme.

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received in support of making progress with the A3 Hindhead improvement scheme as soon as possible from constituents of North-East Hampshire constituency. [64837]

Dr. Ladyman: Over 50 representations have been received between 1 January and 14 April 2006 that have been overwhelmingly in favour of the scheme. We have not analysed which constituency the representations have been made from.

Biodiesel

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps he is *(a)* taking and *(b)* plans to take to promote the use of biodiesel; and if he will make a statement. [65485]

Dr. Ladyman: The Government's main support for biodiesel has, since 2002, come in the form of a 20p per litre fuel duty incentive. This has been sufficient to stimulate sales of several million litres a month. We announced last year, however, that we will introduce from 2008 a renewable transport fuels obligation, which will require all suppliers of transport fuels in the UK to ensure that a certain percentage of their total annual sales is made up of biofuels (or, in the longer term, some other renewable transport fuel). The level of the

obligation will rise from 2.5 per cent. in the financial year 2008–09 to 3.75 per cent. in 2009–10 and 5 per cent. in 2010–11. This should ensure that, by 2010, biodiesel sales in the UK will amount to over 1 billion litres a year—a 20-fold increase from where we are today.

Drink Driving (Lancashire)

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many drink driving accidents there were in *(a)* Ribble Valley and *(b)* Lancashire in each year since 1997. [65297]

Dr. Ladyman: Estimates of drink drive accidents in Great Britain as a whole are published each year in an article in "Road Casualties Great Britain—Annual Report". Estimates below Government office region level are not available.

Drivers (Smoking Ban)

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will introduce legislation to ban smoking while driving. [64618]

Dr. Ladyman: There are no plans to introduce legislation to ban smoking while driving.

Road traffic legislation already places responsibility on all drivers to have proper control of their vehicles. Any motorist who fails to do so, for whatever reason, such as smoking, or eating and drinking, is liable to prosecution.

Rule 126 of the current edition of the Highway Code highlights the need to concentrate and avoid distractions while driving. The consultation paper published in February 2006 on the revision of the code proposes the addition of "smoking" in the list of potential distractions to be avoided.

Driving Instructors (Sexual Assault)

Willie Rennie: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what provisions exist for the *(a)* suspension and *(b)* banning of driving instructors (i) accused and (ii) convicted of sexual assault. [65406]

Dr. Ladyman: Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 (as amended) requires professional car driving instructors to be registered.

One of the conditions of registration is that the instructor is, and remains,

"a fit and proper person to have his name entered in the register".

Failure to continue to meet, any of the conditions for registration can result in the Registrar of Approved Driving Instructors taking action to remove the person's name from the register.

There is no power for the registrar to suspend an instructor.

Mini Motorcycles

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will introduce a system for regulating the driving of mini motorcycles by young people. [63164]

Dr. Ladyman: Appropriate legal requirements are already in place regarding the riding or driving or vehicles on the public highway. In addition to a range of powers under road traffic law—which includes seizure of offending vehicles under certain circumstances—the Police Reform Act 2002 enables the police to seize motor vehicles being used illegally and/or anti-socially, provided a warning has first been given. I have discussed enforcement issues with the Association of Chief Police Officers and have followed this up with a letter about the various powers available for use against offending mini motorcycles.

As far as we are aware only one of a vast range of miniature motorcycles offered for sale claims to have European Whole Vehicle Type Approval (ECWVTA). Unless a motorcycle—whether miniature or otherwise—has ECWVTA or has successfully passed through the Motorcycle Single Vehicle Approval (MSVA) process, it may not be used on the public road. Any mini motorcycles which do have ECWVTA or MSVA must be registered, taxed and insured in order to use the road. The riders, whether young or old, must hold an appropriate licence and wear a suitable helmet.

National Parking Adjudication Service

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when the National Parking Adjudication Service will have in place the appeals process relating to bus lane and tramway enforcement in England outside London; and if he will make a statement. [64864]

Dr. Ladyman: The appeals service is for the local authorities to establish. I understand from the National Parking Adjudication Service that eight councils in England (outside London) hope to have completed all the necessary steps to commence bus lane enforcement this autumn which will include establishing the appeals service and appointing bus lane adjudicators, subject to the consent of the Lord Chancellor.

Railways (Lancashire)

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much money was spent on repairing railways in *(a)* Ribble Valley and *(b)* Lancashire in each year since 1997. [65299]

Derek Twigg: These are operational matters for Network Rail (NR). I have asked NR to write directly to the hon. Member.

Road Fatalities (Richmond)

Susan Kramer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the number of people killed in road accidents on roads maintained by Richmond upon Thames Local Authority from 1998 to the last year for which figures are available. [65070]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of people killed in road accidents on roads maintained by Richmond upon Thames Local Authority from 1998 to 2004 (the last year for which data are available) is given in the table.

Number of fatal casualties on roads maintained by the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Local Authority: 1998 to 2004

	Number of fatal casualties
1998	4
1999	3
2000	2
2001	2
2002	5
2003	1
2004	4

Source:
Transport For London

Search and Rescue

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the *(a)* location and *(b)* composition is of each search and rescue team in the UK. [64964]

Dr. Ladyman: The organisation for Search and Rescue (SAR) in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is an amalgam of separate Government Departments, the emergency services and other organisations. A significant number of charities and voluntary organisations dedicated to SAR also play a significant role. The Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) has responsibility for civil maritime search and rescue in the UK which is undertaken by HM Coastguard. The Coastguard primarily makes use of rescue resources from the MOD (RAF and RN helicopters and aircraft) and lifeboats from the RNLI and other volunteer lifeboat providers. In addition, land based search and rescue is led by the police service. Their statistics are not collated centrally.

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) SAR service is divided into three coastguard regions—Eastern, Western and Scotland and Northern Ireland, which are further subdivided into nine areas. Each area has two Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centres (MRCCs—a total of 19 in the UK). The areas are divided into a total of 64 Coastguard Sectors around the UK and within each sector there are a number of volunteer Coastguard Rescue Teams (CRTs). A table has been placed in the Libraries of the House showing the breakdown of teams and locations. The CRTs carry out coastal rescue operations (cliff and shoreline) and act as mobile lookouts when called out by their controlling MRCC to investigate reports of incidents, etc. In the UK there are 397 Coastguard Rescue Teams based around the UK coastline.

In addition the MCA operates four SAR helicopter units at Sumburgh airport, Stornoway, Portland and Lee-on-Solent. There are two helicopters at each base except for Portland where there is only one aircraft. One helicopter at each base is kept on immediate readiness 24 hours per day except at Portland which is, in general, a daylight hours only service (circa 8 am–8 pm).

MCA (HM Coastguard) coastguard rescue teams in UK

MCA (HM Coastguard) coastguard rescue teams	*Number*
Number of operational CRTs	397
Authorised staff compliment	3,488
Staff, in post	3,395

The details of the Ministry of Defence Search and Rescue and Mountain Rescue Teams are as follows.

MOD search and rescue and mountain rescue teams

Location	*Composition*
Helicopter search and rescue	
Leconfield Barracks, Beverley, Yorkshire	2 Sea King helicopters 53 service personnel 1 MOD civilian
RAF Boulmer, Alnwick, Northumberland	2 Sea King helicopters 62 service personnel 1 MOD civilian
RAF Lossiemouth, Elgin, Moray	2 Sea King helicopters 54 service personnel 1 MOD civilian
RAF Valley, Holyhead, Anglesey	2 Sea King helicopters 54 service personnel 1 MOD civilian
Royal Marine Base Chivenor, Barnstable, Devon	2 Sea King helicopters 62 service personnel 1 MOD civilian
Wattisham Barracks, Ipswich, Suffolk	2 Sea King helicopters 53 service personnel 1 MOD civilian
Royal Naval Air Station Culdrose, Helston, Cornwall	2 Sea King helicopters 10 service personnel[1]
HMS Gannet, Prestwick Airport, Scotland	2 Sea King helicopters 79 service personnel 31 MOD civilians
RAF Kinloss, Moray[2]	19 service personnel 10 MOD civilians
Mountain rescue teams	
RAF Valley, Holyhead, Anglesey,	8 service personnel 28 part-time MOD volunteers
RAF Leeming, Northallerton, Yorkshire	8 service personnel 28 part-time MOD volunteers
RAF Leuchars, St. Andrews Fife	8 military personnel 28 part-time MOD volunteers
RAF Kinloss, Forres, Moray	8 military personnel 28 part-time MOD volunteers

[1] This figure indicates the service personnel required to fulfil the mandated search and rescue tasks, which comes, under the remit of 771 Squadron. Additional military and civilian staff fulfil support duties to the whole squadron including search and rescue.
[2] The aeronautical rescue co-ordination centre located at RAF Kinloss is responsible for co-ordinating all SAR helicopter operations in the UK.
Note:
MOD contractors are not included in these figures.

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many search and rescue operations were carried out in each of the last five years *(a)* in the UK and *(b)* by each search and rescue base. [64965]

Dr. Ladyman: The table shows the number of times that Maritime and Coastguard Agency, through their Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centres, launched rescue missions in the UK in each of the last five years. The responsibility for the co-ordination of land-based and inland waters search and rescue rests with the police service and statistics for these operations are not collated centrally.

Location	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*Total*
Aberdeen	219	228	219	422	450	1,538
Belfast	193	226	208	221	219	1,067
Brixham	563	565	697	705	723	3,253
Clyde	462	495	484	530	475	2,446
Dover	389	347	315	348	374	1,773
Falmouth	349	335	339	289	237	1,549
Forth	203	197	203	63	117	783
Holyhead	359	319	441	394	192	1,705
Humber	414	644	605	451	485	2,599
London	394	390	464	415	218	1,881
Liverpool	310	322	419	504	489	2,044

Location	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	Total
Milford Haven	622	600	367	330	374	2,293
Portland	230	252	640	283	709	2,114
Shetland	892	766	213	225	150	2,246
Solent	281	238	884	1,036	948	3,387
Stornoway	502	501	228	241	224	1,696
Swansea	430	951	484	638	283	2,786
Thames	266	433	488	661	376	2,224
Yarmouth	317	228	372	300	209	1,426
Totals	7,395	8,037	8,070	8,056	7,252	—

Seatbelts

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps he *(a)* is taking and *(b)* plans to take to increase the seatbelt wearing rate to 97 per cent. over the next five years; and if he will make a statement. [65178]

Dr. Ladyman: Seatbelt messages have been included in the Department's road safety campaign for over 35 years. Having achieved very high wearing rates by good publicity and appropriate enforcement, the Department now believes it needs to be more targeted in reaching those who are most resistant to its messages. Seatbelt messages, along with other THINK! road safety issues, will in future be promoted through engagement strategies, currently under development, which will target young drivers and those who drive for work.

Enforcement of the law will remain a matter for the police who issued some 201,000 fixed penalty notices in England and Wales during 2004 for seat belt wearing offences.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what support he has *(a)* given and *(b)* plans to give to seatbelt sheriff campaigns; if he will make it his policy to support such campaigns; and if he will make a statement. [64757]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department has received no requests to support such campaigns. The Department does not directly support local campaigns but local authorities can fund these from their own resources. The Department runs paid publicity campaigns at a national level—radio, TV and posters—which local stakeholders can build upon if they wish. The Department also produces an extensive range of free promotional materials on road safety for use on a local level.

Speed Cameras

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the effectiveness in *(a)* Southend-on-Sea and *(b)* Essex of (i) fixed speed cameras and (ii) mobile speed cameras; what criteria he uses to assess effectiveness; and if he will make a statement. [64595]

Dr. Ladyman: The independent four-year evaluation report of the national safety camera programme, which is available in the Libraries of the House and on the DfT website, included an assessment of the effectiveness of both fixed and mobile cameras at the Essex Safety Camera Partnership level using the criteria of reductions in speed and casualties at camera sites.

The evaluation concluded that both types of camera were effective in both respects. Fixed cameras had, on the whole, a greater effect in reducing speeding than mobile cameras, reflecting the fact that fixed cameras affect driving behaviour all the time, whereas mobile cameras operate periodically at each location.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what guidance he has issued on the minimum number of persons that must have been killed or seriously injured at a given site before *(a)* a fixed speed camera and *(b)* a mobile speed camera is installed; and if he will make a statement. [64596]

Dr. Ladyman: The casualty criteria that must be met before a fixed or mobile speed camera is installed are set out in the Handbook of Rules and Guidance for the National Safety Camera Programme for England and Wales for 2006–07, which is available in the Library of the House, and on the Department's website. For fixed camera sites it is at least three killed or seriously injured collisions per site kilometre in the 36 months that forms the baseline period. For mobile camera sites it is at least one killed or seriously injured collision per site kilometre in the baseline period.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what research his Department has undertaken into the effects of speed cameras on drink driving levels; and if he will make a statement. [64669]

Dr. Ladyman: Speed cameras are neither designed nor intended to detect those who drink and drive. The Department has not therefore undertaken any research into the effects of speed cameras on drink driving.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what guidance he has issued on the speed at which a speed camera is triggered; and if he will make a statement. [64670]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department has not issued guidance on this matter. The guidelines issued by the Association of Chief Police Officers recommends motorists are not prosecuted unless they are recorded as going at 10 per cent. plus 2 mph over the posted speed limit.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much and what percentage of fines in *(a)* Southend-on-Sea and *(b)* Essex for a contravention of Section 89 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, went to (i) HM Treasury and (ii) each local speed camera partnership in each of the last three years for which information is available. [64671]

Dr. Ladyman: The Essex Safety Camera Partnership covers Essex county council, Southend-on-Sea borough council and Thurrock borough council. The following table shows the fine revenue, partnership expenditure and the resulting surplus which was passed to the HMT Consolidated Fund.

	Fine revenue (£)	Partnership expenditure (£)	Surplus (£)	Surplus (percentage)
2002-03	5,672,220	5,150,286	521,934	9.2
2003-04	5,137,740	5,037,293	100,447	2.0
2004-05	4,710,300	4,622,413	87,887	1.9

This information relates only to activity undertaken by the Essex Safety Camera Partnership as part of the safety camera programme. More detailed information on their finances (including individual partners') is available on the Essex Partnership website at: www.essexsafetycameras.co.uk

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the impact on road safety of speed cameras in *(a)* Southend-on-Sea and *(b)* Essex between 1994 and 2006; what (i) long-term trends and (ii) seasonal variations have been recorded; and if he will make a statement. [64694]

Dr. Ladyman: The following independent evaluations of the National Safety Camera Programme undertaken for the Department include an assessment of the Essex Safety Camera Partnership area, and are available in the Library of the House, and on the Department's website:

A cost recovery system for speed and red-light cameras—two year pilot evaluation (11 February 2003);

The national safety camera programme—Three year evaluation report (15 June 2004);

The national safety camera programme—Four year evaluation report (15 December 2005).

Long-term trends and seasonal variations are recorded only at the national level.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of speed cameras on roads in *(a)* Southend, *(b)* Essex and *(c)* England; and if he will make a statement. [64756]

Dr. Ladyman: The independent four-year evaluation report of the National Safety Camera Programme assessed the effectiveness of cameras at both the national programme and safety camera partnership level. The report, published on 15 December 2005, is available in the Library of the House, and on the Department's website.

Jeremy Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when the road accident statistics which are used to decide on the positioning of mobile speed cameras in Warwickshire were last updated. [64773]

Dr. Ladyman: The casualty criteria that must be met before a fixed or mobile speed camera is installed are set out in the "Handbook of Rules and Guidance for the National Safety Camera Programme for England and Wales for 2006/07" a copy of which is in the Library of the House. For mobile camera sites it is at least one killed or seriously injured collision per site kilometre in the baseline period. The baseline period is a 36-month period, the start date of which must be consistent with the start of a programme quarter and the end date must be within 12 months of the date of operational case submission.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many and what percentage of fixed speed cameras located on roads in *(a)* Southend-on-Sea and *(b)* Essex had a (i) 30 mph and (ii) 40 mph speed limit in each year between 1990 and 2006. [64869]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department holds information only at a partnership level although further site by district detail will be available from the Essex Safety Camera Partnership at www.essexsafetycameras.co.uk.

The number and percentage of fixed speed cameras on roads with a 30mph or 40mph speed limit in Essex is shown in the table.

	Number		*Percentage*	
Date established	*30 mph*	*40 mph*	*30 mph*	*40 mph*
1993	3	1	75	25
1995	9	1	90	10
1996	17	1	94	6
1998	19	1	95	5
1999	25	1	96	4
2001	45	6	87	12
2002	48	8	84	14
2003	54	17	75	24
2004	58	20	73	25
2005	58	21	73	26

Note:
Numbers are cumulative

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the cost was of installing a speed camera in Southend-on-Sea in the last period for which figures are available; and what the figures were in each year since 2000. [64870]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department does not hold detailed cost information in relation to installing speed cameras as every site is different, equipment types vary and local conditions need to be taken into account. As a general guide, the following budgetary figure can be used:

Capital cost of providing a fixed housing, including power supply, signage and providing a camera (to go in housing) £40,000.

Detailed costs for specific sites may be available from the Essex Safety Camera Partnership who can be contacted via their website at www.essexsafetycameras.co.uk.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many applications in *(a)* Southend-on-Sea and *(b)* Essex for speed camera sites have been made on which a final decision on whether installation will be allowed remains pending; and if he will make a statement. [64871]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department holds information only at a partnership level. As part of its operational case for 2006–07, the Essex. Safety Camera Partnership submitted proposals for five fixed and 21 mobile speed camera sites. As all these sites were compliant with the published site selection rules, all have been approved. There are no applications for new speed camera sites in Essex where a decision on approval remains pending.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many proposals for speed cameras in *(a)* Southend-on-Sea and *(b)* Essex have been (i) approved and (ii) rejected by his Department in each year since 1997; and what the proposed location was in each case. [64872]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department holds information only at a partnership level and requires all core sites within the safety camera programme to meet the published site selection criteria. Non-compliant sites are not submitted for approval as part of the programme so the Department has not rejected any proposals for speed cameras in Essex.

The exact location of the sites approved by the Department is available from the Essex Safety Camera Partnership. The number of sites submitted as part of their operational cases, and approved by the Department since they joined the safety camera programme in April 2000 is shown in the table:

Operational Case Date	*Fixed Number approved*	*Mobile Number approved*	*Total*
2000–01	59	150	209
2003–04	21	38	59
2004–05	1	21	22
2006–07	5	21	26
Total	86	230	316

Note:
Essex SCP joined the safety camera programme as a 'pilot' partnership in April 2000.
All existing camera sites that existed at that time were brought into the programme.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions his Department has had with Essex police about changing the number of *(a)* fixed and *(b)* mobile speed cameras in (i) Southend and (ii) Essex; and if he will make a statement. [64873]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department would not expect to have discussions with Essex police about changing the number of speed camera sites in Essex because sites are selected locally as the right solution to a particular problem.

The Department did work with the Essex Safety Camera Partnership to develop its 2006–07 operational case and this was approved on 30 March 2006.

The Department's "Handbook of Rules and Guidance for the National Safety Camera Programme for England and Wales for 2006–07" a copy of which is in the Library of the House requires safety camera partnerships to keep existing camera sites under review. Any further new cameras will only be approved as core sites within the safety camera programme if they meet the published site selection criteria set out in the handbook.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the types of *(a)* fixed and *(b)* mobile speed cameras used in (i) Southend, (ii) the Metropolitan police area and (iii) Essex. [64874]

Dr. Ladyman: Partnerships are not required to provide the Department with information about the types of cameras they use. All safety cameras must however be of a type approved by the Home Office.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what research his Department is undertaking into accidents around speed camera sites in *(a)* Southend, *(b)* Essex and *(c)* England; and if he will make a statement. [64875]

Dr. Ladyman: The independent four-year report into the National Safety Camera Programme, published in December 2005, which is available in the Libraries of the House and the Department's website, showed a significant reduction in deaths and serious injuries at camera sites.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent assessment he *(a)* has made and *(b)* plans to make of the potential for temporary blinding of drivers driving at night by (i) forward facing and (ii) rear facing speed camera flashes; and if he will make a statement. [64876]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department has not assessed the effect of camera flashes at night and have no plans to do so. No forward or rear-facing camera is type approved until it has undergone rigorous testing against set specifications that ensures its reliability and safety. The peak intensity and duration of the flash are less than levels which are encountered from other sources when driving at night.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether further speed cameras are planned for each side of the *(a)* A127 and *(b)* A13 between the M25 and Southend; and if he will make a statement. [64877]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department is not currently aware of any further speed cameras planned for these roads. Any further speed cameras in the future will be proposed by the Essex Safety Camera Partnership and will only be approved as core sites within the safety camera programme if they meet the published site selection criteria.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether mobile speed cameras are planned for each side of the *(a)* A127 and *(b)* A13 between the M25 and Southend; and if he will make a statement. [64878]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department is not currently aware of any new planned mobile speed cameras for these roads. Any planned mobile speed cameras in the future will be proposed by the Essex Safety Camera Partnership and will only be approved as core sites within the safety camera programme if they meet the published site selection criteria.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received on the installation of speed cameras in Essex. [65181]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department has not received any representations on the installation of speed cameras in Essex.

Speed Humps

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent representations he has received from the emergency services about the removal of *(a)* speed humps and *(b)* pinch points on the road network in (i) Southend-on-Sea, (ii) Essex, (iii) the Metropolitan Police area of London and (iv) England; and if he will make a statement. [64754]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department has not received any representations from the emergency services about the removal of speed humps and pinch points on any roads in England.

London Ambulance Service did contact the Department in October 2001 with concerns that traffic calming may have a detrimental effect on ambulance

response times. A regular dialogue has been maintained since this time to establish the nature of the concerns and to assist with possible solutions.

Transport Subsidies

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his answer of 23 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 496W, how much of the total bus subsidy in London is from his Department in addition to the bus subsidy operators grant. [63565]

Dr. Ladyman: In addition to funding for buses in the form of subsidy given in my answer of 23 March, the following awards were made to bus projects in the capital:

Hammersmith Urban Bus Challenge, in 2001, at £425,000.

Service improvements and expansion programme in Tower Hamlets, in 2003, at £527,208.

Brent Urban Bus Challenge, in 2003, at £440,000.

Camden and Islington PlusBus, in 2004, at £1,021,465.

Thames Gateway zero-emission electric bus project, in 2005, at £394,000.

Vehicle Excise and Registration Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the operation of section *(a)* 22A and *(b)* 27A of the Vehicle Excise and Registration Act 1994. [65038]

Dr. Ladyman: Section 22A relates to the Vehicle Identity Check (VIC) scheme. The scheme helps to combat the crime of vehicle ringing by verifying that written off vehicles conform to the registered particulars on the DVLA database before being registered and put back on the road.

A recent review of the scheme's effectiveness has shown that car thefts decreased by 24 per cent. in the first two years since the scheme's introduction. Although this can be attributed to a number of crime reduction measures, it is reasonable to conclude that VIC has been a contributing factor to this decrease. The review of the scheme will be published shortly.

Section 27A is not yet in force but its purpose is to introduce regulation making powers to prescribe security features in number plates making them less susceptible to theft or cloning. DVLA is currently considering which security features might be put in place.

MINISTER FOR WOMEN

Correspondence

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Minister for Women and Equality when she expects to reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Maldon and East Chelmsford of 20 December 2005 on behalf of Ms Michelle Langton of Galleywood, Chelmsford. [63770]

Meg Munn: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry to PQ No. 63771 answered today.

DEFENCE

A400M Aircraft

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he has had with his counterparts in other countries on the merits of fitting a fuel tank inerting system to the A400M aircraft. [63224]

Mr. Ingram: The A400M does not come fitted with a fuel inerting system, although a portable removable on board inert gas generation system is available as an option. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence has not discussed the fitting of a fuel tank inerting system to the A400M with his counterparts in other countries. Officials have discussed the merits of fitting such a system with counterparts in other countries. The UK will make a decision in due course on whether to fit the system to our A400M aircraft.

Air and Sea Rescue

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the future of air and sea rescue operations capability. [64963]

Mr. Ingram: A 24 hour military and civil Search and Rescue (SAR) service around the UK is presently provided by RAF, Royal Navy and Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) helicopters. This is planned to remain in service until the middle of the next decade.

As set out in the Defence Industrial Strategy (DIS), MOD and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency are jointly assessing options for provision of a replacement SAR service when the existing helicopters are taken out of service. An announcement setting out further details on the way ahead will be made in due course.

We intend to deliver a service that is at least as effective as the current one, in a manner that provides value for money to the taxpayer. Tasking of the service will continue to be managed jointly by the MOD and MCA. The DIS also makes it clear that we will retain a proportion of military aircrew.

Air Incident (Ballykelly)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether his Department has implemented additional safety precautions as a result of the landing at Ballykelly Army Base of a scheduled aircraft bound for Londonderry Airport on Wednesday 29 March. [65362]

Mr. Ingram: The Civil Aviation Authority are currently conducting an inquiry into the circumstances of this incident. We will consider any recommendations that may emerge from this inquiry as soon as they are available.

Cadet Corps (Rifles)

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what minimum number of rifles *(a)* in total and *(b)* per 100 cadets is required by army cadet organisations to maintain training standards. [60260]

Mr. Touhig: The number of General Purpose Rifles currently required to maintain minimum standards is 7,746, which equates to 17 rifles per 100 cadets at current

strength. The number of Drill Purpose Rifles currently required to maintain minimum standards is 5,130 which equates to 11 rifles per 100 cadets at current strength.

Defence Export Services Organisation

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the annual budget has been for the Defence Export Services Organisation in each of the last 10 years. [64342]

Mr. Ingram: Operating costs which are available for the last eight financial years are given as follows. Forecast costs are given for financial year 2005–06.

£ million

Financial year	*Expenditure*	*Receipts*	*Net operating costs*
1998–99	45.359	-29.342	16.017
1999–2000	46.473	-34.977	11.496
2000–01	55.81	-41.430	14.380
2001–02	48.930	-37.853	11.077
2002–03	56.944	-44.407	11.944
2003–04	58.348	-42.203	16.145
2004–05	59.960	-43.038	16.922
2005–06	51.6	-38.0	13.6

The net operating costs include credits to the defence budget arising from a range of activities of the Defence Export Services Organisation, including those of the Disposal Services Agency until it was transferred to the Defence Logistics Organisation on 1 April 2005.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the ramifications for military stability in the middle east region of increased arms sales to Israel and Saudi Arabia facilitated by the Defence Export Services Organisation; and if he will make a statement. [64466]

Mr. Ingram: The Defence Export Services Organisation (DESO) implements Government policy in respect of supporting legitimate defence exports by industry to a range of countries, including Israel and Saudi Arabia. Export licensing policy requires the Government to take into account concerns that proposed defence exports might be used for internal repression or international aggression, risks to regional stability, or other considerations.

Currently, less than 1 per cent. of (DESO) staff are engaged in export-related business to Israel and around 40 per cent. to Saudi Arabia. The latter figure includes staff in the Saudi Project Office who undertake a range of tasks principally associated with the performance of existing contracts.

Defence Intelligence and Security Centre

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence in which countries short-term training teams were deployed by the Defence Intelligence and Security Centre in 2004–05. [63459]

Mr. Ingram: In 2004–05, short term training teams were deployed from the Defence Intelligence and Security Centre to Iraq, Slovenia and Malaysia.

Depleted Uranium

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he will publish the findings of the Depleted Uranium Oversight Board. [64621]

Mr. Touhig: The Depleted Uranium Oversight Board is an independent committee that reports to me. Its proceedings, including interim summaries of the results of the retrospective depleted uranium testing programme, are published on its website (www.duob.org.uk). I understand that the board expects to submit a final report on its work toward the end of 2006.

I understand that, to date, no depleted uranium has been detected in any of the veterans' urine samples monitored under this programme.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment his Department has made of the effect of depleted uranium shells on soldiers; and if he will make a statement. [64760]

Mr. Touhig: The Ministry of Defence routinely monitors emerging information on the potential health effects of exposure to depleted uranium (DU) and has studied the authoritative assessments by the Royal Society and others. All the reliable scientific and medical evidence shows that the likelihood of ill health as a result of battlefield exposure to DU is extremely low. Nonetheless, urine testing has been made available to current and former personnel concerned about possible exposure. To date, with the exception of a small number of personnel who suffered shrapnel injuries in a "friendly fire" incident involving DU munitions, none of those tested has been found to be excreting DU.

Combined Services Detailed Interrogation Centre

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) when each of the prisons run by the Combined Services Detailed Interrogation Centre ceased to operate; and what took the place of each; [64039]

(2) which organisation took over the functions previously carried out by the Combined Services Detailed Interrogation Centre. [64688]

Mr. Ingram: The research required to locate surviving source material which may provide the information requested will take some time. I will write to the hon. Member when this work is complete.

Far East Prisoners of War

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the camps in which civilians and military personnel must have been interned to be eligible for the Far East Prisoner Of War ex-gratia payment; and what criteria were used to determine the qualifying camps. [62539]

Mr. Touhig *[holding answer 30 March 2006]:* To be eligible under the military part of the ex-gratia scheme, a claimant must have been a member of the UK armed forces and have been captured and detained by the Japanese. An individual's service record and "capture cards" provided by the Japanese have normally contained sufficient contemporary evidence to establish Prisoner of War status without the need to prove

detention in any particular camp. Lists of qualifying camps have not therefore been necessary to prove eligibility for military claimants.

To be eligible under the civilian part of the scheme, a claimant must have been detained within a specifically designated area, under the direct control of the Japanese. Civilian personnel who were held in the camps listed as follows and who met the other criteria for the scheme have received a payment. These camps have been verified as meeting the agreed internment definition through information obtained from a number of sources which include the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Imperial War Museum, the National Archives and ABCIFER. The list includes the main internment camps but is not exhaustive. Claims from former civilian internees who were held captive in other camps would be considered in accordance with the aforementioned internment definition. A small number of claims have been paid to civilians who were not detained at locations directly under the control of the Japanese. These payments were made in error, largely in the initial phase of the scheme. This happened either because eligibility decisions were based on lists of those who had benefited individually or as a family member under the 1950s compensation scheme based on liquidated Japanese assets where the family member may not themselves have been interned, or because the status of some locations had not been fully established.

Qualifying civilian internment camps include the following:

Ash Camp
Baguio
Batavia Area
Burma (Camp had a number of names over the period)
Changi
Chapei
Columbia Country Club
Djambi
Great Western Road
Haiphong Road
Kuching
Lincoln Avenue
Lintang
Los Banos
Muntok (Banka Island)
Lunghwa
Padang
Palembang
Pootung
Santo Tomas
Sarawak
Shanghai (Camp Chit Chat)
Sibul Springs
Sime Road
Stanley Camp
Sumatra (A number of camps with changing names)
Tanahtinggi
Tangerang
Tha Phrachandr (also known as Tha Prachand)
Weihsien
Yangchow
Yu Yuen Road

Information Requests

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many requests for Internal Reviews of Requests for Information he has received in each of the last three years; and how many were completed within 40 working days of receipt of the application. [64781]

Mr. Touhig: Since the full implementation of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 on 1 January 2005, the Ministry of Defence has received 126 requests for internal reviews of responses to requests for information or of the handling of requests. 108 reviews have been completed, of which 64 were completed within 40 working days of receipt of the application.

Joint Strike Fighter

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the Joint Strike Fighter project is subject to the US Arms Export Control Act; and if he will make a statement. [65419]

Mr. Ingram: Yes. Military aircraft appear on the US Munitions List, so the Joint Strike Fighter project is subject to the US Arms Export Control Act.

Pilots

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many qualified pilots in the Royal Air Force are posted to *(a)* a flying post on a squadron and *(b)* a non-flying post. [64608]

Mr. Touhig: The number of trained pilots in the Royal Air Force as at 1 March 2006 by flying/non-flying post is given in the following table.

	Trained strength
Flying Post	1,520
Non-Flying Post	600
Total	2,120

Note:
All figures have been rounded to the nearest ten.

Private Tesoni Vakacakaudrove

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence on what date the Board of Inquiry into the death of Private Tesoni Vakacakaudrove at Leconfield barracks on 6 October 2002 *(a)* opened and *(b)* closed; for how many hours the Board sat; and what measures were taken as a result of its recommendations. [62458]

Mr. Touhig: The Board of Inquiry to investigate the circumstances of the death of Private Tesoni Vakacakaudrove convened on 6 January 2004 and closed on 14 January 2004. The Board comprised three members but there is no record of the number of hours that the Board sat. The recommendations made by the BOI were addressed as follows:

Initial Reporting of Incidents

Direction on the Initial Reporting of such incidents has been reviewed and clearly defined in Defence School of Transport (DST) Standing Orders. Clear guidance is also provided in each accommodation block.

Immediate Action Drills

Immediate Action Drills Flow Charts have been placed in each accommodation block.

Phones

Duty of Care staff are now equipped with both phone and mobile communications which could be relied upon in an emergency.

Health and Safety (H and S)

The DST H and S Policy and Standing Orders have been updated.

Standing Orders

DST Standing Orders have been rewritten.

Bar Orders

Orders for the NAAFI and NAAFI Bar Staff, and for NAAFI points of alcohol sale have been incorporated into Standing Orders, and displayed in all NAAFI run bars and points of sale.

Welfare

Welfare facilities and processes are clearly identified by the unit. Welfare assistance is provided by empowered officers, unit welfare officer, on site WRVS and Army Welfare Services and a Padre. Driver Training Wing (where all phase 2 students receive instruction) now has an established Student Focus Office headed by a captain. Clear direction on the use of these welfare agencies and facilities are included in induction briefings and advertised in Orders.

Health Education Posters

General alcohol education posters are displayed around the unit in accommodation, training blocks and recreational facilities and interspersed with drink driving posters.

Responsibility for Phase 2 Students

A continuous system of individual reporting from phase 1 to phase 2 training, and onward to the Field Army, now exists.

Cultural Awareness

The formalisation of UK and Foreign and Commonwealth (F and C) service personnel and F and C families cultural induction and orientation is being co-ordinated. The following are being drafted: a short guide to all F and C culture and traditions; F and C diversity management training for UK service personnel for incorporation into appropriate individual training courses; a unit welfare officer's induction package for F and C families.

Military Ethos

Following the recommendations made in the duty of care appraisal of initial training the military supervisory manpower at DST has been increased. This will help promote military ethos.

Boards of Inquiry

Since 1 June 2004, Boards of Inquiry are required to convene within 48 hours of an incident.

Replacement of staff

This recommendation was considered by HQ Land to be outside the immediate purview of the BOI.

Queen's Flight

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the cost was of overnight accommodation for the crew of a BAe146 of The Queen's Flight at Sharm el Sheikh in December 2004; for how many crew and for how many nights such accommodation was required; and which Department met the cost. [64807]

John Reid: Ministerial use of 32 (TR) Squadron is charged at an hourly rate calculated on an annual basis. This hourly rate includes a component covering aircrew accommodation, which is not recovered separately. The overall costs of the trip were included in the annual list of Cabinet Ministers' visits overseas for 2004–05 published in July 2005, a copy of which is in the Library of the House. The Prime Minister's Office met the costs. Five crew members remained at Sharm el Sheikh for eight nights.

Royal Irish Regiment

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the projected numbers of the bands of the Royal Irish Regiment are over the next five years; and if he will make a statement on the future of military music in Northern Ireland. [64189]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* Pursuant to my written ministerial statement on 9 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 69WS, the band of the Royal Irish Regiment will be disbanded by 1 April 2008. We will continue to provide military music in Northern Ireland via the Northern Ireland Territorial Army Band which will be renamed The Royal Irish Regiment Band (TA).

Royal Ordnance Chorley

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what role the Minister of State for Defence *(a)* has played and *(b)* is playing in deciding the future of Royal Ordnance Chorley; [63178]

(2) what role each Minister in his Department has played in the run down of *(a)* Royal Ordnance Chorley and *(b)* Royal Ordnance Bridgwater. [63175]

Mr. Ingram: Defence Ministers have played no direct role in decisions taken by BAES Land Systems concerning the future of their sites at Chorley and Bridgwater.

Minister for Defence Procurement did, however, endorse the signing of the Partnering Principles between MOD and BAES (LS) in October, which informed the company of MOD's long term capability requirement as set out in the Defence Industrial Strategy.

Submarines

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many times Royal Navy submarines have docked at Southampton in each of the last five years. [64779]

Mr. Ingram: No Royal Navy submarines have docked at Southampton in the last five years.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate he has made of the cost of upgrading and extending the life-cycle of Vanguard class submarines to accommodate Trident II D5 (A) missiles. [64246]

John Reid: Initial preparatory work is being undertaken by officials on possible options for the future of the UK's nuclear deterrent. However, Ministers have not yet begun to consider the position on this issue in any detail and it would be inappropriate to speculate on the range of options that might be available and their potential costs.

The term Trident II D5 (A) is not recognised by either the Ministry of Defence or the US Department of Defence as a current variant of the Trident D5 missiles.

Trident Replacement

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his strategy is for ensuring the fullest possible debate on the replacement for Trident; and if he will make a statement. [64041]

John Reid: I refer the hon. Member to the answer that I gave previously to the hon. Member for Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey (Danny Alexander) on 7 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1352–53.

Since then, the House of Commons Defence Committee has published a detailed memorandum, which was provided by my Department, and the issue has been raised on other occasions in the House of Commons. But Ministers have not yet engaged in this issue in any detail and it therefore remains the case that it is too early to say what further formal or informal procedures might be used to underpin future decision making by the Government in this area.

CABINET OFFICE

Delivery Unit

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster on what Government *(a)* top delivery and reform priorities and *(b)* targets the Delivery Unit is focusing. [63160]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The Prime Minister's Delivery Unit (PMDU) is focusing on providing support to civil service departments on aspects of delivery of:

health system reform;

education system reform; and

police reform,

as well as leading a programme of departmental reviews designed to improve departments' performance in pursuing their current missions and tackling future challenges.

The PMDU is also focusing on monitoring and providing challenge and support to the following public service agreement (PSA) targets arising from SR04. These include:

Department of Health

Increasing the participation of problem drug users in drug treatment

Improving health outcomes for people with long term conditions

Ensuring maximum 18 weeks waiting time between GP referral and hospital treatment

Department for Education and Skills

Young people reaching 19 ready for skilled employment or higher education

Reducing the proportion of young people not in education, employment or training

GCSE attainment at age 16

Attainment at key stages 2 and 3

Reducing drug use in young people

Reducing school absence

Home Office

Improving the delivery of justice

Reassuring the public about crime and the criminal justice system

Ensuring an effective asylum process

Reducing crime

Reducing the harms caused by illegal drugs

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

Delivering a faster and more efficient planning system.

The unit also monitors a number of targets from the previous spending review including:

reducing criminal reoffending;

inpatient and outpatient maximum waiting times; and

provision of patient choice in the NHS.

All PSA targets are monitored either by HMT or PMDU. PMDU regularly reviews its contribution to target areas in conjunction with HMT and No. 10, and would normally continue to be involved in workstreams until the target was met or where it could be confident that the target was on target to be met.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Burma

Grant Shapps: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has made to the military government of Burma on behalf of political prisoners *(a)* U Saw Naing Naing and *(b)* U Soe Han, who are incarcerated in that country. [64420]

Ian Pearson: I have been asked to reply.

The UK and EU have repeatedly called for the release of all political prisoners in Burma. Our Embassy in Rangoon monitors the general human rights situation in Burma, including the arrest and detention of political prisoners. We have not made any specific representations on behalf of U Saw Naing Naing or U Soe Han.

Community Service Orders

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many offenders who have been handed community service orders by the court have subsequently failed the conditions of their order in each of the past 10 years for which figures are available. [64385]

Fiona Mactaggart: Community service orders were renamed community punishment orders from April 2001. They also formed one element of the combination order, renamed community punishment and rehabilitation order from the same date. For offences

committed since 4 April 2005, unpaid work has been imposed as a community order with an unpaid work requirement.

The readily available information (covering the years 1994 and 1999 to 2004) is published in Table 4.13 of 'Sentencing Statistics 2004, England and Wales' (Home Office Statistical Bulletin No 15/05), a copy of which is in the Library.

Correspondence

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter of 2 December 2005 from the hon. Member for Brent, East regarding Dr. Mohammed Salah Nabi. [64028]

Mr. McNulty: I wrote to the hon. Member on 19 April 2006.

DNA Database

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps the Government are taking to assess the deterrent effect of the DNA database on crime; and if he will make a statement. [64175]

Hazel Blears: It is not currently possible to quantify specific deterrent effects to any single given component of the investigative and prosecutorial processes. The Government have been, and is continuing to, evaluate the impact of increased use of DNA by the police, database growth and the impact on the investigation and detection of crime. The Home Office published a summary of what has been achieved through the Government's DNA Expansion Programme 2000–05 on 4 January 2006.

Identity Cards

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his statement of 18 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 833, what the evidential basis was for the assertion that the London School of Economics Report was written by the leading campaigner against identity cards. [62611]

Andy Burnham: My right hon. Friend the Prime Minster stated that he thought he was right in saying that the Identity Project Report, published by the London School of Economics' Department of Information Systems, had been written by a leading campaigner against identity cards. This is a reasonable conclusion given the close correlation between the contents of the report and the publicly expressed opinions of the individual who acted as project mentor/co-ordinator and of the organisation he is a director of.

Illegal Immigrants

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many employers in West Lancashire constituency have been prosecuted for employing illegal immigrants in each year since 1997. [64123]

Mr. McNulty: The Court Proceedings Database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform shows that there have been no prosecutions in Lancashire for employing illegal immigrants between 1997 and the latest date for which published data is available—2004

Immigration and Nationality Directorate

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many staff of the immigration and nationality directorate are based in *(a)* Scotland, *(b)* each of the English regions, *(c)* Wales, *(d)* Northern Ireland and *(e)* overseas, broken down by office location; and what the remit is of each office. [39935]

Mr. McNulty: The total number of staff employed and based in the UK is shown in table 1 and a breakdown of IND in English regions is presented in table 2.

A table indicating the numbers of staff based overseas is provided in annex A.

There are approximately 134 buildings, at least partially occupied, by the immigration and nationality directorate, within the UK. Some operational staff will also be based in police stations periodically as working practices indicate that co-located intelligence gathering is beneficial to both the immigration and police services.

Due to the large number of offices, and in some instances for security reasons, it is also not feasible to list the remit of each office. I can state that the larger estates such as Croydon and Liverpool, undertake functions that cut across several areas. These include operational programmes; casework—both general and asylum; appeals work; human resources, finance and IT support functions and building services. The smaller locations tend to undertake operational programmes but are supported by regional corporate services as appropriate.

Table 1

Full time equivalent:	*Permanent*	*Non-permanent*
England	14,537	2,534
Scotland	256	10
Wales	83	6
Northern Ireland	5	1

Table 2

Region	*Total*
Croydon* (CR) Greater London	6,532
Heathrow (HT)	1,856
Gatwick (GT)	497
London (LN)	1,484
East (ES)	364
SE	1,443
SW	71
Liverpool (LV)	1,298
Midlands (MD)	422
NW	633
NE	2,021
West (WS)	78
Sh Exec Brew GFL	84
Dover (DV)	69
Other	219
Total	17,071

Annex A

Country	*Total Officers*
Abu Dhabi	2
Accra	16
Abuja	7
Algiers	1

Annex A

Country	Total Officers
Amsterdam	4
Amman	2
Ankara	4
Athens	0
Bahrain	1
Bangkok	3
Banjul	2
Beijing	9
Belgrade	2
Bogota	2
Bratislavia	0
Brussels	28
Bucharest	3
Budapest	2
Cairo	3
Casablanca	0
Chennai	5
Chicago	1
Chongqing	2
Colombo	4
Copenhagen	2
Dar Es Salaam	0
Dhaka	16
Doha	16
Dubai	4
Dublin	1
Dusseldorf	2
Frankfurt	2
Guangzhou	5
Harare	8
Hong Kong	4
Islamabad	47
Istanbul	6
Jakarta	1
Kubul	1
Kampala	2
Karachi	3
Kathmandu	1
Khartoum	1
Kiev	2
Kingston	5
Kinshasa	1
Kolkata	1
Kuala Lumpur	2
Kuwait	1
Kyiv	0
Lisbon	1
Lagos	24
Madrid	1
Manila	4
Moscow	6
Mumbai	12
Moscow	0
Nairobi	10
New York	1
New Delhi	13
Nicosia	1
Nuremberg	0
Paris	51
Nicosia	0
Pretoria	5
Quito	1
Rome	2
Sarajevo/Bosnia	0
Seoul	2
Shanghai	3
Sierra Leone	1
Skopje	1
Sofia	3
St. Petersburg	1
Tehran	3
The Hague	0
Tirana	1

Annex A

Country	Total Officers
Tunis	0
Tripoli	2
Vienna	1
Warsaw	3
Yaounde	1
Zagreb	2
Total	376

Indefinite Leave to Remain

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many cases have been affected by the suspension of casework for indefinite leave to remain applications made under the provisions of the European Community Association Agreement between March 2004 and February 2005; what the size of the backlog is; what the cost is of dealing with these cases; what steps his Department is taking to address the situation; when he expects the backlog to be cleared; and if he will make a statement. [64045]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* An estimated 3,248 European Community Association Agreement (ECAA) applications for indefinite leave to remain (ILR) were affected by the suspension of ECAA casework between 30 March 2004 and 14 February 2005.

This figure includes those cases lodged prior to 30 March 2004, which were put on hold on the date of suspension; those received during the suspension and those submitted since resumption of case consideration. There are currently 2,367 ECAA applications for ILR outstanding.

This information is provisional management information and may be subject to change.

Data on the costs of dealing with this specific category of application are not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Significant additional casework resource has already been allocated to this work. It remains the Department's aim, subject to intake levels, to reduce the backlog of ECAA applications to frictional levels by the end of 2006.

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether compensation will be available to businesses and individuals who have been adversely affected by the suspension of casework for indefinite leave to remain applications made under the provisions of the European Community Association Agreement between March 2004 and February 2005. [64047]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* The suspension was required to strengthen the regime for consideration of these applications and on that basis there are no plans to offer compensation.

Ministerial Visits

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which *(a)* probation offices,

(b) prisons and *(c)* drug rehabilitation centres officials in his Department have visited since 1997; and for what purposes in each case. [64690]

Fiona Mactaggart: This information is not held centrally and would incur disproportionate costs in gathering this information.

Police (Ethnic Minorities)

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to increase the number of recruits from ethnic minorities into the police; whether a target has been set for the Metropolitan Police Service; and whether this target has been broken down by *(a)* ethnic and *(b)* other minority groups. [64159]

Hazel Blears: It remains the Government's policy that the composition of the police workforce should reflect the communities which it serves. The Police Service continues to make progress against the Home Secretary's recruitment targets for 2009, and all forces are committed to recruit from minority ethnic groups in proportion to, or at a level above, their representation in the local economically active population. Performance against this objective is a key performance indicator in the Policing Performance Assessment Framework.

The Home Office is working with the Police Service to accelerate the pace of change. The measures currently in hand include promoting the use of outreach workers in police forces, engagement with student faith societies and black students' unions to encourage applications from minority ethnic graduates and measures to increase minority ethnic applications to the High Potential Development Scheme. The Home Office has developed in collaboration with force recruitment departments materials aimed at increasing recruitment from minority ethnic groups, including multi-lingual recruitment material, a toolkit providing best practice guidance for familiarisation events and a video to familiarise applicants with police assessment and selection procedures.

In 1999, two per cent of police officers were from minority ethnic communities, the latest available figures show that at 31 March 2005 black and minority ethnic police officers made up 3.5 per cent. of total officer strength and that minority ethnic representation across the Service as a whole, including special constables and police staff, stood at 4.6 per cent.

The Home Secretary's Employment Targets which were published in 1999 set the Metropolitan Police a target of 25 per cent. ethnic minority representation within the force to be achieved by 2009. The latest available figures show that as at 31 March 2005; 7 per cent. of police officers (an increase from 3.3 per cent. in 1999), 20.8 per cent. of special constables (an increase from 13.9 per cent. in 1999) and 21.9 per cent. of police staff (an increase from 14.6 per cent. in 1999) within the Metropolitan Police were from ethnic minorities. The target set for the Metropolitan Police is based solely on ethnicity.

Probation Service

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action was taken in each year since 1997 to address each complaint about *(a)* Essex and *(b)* Southend probation service. [48871]

Fiona Mactaggart: In 2001 the Secretary of State agreed the National Complaints Procedure that enables local probation areas to handle complaints. Each complaint made about the Essex probation service is investigated under a three stage process. The three stages are: informal investigation by the local office, formal investigation by the chief officer or a senior officer nominated by the chief officer, and finally the appeal stage when a panel of three board members hears the appeal. Unresolved local complaints can be escalated to the independent Prison and Probation Ombudsman.

Essex probation area will maintain their own record of complaints received from offenders and the outcome of these cases.

Public Order

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps are being taken to tackle antisocial behaviour in Southend West; and if he will make a statement. [64211]

Hazel Blears: Southend on Sea is an action area—one of 50 areas across the country who work closely with the Home Office to ensure a high level of commitment to tackle antisocial behaviour locally.

With effect from 18 April, South Eastern Division of Essex Police is adopting Neighbourhood Policing, some two years before the national due date. Each Neighbourhood Policing Team will have a nominated officer who will be able to take calls relating to non emergency calls, including antisocial behaviour. Southend Antisocial Behaviour Team are in the process of setting up community engagement panels in which residents will have a direct input into the policing of their areas.

Recently high visibility patrols including Police Community Support Officers have been carried out throughout West Southend tackling all aspects of crime and antisocial behaviour. The area has several parks and open spaces and patrols are regularly carried out here.

The Police work together with the Southend Multi Agency Antisocial Behaviour Response Team (SMAART) in taking a twin track approach to perpetrators of antisocial behaviour using both preventative and enforcement action. This includes among others working with the Youth Offending Service in addressing behaviour through to obtaining antisocial behaviour orders.

UK Immigration Procedures

Susan Kramer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people were *(a)* detained and *(b)* questioned by immigration officials at Heathrow airport in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by ethnic group. [64135]

Mr. McNulty: In 2005–06, 25,040 were interviewed, of which 21,287 were detained by UK Immigration Service staff at Heathrow airport only and do not include detention centres.

Note:
These figures are from locally collated management information and as such are subject to change. It is not possible to obtain these figures broken down by ethnic group as this information is not held centrally and can therefore be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Vehicles (Crime) Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the operation of section 38 of the Vehicles (Crime) Act 2001. [65036]

Dr. Ladyman: I have been asked to reply.

Section 38 of the Vehicles (Crime) Act 2001 gives the Secretary of State powers to make payments in relation to;

> the prevention or detection of speeding or red light offences, or any enforcement action or proceedings in respect of such offences or any alleged such offences.

Section 38 provides the legal basis for the safety camera programme 'netting off' scheme which allows the police, highway authorities and magistrates courts, working in local 'Safety Camera Partnerships' to be reimbursed for the costs of safety cameras and follow-up enforcement from fixed penalty fines for speeding and red light offences.

On 15 December 2005 the Secretary of State announced that the netting off funding arrangement for safety cameras was to cease on 31 March 2007.

World Cup

Mr. Simon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how his Department is working with the German Government to prevent hooliganism by British fans at the 2006 World Cup. [64576]

Paul Goggins: There is very close and effective liaison with the German Government, police and civil authorities at Federal and Länder levels. My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary and Herr Schauble (German Interior Minister) signed an agreement last month covering governmental, police, judicial and other co-operation. Detailed arrangements are in place to minimise the risk of significant English football disorder during the World Cup, the cornerstone of which is tough football banning order legislation which prevents known risk fans from leaving England and Wales during the tournament.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Arms Exports

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs which Government agency is responsible for monitoring the end-use of UK arms exports; and if he will make a statement. [64913]

Dr. Howells: The possibility of diversion of exported goods to an undesirable end use is part of the strict risk assessment undertaken by all four Government Departments (the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Department for Trade and Industry, the Ministry of Defence and the Department for International Development) involved in the export licensing process at the time of application, which takes into account relevant information the Government may hold, including from the Government's overseas posts. Should information come to light that goods have been diverted, the Government will take this into consideration when assessing any future applications. The Government may also revoke the relevant licence(s) and ask the authorities in the country concerned to investigate.

Chad

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the political situation in Chad; and what discussions he has had with representatives of the rebel army. [64991]

Ian Pearson: The Chadian army defeated attacks on N'Djamena and Adre by rebel groups on 13 April. The United Nations Security Council condemned the attempt to overthrow the Government of Chad by force and called on the parties to resolve their political differences by negotiation.

We are concerned about the current political and security situation in Chad not only for the safety and security of Chadian and any remaining UK nationals, but also for the impact of an extended conflict on over 200,000 refugees from Darfur, now sheltering in camps in Eastern Chad. Our non-resident Ambassador to Chad met the Chadian Foreign Minister in N'Djamena on 4 April and made clear that the UK expects Chad to do its utmost to reduce tensions on the border with Sudan.

Chad is due to hold presidential elections on 3 May 2006. The UK is working with EU partners to urge the Chadian authorities to ensure a peaceful and credible electoral process in which all parties can participate.

Ministers have had no discussions with the rebel groups. A representative of one of the rebel groups has initiated limited contact with our Special Representative to Darfur.

China

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the government of China since 2002 about the implementation of the Population and Birth-planning Law 2001; what response was received; and if he will make a statement. [65259]

Ian Pearson: The Government have not had any discussions with the Chinese government about China's right or need to implement family planning policies, as set out in the Law on Population and Birth Planning. However, we remain concerned about reports of enforced sterilisation and abortion in China. We believe that China's family planning policies should be based on the principle of consent, and not coercion, as espoused

by the International Conference on Population and Development. We will continue to raise our concerns where this is an issue, both in our bilateral contacts and with EU Partners.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Government of China since 1997 about trends in its population; what response he has received; and if he will make a statement. [65260]

Ian Pearson: China's population trends impact on a wide range of policy areas, including social security, pension planning, migrant workforces and poverty alleviation. We take due account of these trends in our discussions of policy issues with the Chinese Government. Although the Government have never questioned China's right or need to implement family planning policies, we have raised concerns about reports of enforced sterilisation and abortion. Where appropriate, we will continue to broach this subject with the Chinese authorities on a bilateral basis and in conjunction with EU partners.

Cuba

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Government of South Sudan on the presence of Lord's Resistance Army militia in Cuba. [64920]

Ian Pearson: The UK continues to stress the importance of tackling the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in its discussions with the Government of Southern Sudan. Close co-operation with the Ugandan and Congolese Governments is crucial, as is full support for effecting the arrest warrants issued by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for five senior LRA commanders. The importance of the ICC process was emphasised by our ambassador in Khartoum in a meeting with Salva Kiir, President of the Government of Southern Sudan, at the end of 2005.

Democratic Republic of Congo

Mr. Mullin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made regarding the recent arrest of Bria Mackosso and Christian Mounzeo in the Republic of Congo; and if he will make a statement. [64815]

Ian Pearson: We understand that Bria Mackosso and Christian Mounzeo were arrested following accusations of misappropriation of funds from the human rights organisation founded by Mr. Mounzeo. Local non-governmental organisations and media have strongly criticised the arrests as irregular and politically motivated. The human rights situation in the Republic of Congo remains poor, with limited freedom of expression. The UK takes seriously the protection of human rights and their defenders. We have raised our concerns about these arrests with the Republic of Congo Embassy in Kinshasa. We will continue to monitor the case.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make an assessment of the human rights situations pertaining in the Democratic Republic of Congo, with particular reference to the treatment of human rights activists in Katanga province. [64917]

Ian Pearson: The human rights situation across the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) remains poor. Congolese civilians, particularly in eastern DRC, continue to suffer abuses committed by militias, foreign armed groups and ill-disciplined and poorly-controlled Congolese army soldiers.

The UK is committed to the protection of human rights and human rights defenders across the DRC. Ending the climate of impunity remains a high priority. We are in regular contact with United Nations and non-governmental organisation teams working in Katanga who keep us updated on the human rights situation there. The imminent arrival of troops temporarily transferred from the UN Mission in Burundi should help to deter future abuses. And, with international community partners, we have told the Congolese Government that we hold it responsible for the abuses committed by its own soldiers, including in Katanga. President Kabila has promised that his Government will take positive action.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the decision of President Yoweri Museveni to send Ugandan troops to the Democratic Republic of Congo. [64632]

Ian Pearson: The Ugandan Government have raised concerns about the threat posed to regional security by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), some of whom are believed to be in the Garamba National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The Ugandan Government have said that if Uganda is attacked over the border from DRC by the LRA, Ugandan forces would respond. But we are not aware that President Museveni has taken a decision to send Ugandan troops to the DRC.

We agree that the LRA are a threat to regional peace and that those commanders facing International Criminal Court arrest warrants need to be brought to justice. But in signing the Lusaka (1999) and Luanda accords (2002), Uganda undertook to withdraw its troops from the DRC and to stay out.

The international community has emphasised the need for the DRC's territorial sovereignty to be respected in a number of UN Security Council Resolutions. In recent weeks my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for International Development, Gareth Thomas, and Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials in Kampala and New York have all underlined to the Ugandan Government the UK's opposition to any unilateral Ugandan military interventions in the DRC.

Departmental Leave (Stress)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many people have been on sick leave suffering from stress in his Department in each of the last three years; and what percentage of the total staff number this represents. [63556]

Mr. Straw: Although sick absence information is recorded on our computerised Management Information system, we do not currently have a method of extracting the specific reason for absence. In order for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to obtain this data, it would require all sickness absence records to be manually checked for the last three years. This would be both time consuming and incur disproportionate costs. Therefore, we are developing a customised report to enable us to analyse the data by absence type. My officials will write to the hon. Member as soon as the figures are available.

Foreign Policy Centre

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what role his Department has in appointments to the advisory council of the Foreign Policy Centre. [63248]

Mr. Straw: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has no role in appointments to the Foreign Policy Centre's Advisory Council.

Guantanamo Bay

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the conditions under which detainees are being held at Guantanamo Bay. [65089]

Dr. Howells: We have made it clear that we regard the circumstances under which detainees continue to be held in Guantanamo Bay as unacceptable. The US Government is fully aware of our views.

Indonesia

Mr. Mullin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to the government of Indonesia regarding the impending executions of *(a)* Fabianus Tibo, *(b)* Domingus da Silva and *(c)* Marianus Riwu in Sulawesi; and if he will make a statement. [64814]

Ian Pearson: On 14 November 2005, as EU Presidency, we expressed to the Government of Indonesia the EU's regret at the decision to carry out the executions and urged the Indonesian government not to do so and to consider the abolition of the death penalty altogether.

At present, there are no plans for the Government to make further representations on these cases. However, the current EU presidency, Austria, followed this up with the Government of Indonesia in January in separate meetings with the Minister of Law and Human Rights and the Attorney-General and in a note to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

We understand the Indonesian Supreme Court has reopened these cases, which we welcome.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will intercede in the case of *(a)* Fabianus Tibo, *(b)* Domingus da Silva and *(c)* Marianus Riwu in Sulawesi, Indonesia. [64918]

Ian Pearson: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave today (UIN 64814) to my hon. Friend the Member for Sunderland, South (Mr. Mullin).

Nepal

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations the Government have made to the King of Nepal on the current instability in Nepal. [64634]

Dr. Howells: The UK has made regular representations to the King and Government of Nepal, calling on them to restore democracy and to pursue a negotiated political settlement to the conflict involving all of the main actors. Most recently, on 5 April officials from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) met with the Nepalese ambassador to the UK. We told him that the King and Government were to a large extent responsible for the current impasse: the King's offer to talk to the parties did not amount to a substantive move towards restoration of democracy. We conveyed our concerns about the dangers of a heavy-handed crackdown in response to demonstrations, including the announcement of a shoot to kill policy.

In February FCO officials visited Kathmandu and met with the Home Minister. They conveyed our concerns about continuing arrests and detention of political activists, restrictions on the media and the absence of consultations involving all sides in Nepal leading to a full return to democracy.

From 18–24 March the hon. Member was part of a delegation of British parliamentarians which visited Nepal, funded by the FCO under the Global Conflict Prevention Pool. That visit aimed to support the democratic movement and put pressure on the King to restore democracy. The first objective was achieved. The delegation held high profile meetings, both individually and in joint seminars, with all the main party leaders except Madhav Kumar Nepal. The delegation encouraged party activists in Biratnagar, Nepal's second largest town, in the Terai. The second objective proved more difficult. The King avoided meeting the delegation. The delegation did meet the King's most senior advisor, Tulsi Giri, and the Chief of Army Staff. They also had dinner with a number of the King's advisors.

On 11 April, the presidency of the European Union issued a statement deploring the escalating violence and excessive use of force by all sides and calling upon those concerned to exercise restraint. The statement also called on the King of Nepal to take an urgent initiative to resolve the present problems by restoring democracy and by reaching out to all political forces to initiate a dialogue for peace.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the actions of Maoist insurgents in Nepal; and what assessment he has made of the implications of such actions for British-Nepalese relations. [64635]

Dr. Howells: The Maoists have committed innumerable abhorrent acts including murder, abduction, extortion and intimidation of innocent people. We condemn these acts of violence and have clearly stated that we cannot condone their violence and intimidation in any circumstances.

We deeply regret the Maoists' decision to end their unilateral ceasefire in January 2006 but welcome the current Maoist ceasefire within Kathmandu. We believe that the Maoists must eventually join a wider peace process because a military victory by either side is unachievable.

The insurgency risks destabilising Nepal and has implications for regional security and important UK interests, particularly Gurkha recruitment and welfare and the provision of development assistance.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assurances the King of Nepal has given to *(a)* the UK Government and *(b)* the European Union that the elections to be held in Nepal in 2007 will be held on a free and fair basis; and what assessment he has made of the powers the King is likely to relinquish to any freely elected party. [64637]

Dr. Howells: The King has set out his roadmap for parliamentary elections without due consultation with the political parties. For parliamentary elections to be credible, they would need to take place in the context of an overall peace process and within a political and security climate which enables all parties to put up candidates for free and fair polls. If the elections take place in April 2007, the King will be judged on his actions. It is too early to assess how the King is likely to react to any freely elected party.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what action he plans to take towards ensuring that the elections to be held in Nepal in 2007 are free and fair. [64638]

Dr. Howells: For parliamentary elections to be credible, they would need to take place in the context of an overall peace process and within a political and security climate which attracts all parties to put up candidates for free and fair polls. Working with international partners, as well as in bilateral contacts with the King, Government and the political parties, we will continue to urge the King to act urgently to restore full democracy and enable negotiations to agree a consensus roadmap towards peace.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what action he is prepared to take if the elections to be held in Nepal in 2007 are not conducted on a free and fair basis. [64639]

Dr. Howells: For parliamentary elections to be credible, they would need to take place in the context of an overall peace process and within a political and security climate which enables all parties to put up candidates for free and fair polls. It is too early to say what circumstances will pertain if and when elections are held. We will judge our response in light of those circumstances.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs which international observers he expects to take part in the elections in Nepal in 2007 to ensure that they are free and fair; what action he plans to take to ensure that such observers take part in the election; and what representations he has made to the King of Nepal on the participation of observers. [64640]

Dr. Howells: Elections can only take place in the context of a secure environment and a meaningful political process. It is too early to say what conditions will pertain at the time of any elections, or even if elections will be possible in the timeframe indicated by the King, and therefore what role election observers might play.

Peace Talks (Abuja)

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the peace talks in Abuja. [64641]

Ian Pearson: The talks continue in permanent session, but progress is still slow. When my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary addressed the talks on 14 February, he made clear that we expected more rapid progress. We welcome the African Union's emphasis on the need for a high-level push to secure a peace agreement by the end of April. We are pressing the parties to reach a deal by this date.

Proliferation Security Initiative

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many exercises are planned to support the Proliferation Security Initiative in *(a)* 2006 and *(b)* 2007. [65281]

Dr. Howells: Australia and the Netherlands both hosted exercises in April 2006 in support of the Proliferation Security Initiative. Turkey and France plan to host exercises in summer 2006. The United Kingdom is planning a maritime industry workshop for autumn 2006. As yet there are no scheduled exercises for 2007.

Rendition Flights

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many times he was notified by the US Administration that flights ordered by the Central Intelligence Agency would be landing in the UK in each of the last four years; and if he will make a statement. [64777]

Dr. Howells: None. There is no requirement for the Government to be notified of such flights.

Student Visas (Iran)

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many visas have been issued to students from Iran in each year since 1997; and which subjects for *(a)* study and *(b)* research they indicated a wish to pursue. [64894]

Dr. Howells: The number of student visas issued in Tehran between 1997 and 2004–05 is provided in the table. UKvisas does not hold records detailing which subjects these students intended to study.

	Issued
1997	203
1998	0
1999	623
2000	685
2001–02	954
2002–03	900
2003–04	977
2004–05	1,151
Total	5,493

Note:
Prior to 2001–02, entry clearance statistics were published by calendar year.

Sudan

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what contingency plans the UK Government have for the absence of a peace agreement for Darfur. [64643]

Ian Pearson: The UK is at the forefront of international efforts to bring peace to Darfur. In the absence of a peace agreement we have been a leading supporter of the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS), contributing over £50 million. The African Union (AU) has done a good job in improving security in the region. But the situation is evolving and a more multi-disciplinary approach is now needed. We therefore support handover to a UN mission when AMIS' current mandate expires on 30 September.

But only a political solution will bring lasting peace and security to Darfur. We fully support the AU-led peace talks in Abuja and are pressing the parties to reach a deal as soon as possible. We welcome the AU's commitment to reach an agreement by the end of April. When my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary addressed the talks on 14 February, he made clear to the parties that if they do not reach an agreement soon, we, with the AU, would need to start looking at the alternatives. If necessary, we will take this discussion forward with the AU and international partners.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what action the UK Government *(a)* is taking and *(b)* is prepared to take to uphold the United Nations mandate in Sudan. [64644]

Ian Pearson: We support fully the existing mandate for the United Nations Mission in Sudan and welcome the African Union's decision to support in principle the African Mission in Sudan's transition to a UN force in Darfur. We are supporting UN planning to deploy a future UN military force to Darfur and will seek to ensure they have the mandate necessary to operate there.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what support the Government is giving to establish *(a)* legal systems and *(b)* an independent judiciary in the Sudan. [64919]

Ian Pearson: We are providing £7.2 million to support capacity building and reform of legal systems. This includes training, awareness raising, equipment and basic infrastructure for the police, the Ministry of Justice, the judiciary and the prison service. We are also providing more substantial and longer-term support to legal systems through the Multi Donor Trust Funds for the north and south.

We are working to achieve independence of the judiciary through the establishment of the National Judicial Service Commission. We are also contributing towards a Judiciary Programme in the north under the Multi Donor Trust Fund, totalling £10 million. This is aimed at helping the judiciary to maintain its independence, build a knowledge base and to effectively and fairly apply the law. A similar programme is envisaged for the south.

Sylvarius Baye

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he expects to make contact with the entry clearance officers who dealt with the case of Sylvarius Baye (UK Visa Reference GV100/113504/NW/RK); when he first attempted to make contact with those officers; and if he will make a statement. [64804]

Dr. Howells: My noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, with responsibility for entry clearance, will write to my hon. Friend about this case as I cannot comment on individual cases.

United Nations (Votes)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the occasions on which *(a)* the UK has voted against and the US has voted for and *(b)* the UK has voted for and the US has voted against the adoption of measures at the United Nations since 1997. [64992]

Dr. Howells: Since 1997 the UK and the US have voted differently in the UN Security Council on 16 occasions.

The US abstained, while the UK voted in favour, on the following six resolutions (resn.) which were passed by the Security Council:

1322 (2000) on the situation in the Occupied Territories (OTs)

1372 (2000) on the lifting of Sudan sanctions

1435 (2002) on the OTs

1506 (2003) on the lifting of Libya sanctions

1544 (2004) on the OTs

1593 (2005) on referral of the situation in Darfur to the International Criminal Court

The US voted no, while the UK voted in favour, on the following four draft Security Council resolutions:

draft resn. S/1997/199 (7 March 1997) on the OTs

draft resn. S/1997/241 (21 March 1997) on the OTs

draft resn. S/2002/712 (30 June 2002) on extension of the mandate of UNMIBH (UN Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina)

draft resn. S/2002/1385 (20 December 2002) on the OTs

The US voted no, while the UK abstained, on the following six draft Security Council resolutions, which all referred to the situation in the Ots;

draft resn. S/2001/270 (27 March 2001)

draft resn. S/2001/1199 (14 December 2001)

draft resn. S/2003/891 (16 September 2003)
draft resn. S/2003/980 (14 October 2003)
draft resn. S/2004/204 (25 March 2004)
draft resn. S/2004/783 (5 October 2004)

Voting information on all Security Council resolutions is available on the United Nations website at www.un.org.

TREASURY

Baby Deaths (Overlaying)

Mary Creagh: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many babies died as a result of overlaying while co-sleeping with their parents in each of the past 10 years. [64456]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated 24 April 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how many babies died as a result of overlaying whilst co-sleeping with their parents in each of the past 10 years. I am replying in her absence. (64456)

Statistics are not routinely available on the number of babies dying as a result of overlaying whilst co-sleeping with their parents. Since 2001, deaths have been coded to the tenth revision of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10). This includes a code that combines deaths from 'accidental suffocation and strangulation in bed'. Figures for these deaths, in England and Wales for the years 2001 to 2004, are given in the table attached. Prior to 2001 deaths were coded to the ninth revision of the ICD (ICD-9). Figures based on ICD-9 are not comparable to those using ICD-10.

Number of deaths in children under age one from accidental suffocation and strangulation in bed [1], England and Wales, 2001–04 [2]

	[3]Neonatal deaths	*[4]Postneonatal deaths*
2001	4	19
2002	7	10
2003	2	16
2004	4	7

[1] Figures selected using the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10), code W75 'Accidental suffocation and strangulation in bed'.
[2] *Source:*
Office for National Statistics
Series DH2 Mortality statistics—by cause
Series DH3 Mortality statistics—childhood, infant and perinatal
[3] Deaths at ages up to 27 completed days of life where mention of infant conditions coded to W75 is made on the neonatal death certificate.
[4] Deaths at ages 28 days and over but under one year where underlying cause of death coded to W75 is made on the death certificate.

Budget 2006 (Leaflets)

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many Budget 2006 summary leaflets were printed; and at what cost. [64140]

John Healey: Just over 1 million Budget 2006 summary leaflets were printed. The total cost of producing the Budget summary leaflets was around £151,000. The printing cost was around £69,000 and the distribution cost was around £82,000 as met from within the Treasury's departmental expenditure limits.

The leaflet is designed to provide a concise and informative summary of the Budget for a wide audience.

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many Budget 2006 summary leaflets were distributed to *(a)* doctors' surgeries, *(b)* hospitals and *(c)* other health service-related locations; and what the cost was of the distribution. [64141]

John Healey: The following table shows the number of Budget 2006 summary leaflets distributed to doctors' surgeries, hospitals and other health service related organisations.

Location	*Number of leaflets distributed*
(a) Doctors' surgeries	[1]200,000
(b) Hospitals	[1]187,000
(c) Other health service related organisations	[1]107,000

[1] Figures have been rounded to the nearest thousand

The total cost of distribution of the Budget 2006 summary leaflet was around £82,000 including VAT. All costs were met from within the Treasury's departmental expenditure limits.

The summary leaflet is designed to provide a concise and informative summary of the Budget. It is aimed at a wide audience, and was also sent to other public organisations such as libraries, post offices, schools and universities.

Public Sector Finance

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the budget surplus or deficit was, excluding expenditure on investment, for each financial year from 1997–98 to 2005–06 as a percentage of gross domestic product. [64593]

Mr. Des Browne: Outturns for the public sector current budget as a percentage of GDP from 1997–98 to 2004–05 can be found in the monthly Office for National Statistics publication "Public sector finances". The Budget forecast for the public sector current budget in 2005–06 was published in Table C1 of Budget 2006.

Cancer

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the *(a)* diagnosis and *(b)* mortality rate was for cancer in each of the last five years in the West Lancashire constituency. [64226]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated 24 April 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking what the *(a)* diagnosis and *(b)* mortality rate was for cancer in each of the last five years in the West Lancashire constituency. I am replying in her absence.

The most recent available figures for newly diagnosed cases of all cancers combined are for the year 2003. Incidence rates are not available centrally for Parliamentary Constituencies.

Age-standardised incidence rates (directly standardised to the European standard population) for West Lancashire local authority for 1999–2003 are given in the table below.

Directly age-standardised incidence rates[1] per 100,000 population of all cancers[2] (excluding non-melanoma skin cancer) in West Lancashire local authority, 1999–2003

	West Lancashire LA		
	Male	*Female*	*Persons*
1999	406.6	378.5	384.9
2000	446.6	377.8	401.6
2001	393.4	333.0	356.4
2002	401.3	380.7	385.9
2003	336.3	337.5	340.0

[1] Age-standardised rates per 100,000 population are directly standardised to the European standard population. In detailed analyses of trends in incidence and mortality over time for a particular cancer, ONS use age-standardised rates. These control for differences in the size and age structure of the population and allow unbiased comparison of rates over time.

[2] International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes C00-C97 excluding C44.

Source:

Office for National Statistics

The most recent available figures for deaths from all cancers combined are for the year 2004. Age-standardised mortality rates (directly standardised to the European standard population) for West Lancashire local authority for 1999–2004 can be found on the Clinical and Health Outcomes Knowledge Base website. http://www.nchod.nhs.uk/.

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the *(a)* standard mortality rate and *(b)* number of deaths was for (i) women dying from breast cancer and (ii) (A) women and (B) men dying from all cancers in (1) York and (2) North Yorkshire in (x) 1997 and (y) the latest year for which figures are available. [64337]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 24 April 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent question concerning what the *(a)* SMR and *(b)* number of deaths was for (i) women dying from breast cancer and (ii) (A) women and (B) men dying from all cancers in (1) York and (2) North Yorkshire in (aa) 1997 and (bb) in the latest year for which figures are available. (64337)

The latest year for which figures are available is 2004. Numbers of deaths and age-standardised death rates for 2004 and 1997 are provided in the following table. Death rates for 1997 have been adjusted to take account of the introduction of the Tenth Revision of the International Classification of Diseases in 2001.

Number of deaths and death rates[1] for all cancers and female breast cancer,[2] for York unitary authority and the county of North Yorkshire,[3] 1997 and 2004 [4]

	All cancers		*Breast cancer*
	Males	*Females*	*Females*
Number of deaths			
York			
1997	228	197	38
2004	215	212	39
North Yorkshire			
1997	794	736	126
2004	832	749	135
Death rates[1] per 100,000 population			
York			
1997	229.9	136.6	31.1
2004	193.0	135.7	28.2
North Yorkshire			
1997	227.3	153.9	30.5
2004	203.6	143.8	29.7

[1] Rates per 100,000 population standardised to the European Standard Population.

Directly age-standardised rates have been supplied rather than Standardised Mortality Ratios (SMRs) to allow comparisons between 1997 and 2004, between York and North Yorkshire and between the sexes.

[2] The causes of death for 2004 were defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10)

All cancers (malignant neoplasms)—ICD-10 C00-C97

Breast cancer—ICD-10 C50

The causes of death for 1997 were defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9).

The codes used are listed below:

All cancers (malignant neoplasms)—ICD-9 140–208

Breast cancer—ICD-9 174

Deaths were selected using the original underlying cause.

The introduction of ICD-10 for coding cause of death in England and Wales in 2001 means that data for all cancers and female breast cancer are not completely comparable with data for years before this date. The effect of the change in classification in 2001 on deaths from these causes is described in a report published in May 2002:

Office for National Statistics. Results of the ICD-10 bridge coding study, England and Wales, 1999.

Health Statistics Quarterly 14 (2002), 75–83.

For all cancers (malignant neoplasms) the introduction of ICD-10 caused an increase of 2.5 per cent. and 2.2 per cent. for males and females respectively and for female breast cancer an increase of 2.7 per cent. in the number of deaths coded to these conditions in England and Wales. Death rates for 1997 from these causes have been adjusted to make them comparable with those for 2004. The numbers of deaths have not been adjusted.

[3] Usual residents of these areas. Deaths were assigned to these areas using the November 2005 All Fields Postcode Directory. The county of North Yorkshire excludes York unitary authority.

[4] Deaths registered in each calendar year.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the *(a)* diagnosis and *(b)* mortality rate was for cancer in each of the last five years in Ribble Valley constituency. [65302]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated 24 April 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking what the *(a)* diagnosis and *(b)* mortality rate was for cancer in each of the last five years in Ribble Valley constituency. I am replying in her absence. [65302]

The most recent available figures for newly diagnosed cases of all cancers combined are for the year 2003. Incidence rates are not available centrally for parliamentary constituencies.

Age-standardised incidence rates (directly standardised to the European standard population) for Ribble Valley local authority for 1999–2003 are given in the table below.

Directly age-standardised incidence rates[1] per 100,000 population of all cancers[2] (excluding non-melanoma skin cancer) in Ribble Valley local authority, 1999–2003

	Ribble Valley LA		
	Male	*Female*	*Persons*
1999	455.9	280.0	353.9
2000	456.8	338.6	378.7
2001	475.7	421.1	431.4
2002	433.3	304.1	363.2
2003	420.4	314.6	359.8

[1] Age-standardised rates per 100,000 population are directly standardised to the European standard population. In detailed analyses of trends in incidence and mortality over time for a particular cancer, ONS use age-standardised rates. These control for differences in the size and age structure of the population and allow unbiased comparison of rates over time.

[2] International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes C00-C97 excluding C44.

Source:

Office for National Statistics

The most recent available figures for deaths from all cancers combined are for the year 2004. Age-standardised mortality rates (directly standardised to the European standard population) for Ribble Valley local authority for 1999–2004 can be found on the Clinical and Health Outcomes Knowledge Base website. http://www.nchod.nhs.uk/.

Correspondence

John Barrett: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the Parliamentary Business Unit of the Tax Credit Office will respond to the hon. Member for Edinburgh West's letters of *(a)* 20 December 2005 and *(b)* 19 January 2006 with regard to his constituent Mr. Terence Boyd. [64409]

Dawn Primarolo: The Tax Credit Office replied in January 2006 and has provided copies of those replies to the hon. Member's constituency office.

EU Sixth VAT Directive

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent representations the Treasury has received on the EU Sixth VAT Directive; and if he will make a statement. [64262]

Dawn Primarolo: The Sixth VAT Directive provides the basis for the application of VAT in EU member states. It is therefore the subject of many representations to the Treasury.

Family Hardship

Mr. Love: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what *(a)* essential living expenses and *(b)* estimated weekly costs are taken into account in the calculation of family hardship when considering the recovery of an overpayment under code of practice note 26; and if he will make a statement. [64108]

Dawn Primarolo: When considering the recovery of an overpayment each individual case will be dealt with according to its circumstances as these will vary from case-to-case. In the calculation of family hardship, examples of essential living expenses that will be taken into account are: food, vital services (e.g. gas, electricity, water), rent or mortgage payments, court fines, council tax payments, and maintenance/child support.

In addition to the costs noted, other examples of estimated weekly costs that are taken into account include telephone bills, fares and motoring costs, insurance, pension payments, health, television licence payments and repairs and maintenance.

Financial Services Authority

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what measures he has put in place to ensure value for money from the operation of the Financial Services Authority. [64931]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (FSMA), enables the Treasury to hold an independent review of the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which the Financial Services Authority (FSA) has used its resources in discharging its functions. As announced in the pre- Budget report 2005, the Treasury aims to hold the first such review in the near future.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what role the Financial Services Authority has in improving consumer understanding of financial matters. [64932]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Financial Services Authority has a statutory responsibility to promote public understanding of the financial system and to secure the right degree of protection for consumers. The FSA's annual report, which is laid before Parliament, explains how this statutory remit has been met.

The FSA leads work on the national strategy for financial capability involving a range of other partners, including Government, the financial services industry, employers' organisations and trades unions, the media, consumer bodies and the voluntary sector. Over the coming year the focus for the strategy will be on the following seven key priorities:

Embedding personal finance education in schools;

Helping students in higher education and young people not in education, employment or training manage their money;

Providing generic financial guidance through the workplace;

Providing resources for those taking maternity or paternity leave;

Distributing more widely the financial health check and an on-line tool to help people assess their debt position;

Examination of whether there is a commercial case for the delivery of a more widespread generic financial advice service; and

As part of a revised FSA consumer communication strategy, revamping and re-launching the information and tools it provides to consumers.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what public participation in its operation the Financial Services Authority provides for. [64933]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: This is an operational matter for the FSA. The Chairman of the FSA will write to the hon. Member directly.

Fiscal Golden Rule

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of whether his fiscal

golden rule would have been complied with had the assessment of the economic cycle not been altered in *(a)* July 2005 and *(b)* December 2005. [64594]

Mr. Des Browne: Progress against the golden rule is measured across the full economic cycle. It is misleading to assess progress over an arbitrary portion of the cycle.

The latest judgment of the current economic cycle and progress against the golden rule over the cycle was set out in Budget 2006.

GDP

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the gross domestic product per capita was in *(a)* the UK, *(b)* England, *(c)* Wales, *(d)* Scotland and *(e)* Northern Ireland in each year since 1976. [64197]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell dated 24 April 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita in UK, England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland in each year since 1976.(64197).

Estimates of GDP per capita for the years 1976 to 1988 are shown in table A. For the years 1989 to 2004 , estimates of Gross Value Added[1] (GVA) per capita are shown in table B. GVA is similar in concept to GDP but the estimates are not directly comparable.

The figures in table A are based on data published in 1998, the last time estimates for 1976 to 1988 were updated. Figures in table B are based on regional GVA published in December 2005. Estimates for 2005 are expected to be published in December of this year.

[1] Gross value added (GVA) is gross domestic product (GDP) less taxes (plus subsidies) on products. These data are current price estimates which are not adjusted for changes in prices over time.

Table A: Gross domestic product per capita 1976 to 1988[1]

£

	United Kingdom	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
1976	1,968	1,989	1,708	1,927	1,582
1977	2,291	2,295	1,966	2,190	1,805
1978	2,630	2,639	2,204	2,452	2,023
1979	3,052	3,019	2,517	2,802	2,334
1980	3,555	3,481	2,867	3,212	2,664
1981	3,869	3,738	3,070	3,542	2,882
1982	4,221	4,070	3,515	3,842	3,175
1983	4,635	4,436	3,789	4,230	3,472
1984	4,946	4,698	3,966	4,440	3,720
1985	5,432	5,213	4,279	4,911	4,050
1986	5,774	5,745	4,817	5,324	4,467
1987	6,327	6,291	5,332	5,826	4,784
1988	7,023	7,053	6,010	6,473	5,303

[1] Gross Domestic Product per head for 1976–1988 is based on data from the National Accounts Blue Book 1997. As the regional estimates of GDP and GVA are produced on a different basis, they cannot be used in conjunction to form a time series.

Table B: Gross value added per capita 1989 to 2004

£

	United Kingdom	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
1989	8,086	8,078	6,715	7,735	5,921
1990	8,761	8,751	7,234	8,449	6,467
1991	9,119	9,107	7,451	8,924	6,890
1992	9,484	9,473	7,764	9,338	7,257
1993	9,960	9,944	8,106	9,776	7,718

Table B: Gross value added per capita 1989 to 2004

£

	United Kingdom	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
1994	10,505	10,470	8,571	10,350	8,171
1995	11,015	10,956	9,026	10,857	8,703
1996	11,699	11,608	9,431	11,402	9,275
1997	12,347	12,324	9,822	11,952	9,743
1998	13,056	13,126	10,189	12,449	10,296
1999	13,622	13,691	10,506	12,847	10,766
2000	14,290	14,247	10,917	13,312	11,241
2001	14,944	14,938	11,515	13,864	11,731
2002	15,691	15,711	12,067	14,658	12,274
2003	16,485	16,521	12,716	15,523	12,893
2004	17,258	17,188	13,292	16,157	13,482

Lower Emission Vehicles

Chris Grayling: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer for what reason Government incentives for lower emission vehicles are limited to those vehicles registered since 2001. [63189]

John Healey: Vehicle excise duty rates for cars registered before March 2001 are not set according to CO_2 emissions since the necessary data for cars registered before that data is not available to the DVLA. Cars registered after 2001 are subject to the graduated VED system. There are currently six VED bands for cars registered after March 2001 (band A-F) and seven VED bands for cars registered after March 2006 (band A-G), based on CO_2 emissions.

Maternity Pay

Kate Hoey: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer why statutory maternity pay is not treated as an equivalent benefit for low-earning parents when assessing the additional payment for the child trust fund for children born between the introduction of the child tax credit and the introduction of the child trust fund; and if he will make a statement. [64304]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The child trust fund is designed to give more to those children in low-income households. If a child born before the introduction of child tax credit in April 2003 was part of a household receiving a specified income-related benefit when child benefit was first awarded, an additional payment will be credited to the child's account. Statutory maternity pay is not an income-related benefit. Receipt of statutory maternity pay does not necessarily indicate that a household is on a low income.

National Minimum Wage (West Lancashire)

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many companies in West Lancashire have been *(a)* fined and *(b)* forced to cease trading for non-compliance with the national minimum wage since it was introduced. [64117]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested is not available.

Personal Bankruptcies

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many personal bankruptcies there have been in each quarter since 1989–90; and if he will make a statement. [64012]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I have been asked to reply.

Figures quoted in the following three tables relate to England and Wales, are not seasonally adjusted and they are given by calendar year quarters. Bankruptcy order figures only make up part of the headline individual insolvency series, which also includes individual voluntary arrangements (IVAs) and deeds of arrangements.

Total individual insolvencies

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
1989	2,224	2,418	2,159	2,564	9,365
1990	2,942	3,228	3,547	4,270	13,987
1991	5,436	6,058	6,385	7,761	25,640
1992	9,381	9,008	8,759	9,646	36,794
1993	10,942	8,824	8,553	8,384	36,703
1994	8,729	7,984	7,382	6,644	30,739
1995	6,784	6,858	6,402	6,275	26,319
1996	6,982	6,526	6,511	6,252	26,271
1997	6,211	6,478	6,152	5,600	24,441
1998	5,953	5,855	6,380	6,361	24,549
1999	7,025	7,120	7,592	7,069	28,806
2000	7,837	7,532	7,316	6,843	29,528
2001	7,750	7,714	7,434	6,877	29,775
2002	7,411	7,861	7,892	7,423	30,587
2003	8,426	8,889	9,291	8,998	35,604
2004	10,665	11,535	12,227	12,223	46,650
2005	13,190	16,873	18,010	19,507	67,580

Individual voluntary arrangements and deeds of arrangement

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
1989	252	315	322	338	1,227
1990	428	424	529	548	1,929
1991	601	721	862	824	3,008
1992	992	1,217	1,253	1,226	4,688
1993	1,507	1,430	1,381	1,369	5,687
1994	1,314	1,396	1,242	1,153	5,105
1995	1,175	1,020	1,123	1,068	4,386
1996	1,120	1,083	1,065	1,200	4,468
1997	1,094	1,200	1,194	1,061	4,549
1998	1,015	1,100	1,267	1,520	4,902
1999	1,226	1,593	2,227	2,149	7,195
2000	2,170	2,118	1,865	1,825	7,978
2001	1,672	1,599	1,617	1,410	6,298
2002	1,384	1,592	1,643	1,676	6,295
2003	1,514	1,941	2,070	2,058	7,583
2004	2,141	2,475	2,912	3,224	10,752
2005	3,002	4,535	5,754	7,002	20,293

Bankruptcy orders

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
1989	1,972	2,103	1,837	2,226	8,138
1990	2,514	2,804	3,018	3,722	12,058
1991	4,835	5,337	5,523	6,937	22,632
1992	8,389	7,791	7,506	8,420	32,106
1993	9,435	7,394	7,172	7,015	31,016
1994	7,415	6,588	6,140	5,491	25,634
1995	5,609	5,838	5,279	5,207	21,933
1996	5,862	5,443	5,446	5,052	21,803
1997	5,117	5,278	4,958	4,539	19,892
1998	4,938	4,755	5,113	4,841	19,647
1999	5,799	5,527	5,365	4,920	21,611
2000	5,667	5,414	5,451	5,018	21,550
2001	6,078	6,115	5,817	5,467	23,477
2002	6,027	6,269	6,249	5,747	24,292
2003	6,912	6,948	7,221	6,940	28,021
2004	8,524	9,060	9,315	8,999	35,898
2005	10,188	12,338	12,256	12,505	47,287

Population Forecasts

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what proportion of the population is aged *(a)* 65 years and over and *(b)* 18 to 64 years; and what the forecast ratio is for (i) 2007, (ii) 2009, (iii) 2010, (iv) 2015 and (v) 2020. [64020]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 24 April 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your question regarding the proportion of the population aged *(a)* 65 years and over and *(b)* 18 to 64 years; and what the forecast ratio is for (i) 2007, (ii) 2009, (iii) 2010, (iv) 2015 and (v) 2020. (64020)

The table below shows the requested information for the United Kingdom.

Proportion of total population by age group, United Kingdom, selected years from 2004 to 2020

	2004	2007	2009	2010	2015	2020
(a) Per cent. aged 18 to 64	61.9	62.5	62.6	62.6	61.6	60.7
(b) Per cent. aged 65 and over	16.0	16.1	16.5	16.7	18.4	19.5
Ratio of *(a)* to *(b)*	3.87	3.88	3.80	3.74	3.35	3.12

Source:

Mid-2004 population estimates: ONS

2004-based national population projections: GAD.

Tax Credits

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much was overpaid to tax credit recipients in West Lancashire constituency in 2004–05. [64115]

Dawn Primarolo: Estimates for 2004–05 of the number of in-work families with tax credits awards, including information on overpayments and underpayments by constituency, based on final family circumstances and incomes for 2004–05 will be published on 31 May 2006.

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of families received tax credits in *(a)* the UK, *(b)* the South West and *(c)* Taunton constituency in each year since their introduction. [64311]

Dawn Primarolo: Estimates of child and working tax credit take-up rates for 2003–04 are available on the HMRC website at http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/cwtc-take-up.htm. National and regional take-up rates for child tax credit are shown in tables 1 and 9 respectively.

Take-up rate estimates are not available at parliamentary constituency level.

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what tax credits are available to full-time carers. [64375]

Dawn Primarolo: Child tax credit and working tax credit are available to full-time carers who meet the appropriate qualifying conditions.

Unemployment

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what changes in the level of unemployment there have been in West Lancashire constituency in each year since 2003; [64116]

(2) what the level of youth unemployment has been in *(a)* West Lancashire constituency, *(b)* Lancashire and *(c)* the UK in each year since 1983. [64294]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 24 April 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Questions about unemployment. (64116, 64294)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment for local areas from the Annual Population Survey (APS) following International Labour Organisation definitions.

Table 1 shows the numbers of unemployed, resident in the West Lancashire Parliamentary Constituency for the 12 month periods ending February 2003 to February 2004 and for the 12 months ending December 2004.

Table 2 shows the numbers of unemployed aged 16 to 24 resident in the West Lancashire constituency, Lancashire, and the United Kingdom for the, 12 month periods ending February 1995 to February 2004 and for the 12 months ending December 2004.

These estimates, as with any from sample surveys, are subject to a margin of uncertainty. Changes in the estimates from year to year should be treated with particular caution.

ONS also compiles statistics for local areas of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA). Table 3 shows the annual average number of JSA claimants, and changes in levels, for claimants resident in the West Lancashire constituency since 2003.

Table 4 shows the annual average number of claimants, aged 18 to 24, resident in the West Lancashire constituency, Lancashire, Great Britain and the United Kingdom since 1986. Data for earlier years area not available on a consistent basis.

Table 1: Unemployed resident in the West Lancashire parliamentary constituency

Thousand

12 months ending:	*Number of unemployed*
February 2003	3
February 2004	2
December 2004	3

Source:
Annual Population Survey.

Table 2: Youth unemployed resident in West Lancashire parliamentary constituency, Lancashire and the United Kingdom

Thousand

12 months ending:	*West Lancashire*	*Lancashire*	*United Kingdom*
February 1995	1	13	n/a
February 1996	2	12	727
February 1997	2	11	684
February 1998	1	9	616
February 1999	[1]—	6	583
February 2000	2	11	556
February 2001	[1]—	9	535
February 2002	2	9	525
February 2003	1	9	553
February 2004	2	9	557
December 2004	1	12	559

n/a = Not available.
[1] Disclosive sample size.
Source:
Annual Population Survey.

Table 3: JSA claimants resident in the West Lancashire parliamentary constituency

Annual average	*Number of claimants*	*Change*
2003	1,659	n/a
2004	1,492	-167
2005	1,534	42

n/a = Not available.
Source:
Jobcentre Plus administrative systems.

Table 4: JSA claimants, aged 18 to 24, resident in West Lancashire parliamentary constituency, Lancashire, Great Britain and the United Kingdom; annual averages 1986 to 2005

Number of JSA claimants aged 18 to 24[1]

Annual average	*West Lancashire*	*Lancashire*	*Great Britain*	*United Kingdom*
1986	n/a	17,230	941,205	n/a
1987	n/a	14,465	806,910	n/a
1988	n/a	11,570	626,450	n/a
1989	n/a	8,670	480,100	n/a
1990	n/a	8,120	458,670	n/a
1991	n/a	11,100	660,925	n/a
1992	n/a	12,930	775,470	n/a
1993	n/a	12,430	780,455	n/a
1994	n/a	10,590	685,570	n/a
1995	n/a	9,185	597,350	619,000
1996	1,020	8,095	522,250	543,050
1997	810	6,160	390,100	406,415
1998	725	5,455	324,305	339,000
1999	655	5,030	281,790	294,125
2000	530	4,400	250,270	261,470
2001	480	4,140	230,405	241 220
2002	460	4,025	232,170	242,930
2003	465	3,945	238,720	249,055
2004	415	3,690	226,685	235,910
2005	450	4,040	244,435	253,480

n/a = Not available.
[1] Computerised claims only. Data rounded to nearest 5 for disclosure control.
Source:
Jobcentre Plus administrative systems.

VAT (Car Allowances)

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much VAT on the road fuel element of car allowances was reclaimed in each year since 1997 up to the last period for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [64263]

Dawn Primarolo: This information is not available. HM Revenue and Customs does not collect data on VAT relating to individual goods and services.

Departmental Policies

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will set out with statistical evidence relating as closely as possible to West Lancashire constituency the effects in West Lancashire of changes to his Department's policies since 1997. [64232]

John Healey: The Government have put in place a broad programme of both macroeconomic and microeconomic reform since our election in 1997 designed to improve the economic performance of all parts of the UK. Since these policies were implemented, the economic performance of the West Lancashire constituency has improved considerably. For example, since May 1997, claimant unemployment in West

Lancashire has fallen by 35 per cent., while both long-term youth and adult unemployment have fallen by over 75 per cent.

The Neighbourhood Statistics Service provides a wide range of statistical information at parliamentary constituency level, taken from the 2001 Census and other sources. This service is available on the National Statistics website at http://neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Altnagelvin Hospital Trust

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what *(a)* additional resources have been allocated to and *(b)* measures have been put in place by Altnagelvin Hospital Trust to meet increased need arising from the closure of the accident and emergency department at Tyrone county hospital. [64299]

Mr. Woodward: Sperrin Lakeland Trust has worked closely with Altnagelvin to ensure that safe hospital services are available to all of population of the Western Board area.

In anticipation of increased attendances at Altnagelvin an additional £750,000 was allocated for the creation of a new acute medical unit and to fund the structural changes made to the A&E department at Altnagelvin.

Funding for three additional surgical beds, to accommodate an increase in surgical admissions, has also been approved.

Altnagelvin is monitoring the situation very closely to ensure that their systems are sufficiently robust to cope with increased attendances.

Carers Allowance

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people receive carers allowance in each *(a)* parliamentary constituency and *(b)* council district in Northern Ireland; and how many received the allowance in each of the last three years. [64298]

Mr. Hanson: The information requested is shown in the following tables.

Parliamentary constituency	*Numbers receiving carers allowance*
Belfast East	1,270
Belfast North	2,181
Belfast South	1,018
Belfast West	3,446
East Antrim	1,092
East Londonderry	1,507
Fermanagh And South Tyrone	1,614
Foyle	2,764
Lagan Valley	1,308
Mid Ulster	2,035
Newry And Armagh	2,354
North Antrim	1,492
North Down	889
South Antrim	1,221
South Down	1,966
Strangford	1,326
Upper Bann	2,067
West Tyrone	2,059
Frequency Missing[1]	248

Council district	*Numbers receiving carers allowance*
Antrim	635
Ards	1,063
Armagh	884
Ballymena	732
Ballymoney	466
Banbridge	681
Belfast	6,484
Carrickfergus	449
Castlereagh	782
Coleraine	811
Cookstown	833
Craigavon	1,671
Derry	2,764
Down	1,084
Dungannon	1,082
Fermanagh	1,002
Larne	495
Limavady	696
Lisburn	1,863
Magherafelt	732
Moyle	294
Newry and Mourne	2,302
Newtownabbey	990
North Down	755
Omagh	963
Strabane	1,096
Frequency Missing[1]	248

[1] Parliamentary constituency and council area are assigned using the claimant's postcode, if a postcode is missing then a constituency or council area cannot be assigned.

	Numbers receiving carers allowance
2004	30,204
2005	31,535
2006	31,857

Note:
Data is taken from January of each year.

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people in Northern Ireland have applied for carers allowance in the last 12 months; how many of those applicants are awaiting a decision; what the target length of time is that applicants should wait for a decision; what the average length of time applicants waited for a decision in the latest period for which figures are available is; what the target length of time is that applicants should wait for notification of decisions once taken; and for what average length of time applicants waited for such notification in the latest period for which figures are available. [64334]

Mr. Hanson: From April 2005 to March 2006 11,642 carer's allowance applications have been received. Of these, 1447 are currently awaiting a decision.

The target length of time for applicants to wait for a decision in this period was 55 days. The average length of time applicants waited for a decision was 35 days.

There is no separate target time for the issue of notifications. However, notifications are issued automatically by computer within 24 hours of the decision being made.

CCTV

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when the consultation process on the installation of CCTV in West Belfast will be completed; what the reasons are for the time taken for the consultation process; and why East, South and North Belfast did not have an equivalent consultation processes. [52879]

Mr. Woodward: In some cases, where urgent response to disorder was necessary, consultation in respect of a number of CCTV cameras was limited. In other cases, community based consultation has taken place with both community and political representatives.

It has not been possible to identify the nature of the West Belfast CCTV consultation referred to in the question. The most recent CCTV scheme was announced in 2004, when the then Minister of State announced £2 million funding for the development of CCTV systems across Northern Ireland. In that case, interested parties have been invited to make an application to Government for funding to establish new CCTV systems in town centres across Northern Ireland. The closing date for applications has been extended to the 14 April 2006 and an "order of merit" list will be drawn up and published thereafter.

Craigavon Bridge

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether there are plans to provide additional signage indicating vehicle height restrictions for Craigavon bridge in Derry. [64509]

Mr. Woodward: The chief executive of the Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has been asked to write to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Dr. Malcolm McKibbin, dated 21 April 2006

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question regarding whether there are plans to provide additional signage indicating vehicle height restrictions for Craigavon Bridge in Derry.

As this issue falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service, I have been asked to reply.

You will be aware that an incident occurred on 11 April 2006, in which an articulated lorry became lodged on the lower deck of the Craigavon Bridge. Our local officials have checked both the structure of the bridge and the adequacy of the signage and I can advise that damage to the bridge was slight, and that the signage for the lower deck, which was up-graded a few years ago, exceeds the required standard.

I should explain that Roads Service is required to sign all bridges with headroom less than 16'6" in order to warn drivers of high-sided vehicles of a potential hazard ahead. Accordingly, prominent triangular warning signs advising of a height restriction of 14'3" (4.3 m) have been erected both on the lower deck of Craigavon Bridge and at several locations on the immediate approaches. Further prominent signage advising that the lower deck of the bridge is "unsuitable for large vehicles" has been included on advance signage at the wider approaches to the bridge.

As you will understand, it is the responsibility for drivers of high-sided lorries to know the height and width of their vehicle and to take notice of both advanced signage and of warning signs in the immediate vicinity of a low structure. You may be interested to know that the Ordnance Survey, in association with Roads Service and Northern Ireland Railways, has produced a map, which has been widely advertised, showing all the low structures across Northern Ireland.

Historical Enquiries Team

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many unsolved murders from each year since 1969 will be reviewed by the Historical Enquiries Team. [63614]

Mr. Woodward: I am advised that the Historical Enquiries Team (HET) intends to re-examine all deaths attributable to the security situation between 1968 and 10 April 1998—some 3,268 deaths.

The HET aims to review 400 cases per year for the first two years of the review and 600 cases each for years, three, four, five and six. The PSNI has designed an analytical database to capture all this information in a victim-centred way. Families will sit at the very heart of their investigations. The primary objective will be to work with them to achieve a measure of resolution in these difficult cases.

InterTradeIreland

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the religious composition is of the senior management in InterTradeIreland. [58933]

Angela E. Smith: The community background of the four members of the senior management of InterTradeIreland has been identified as Roman Catholic.

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many staff members in InterTradeIreland are from *(a)* Northern Ireland, *(b)* the Irish Republic and *(c)* neither Northern Ireland nor the Irish Republic. [58934]

Angela E. Smith: At 1 March 2006, InterTradeIreland employed 38 permanent staff. 35 staff have home addresses in Northern Ireland and three in the Republic of Ireland.

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what recent assessment he has made of the value for money provided by InterTradeIreland. [58935]

Angela E. Smith: Although InterTradeIreland has produced a number of well regarded, innovative all-island trade and business initiatives, there has been no recent value for money assessment of its performance. InterTradeIreland is however required to operate in accordance with a set of procedures contained in a Financial Memorandum approved by its Sponsor Departments and the Finance Departments North and South. Its business plan and associated costs are subject to scrutiny and approval on an annual basis and its annual accounts are examined and certified by the Comptroller and Auditor General for Northern Ireland and the Irish Comptroller and Auditor General.

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the community background is of the workforce of InterTradeIreland. [59112]

Angela E. Smith: At 1 March 2006, InterTradeIreland employed 38 permanent staff. The community backgrounds of these staff have been identified as follows:

	Number	*Percentage*
Catholic	31	81
Protestant	6	16
Non-determined	1	3

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the community background is of the senior management team of InterTradeIreland. [59113]

Angela E. Smith: The community background of the four members of the senior management of InterTradeIreland has been identified as Roman Catholic.

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many employees of InterTradeIreland are citizens of the Republic of Ireland. [59114]

Angela E. Smith: Information on the citizenship of its employees is not held by InterTradeIreland. However, three staff have home addresses in the Republic of Ireland.

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the value of contracts awarded by InterTradeIreland to PriceWaterhouseCoopers has been since the establishment of the body. [59115]

Angela E. Smith: Since the establishment of the body in 1999 InterTradeIreland has awarded contracts to PriceWaterhouseCoopers to the value of £1.054 million.

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland in how many years InterTradeIreland has spent less than its budgetary allocation from the Exchequer. [59116]

Angela E. Smith: InterTradeIreland has spent less than its initial budgetary allocation in each year since its formation. The level of underspend has decreased year-on-year.

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the ratio between overheads expenditure and project spending was in InterTradeIreland in the last financial year for which figures are available. [59117]

Angela E. Smith: The ratio between overheads expenditure and programme spending by InterTradeIreland in 2005 was 1 to 2.3. Expenditure details have been taken from the 2005 draft accounts.

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the rate of usage by businesses of InterTradeIreland's Information Resource Centre. [59118]

Angela E. Smith: Since 2003 InterTradeIreland's Information Resource Centre has handled almost 800 inquiries from businesses, business organisations, researchers and academia.

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the total expenditure of InterTradeIreland on events was in each of the last five years. [59119]

Angela E. Smith: The total expenditure by InterTradeIreland on events in each of the last five years is as follows:

	Expenditure (£)
2001	82,837
2002	679,520
2003	755,351
2004	984,812
2005[1]	629,443

[1] Provisional figures from 2005 draft accounts.

Metro Bus Service (Belfast)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many complaints were received during the first month of operation of the Metro bus service in Belfast. [64912]

Mr. Woodward: The information in the form requested is not readily available. However, Translink has informed me that in the first five weeks of operation (7 February 2005 to 14 March 2005) it received a total of 404 complaints relating to Metro.

Nursing Training

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many students *(a)* entered nursing training and *(b)* successfully completed nursing training in Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 years; and how many of those subsequently entered the professional register. [64351]

Mr. Woodward: The number of students who commenced pre-registration nurse training and successfully completed this training in each of the last 10 years is detailed as follows. Information on the number of nurses entering the professional register each year is not held in the Department, this is the responsibility of the Nursing and Midwifery Council.

The number of pre-registration nursing students who commenced training in each of the last 10 years

1 April to 31 March	*Number commencing training*
1996–97	711
1997–98	749
1998–99	617
1999–2000	562
2000–01	614
2001–02	856
2002–03	770
2003–04	864
2004–05	826
2005–06	828

The number of pre-registration nursing students who completed training in each of the last 10 years

1 April to 31 March	*Number*
1995–96	827
1996–97	626
1997–98	716
1998–99	599

The number of pre-registration nursing students who completed training in each of the last 10 years

1 April to 31 March	*Number*
1999–2000	612
2000–01	508
2001–02	454
2002–03	449
2003–04	490
2004–05	713

PEACE Funding

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will estimate the number of jobs likely to be affected by the end of PEACE funding; and what steps each Department is taking to ensure that work and services provided through PEACE funding can be sustained in the long-term. [63122]

Angela E. Smith: Many projects will end naturally in line with original plans. For all projects it was a condition of their assistance that they would sustain their activities when PEACE funding ended.

The European Council agreed in December 2005 to allocate a further 200 million to the EU PEACE Programme for 2007 to 2013 and the funding would not end until that time. For Northern Ireland the annual amount available will, however, be approximately half current levels. How this will be allocated will only be determined after a consultation process later this year and it is not yet possible to say what activities will not continue and to estimate precisely the impact.

The primary purpose of PEACE funding is to promote peace and reconciliation outcomes and not solely the creation or maintenance of job opportunities where different sectors will be affected differently by any reductions in expenditure levels. Employment in successful private sector and social economy enterprises will continue. For the voluntary and community sector it is estimated that EU funding currently supports an estimated 1,500 jobs and at half annual funding levels this would suggest that up to 750 of these could be at potential risk. Any expenditure areas that are brought within mainstream expenditure will mitigate this. For example employment in children's projects is, following the recent announcement of the Children's and Young Peoples funding package, ensured until March 2008.

Pupil Injuries (Compensation)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much has been paid in Northern Ireland in compensation claims for injuries received by *(a)* pupils, (i) on school field trips and (ii) while at school and *(b)* teachers as a result of (A) assault and (B) accident while on duty in each of the last five years. [63442]

Angela E. Smith: I have been advised that the information requested is as follows.

£

	2001–02	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06*
Pupils					
Field trip	1,618	15,614	10,851	153,057	0
Injuries at school	369,945	182,008	363,422	289,509	221,726
Teachers					
Assault	0	0	3,000	0	5,000
Accident on duty	47,003	78,488	10,767	29,153	104,023

Special Educational Needs

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary school pupils in Northern Ireland (i) have special educational needs and (ii) are eligible for free school meals; and what the equivalent figures are for the 100 (A) best and (B) worst performing (1) primary and (2) secondary schools. [64176]

Angela E. Smith: The requested information (2004–05) is as follows:

Percentages of pupils with special educational needs and eligible for free school meals: all schools

Percentage

	Primary schools	*Post primary schools*
Pupils with special educational needs	18	10
Pupils eligible for free school meals	20	20

Percentages of pupils with special educational needs and eligible for free school meals: top performing 100 schools

Percentage

	Primary schools	*Post primary schools*
Pupils with special educational needs	14	5
Pupils eligible for free school meals	10	10

Percentages of pupils with special educational needs and eligible for free school meals: lowest performing 100 schools

Percentage

	Primary schools	*Post primary schools*
Pupils with special educational needs	27	16
Pupils eligible for free school meals	41	32

Notes:

1. Figures relate to post primary pupils and pupils in nursery, reception and year 1–year 7 classes in primary schools.
2. Top and lowest 100 performing schools were identified by ranking the percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 and above and Level 5 in Key Stage 2 assessments for primary schools, and by ranking the percentage of year 12 pupils achieving five or more GCSEs at grades A*–C for post primary schools.

For nursery class pupils, "pupils with a parent in receipt of jobseeker's allowance or income support" was used as a proxy for free school meal entitlement.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

1911 Census

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs pursuant to the answer of 9 February 2006 to Question 49704 how, and in what form, the assurances to which she refers in her answer were given. [51803]

Ms Harman: The 1911 census forms for England and Wales included the following assurance to householders:

'The contents of the Schedule will be treated as confidential. Strict care will be taken that no information is disclosed with regard to individual persons. The returns are not to be used for proof of age, as in connection with old age pensions, or for any other purpose than the preparation of statistical tables'.

Hague Convention 1996

Sir John Stanley: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs which countries have *(a)* signed and ratified and *(b)* only signed the Hague Convention of 1996 on the International Protection of Children. [62853]

Ms Harman: My hon. Friend the Member for Doncaster, Central (Ms Winterton), the then Minister, signed the Convention on behalf of the UK on 1 April 2003. The full details of signatures, ratifications and accessions are set out as follows. Up-to-date information is on the Hague Conference website at http://www.hcch.net.

The following signed and ratified:

Australia;
Czech Republic;
Hungary;
Latvia;
Monaco;
Morocco;
Slovakia;
Slovenia.

The following signed:

Austria;
Belgium;
Cyprus;
Denmark;
Finland;
France;
Germany;
Greece;
Ireland;
Italy;
Luxembourg;
Netherlands;
Poland;
Portugal;
Spain;
Sweden;
Switzerland;
UK.

The following acceded:

Bulgaria;
Ecuador;
Estonia;
Lithuania.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Action for Southern Africa Sanitary Appeal

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what funding has been allocated to the Action for Southern Africa Sanitary Appeal. [64474]

Hilary Benn: DFID has not provided funding specifically to the Action for Southern Africa Sanitary Appeal. DFID has, however, provided funds to the International Organisation for Migration to assist the most poor and vulnerable households displaced as a result of the Government of Zimbabwe's urban clean-up operations and land reform programme. Sanitary products are included in the pack of non-food items which to date have been distributed to nearly 12,000 families, many of whom are affected by the HIV/AIDS crisis in the country.

In the last year, our top priorities have been to address the HIV and AIDS crisis, which is causing over 3,000 deaths every week; to support orphans and vulnerable children, now numbering over 10 per cent. of the total population; and to ensure that poor people across the country avoid serious food shortages. We expect these to remain our priorities in the coming year, with a planned expenditure of approximately 30 million channelled through UN Agencies and non-governmental organisations.

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what assessment he has made of the impact of a lack of female sanitary products on growth in developing countries via effects on female economic productivity; and what steps he plans take to tackle this problem; [64477]

(2) what steps the Government are taking to tackle rising vaginal infections in developing countries due to a lack of female sanitary products; [64476]

(3) what aid is given for the supply of female sanitary products in developing countries. [64475]

Hilary Benn: The low availability and high cost of purpose-made female sanitary products for menstrual protection means that they are generally not used by poor women and girls in developing countries. In general, strips of old cloth are used to provide protection during menstruation. Critically, to ensure hygiene, comfort and to lessen vulnerability to reproductive tract infections these cloths must be clean and dry. However, a lack of basic infrastructure such as toilets and clean water combined with social taboos means that it is often difficult and embarrassing to wash and dry these cloths. Women and girls also face problems bathing due to lack of facilities that provide privacy. Consequently damp or even dirty rags are re-used.

All people deserve the dignity of decent and private sanitation near their home. However, 2.6 billion people do not have it. DFID is working to increase poor people's access to clean water and basic sanitation and infrastructure.

Adolescent girls also get inadequate preparation for the changes they face in puberty, including issues around menstrual health and hygiene. The silence around these discussions with young girls is linked to taboos around female sexuality. This is why DFID is supporting work in adolescent sexual and reproductive health. This includes fostering life skills that enable young girls and boys to make informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health and to adopt healthy behaviours that enable them to avoid reproductive track, sexually transmitted infections (including HIV) and unintended pregnancy.

DFID has not made an assessment of the impact of a lack of female sanitary products on economic growth and productivity. We are fully committed to working in ways that enable girls and women to reach their full potential. Investment in sexual and reproductive health is cost-effective. As well as direct health gains, better access to services can enable completion of education and access to economic opportunities by women and girls. This has immediate and longer term payoffs.

Central African Republic

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of *(a)* food shortages and *(b)* the number of internally displaced persons in the Central African Republic; and if he will make a statement. [64493]

Hilary Benn: Recent conflict has caused an estimated 35,000 to 50,000 people to flee their homes in North Western parts of the Central African Republic (CAR). It has not yet been possible for any agency to conduct a full nutritional survey due to instability, poor access and lack of local operational capacity, but one recent assessment found that at least 10,333 displaced people are in serious need. Medecins Sans Frontieres-Holland is making medical surveys.

DFID is providing £300,000 (a quarter of the estimated requirement) towards the World Food Programme's (WHO) pipeline, which has been revised to feed up to 50,000 people for three months. The WFP has started providing food to the most vulnerable through partners already based in the area such as the Red Cross and Caritas. DFID is in contact with the main agencies to keep needs under review. Should additional specific nutritional interventions be required, we shall respond urgently.

There is also an existing caseload of some 46,000 CAR nationals in camps in Chad that we are supporting through separate funding to the WFP and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

Contracts (Voluntary Sector)

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many contracts are let by his Department to voluntary sector organisations; how many of those are let on an annual basis; and how many of those had received finalised contracts for 2006–07 by 31 March. [63210]

Mr. Thomas: The Department for International Development has three current contracts with voluntary sector organisations: two were awarded in 2002 and the other in 2005. DFID does not let contracts on an annual basis and contract duration is specified in each case. The total does not include lower-value contracts let by DFID's overseas offices, of which we do not keep a central record; this information could not be obtained without incurring a disproportionate cost.

These contracts do not include the considerable activity by NGOs which DFID funds directly through our Civil Society Challenge Fund, Partnership Programme Agreements, Humanitarian Assistance and in country through our country programmes.

East Africa Drought

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of drought in the *(a)* Somali region and *(b)* Borena zone of Oromiya region of Ethiopia; and if he will make a statement. [64494]

Hilary Benn: The humanitarian situation in the worst affected areas of the Somali region (Afder, Gode and Liban zones) was re-assessed by missions which took place from 28 March to 2 April. Preliminary findings indicate that more people are in need and that more non-food help is needed. Nutritional screening also indicated a high level of malnutrition. Humanitarian agencies are continuing with a blanket supplementary feeding programme until targeted supplementary feeding is fully operational.

A similar reassessment in the Borena zone of the Oromiya region has recommended that the number of people in need has increased from 155,000 to 220,000. Blanket supplementary feeding continues and a nutrition survey is planned for May.

To date, US$37.5 million has been contributed in response to the joint Government of Ethiopia/United Nations appeal for US$111 million for non-food assistance. DFID allocated £4 million to the United Nations Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and £1 million to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Most of the non-food needs included in the appeal would be best addressed through long-term development. DFID is working with the Government and other donors, including the European Commission, OCHA and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to find other ways of assisting in the meantime.

The next full assessment of all pastoral areas including the worst affected areas of the Somali region and the Borena zone of the Oromiya region is scheduled for June, following the April-June rainfall season. DFID will follow the situation closely and respond to identified humanitarian needs accordingly.

Fledgling Democracies

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what proportion of UK development aid was provided *(a)* bilaterally and *(b)* multilaterally to ensure better and more transparent government in fledgling democracies in 2005–06. [64625]

Mr. Thomas: DFID provides bilateral and multilateral assistance towards developing countries on the basis of their need and their ability to use aid effectively. Many of these countries are moving towards democracy and our assistance supports their state building efforts.

DFID tracks its bilateral expenditure towards developing countries by monitoring expenditure against specific sector objectives, one of which is improved governance. This includes different aspects of state building and the encouragement of better and more transparent government.

DFID's bilateral expenditure on programmes which include governance amongst their objectives was £347 million in 2005–06 or 13 per cent. of a total bilateral spend of £2.5 billion. Examples of this expenditure include £3,600,000 support to civic education for the Afghan National Assembly and Provincial Council elections, and £2,555,444 to support building the capacity of Iraqi media by establishing a broadcasting station for provinces in Southern Iraq. UK development aid is also used to support public service reform programmes. An example of this funding in 2005–06 was £8,500,000 provided to enhance the commitment, capability, accountability and transparency of the public service in Tanzania.

DFID provides funding to a number of multilaterals and this is pooled with other donors. In many cases these institutions support a range of activities, including governance. The UK share of this is not tracked.

International Planned Parenthood Federation

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what monitoring his Department has carried out on how the International Planned Parenthood Federation spent the funds provided by his Department in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [64205]

Mr. Thomas: DFID provides funding to the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) for its work to promote reproductive health. The IPPF produces an annual report and audited accounts which are used by DFID for monitoring purposes. DFID also attends the IPPF's annual donor consultation meeting to consider issues such as performance and effectiveness.

In 2003, DFID co-sponsored with other IPPF donors, an evaluation of the Federation's work to promote adolescent sexual and reproductive health. It confirmed the important role of the IPPF in promoting adolescent reproductive health and that the development goal of combating HIV and AIDS would only be achieved through the increased involvement of adolescents and young people. It emphasised that although progress had been made, much remains to be done to respond to the reproductive health and rights needs of adolescents and young people, and there was a need for increased support by the international community.

We are currently planning with the governments of Sweden and Norway, another evaluation of the IPPF's work at country level.

World Conference on Women

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what action his Department has taken in response to the Report of the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women; and if he will make a statement. [62698]

Mr. Thomas: The United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, which took place in Beijing in September 1995, concluded with adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The Government fully supports implementation of the Platform for Action which we see as hugely significant in taking forward the global agenda on gender equality and as essential for making greater progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs.) We welcomed the re-affirmation of the key importance of the Declaration and Platform for Action, including the clear linkage with achievement of the MDGs at the Beijing Plus 10 conference, the Millennium Review Summit, and most recently at the meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women in March.

DFID's strategy for promoting gender equality is set out in the document "Poverty Elimination and the Empowerment of Women", and we are working to ensure that gender issues are made a priority across our work, and that developing country partners integrate gender into their own national plans. DFID also supports specific activities to promote the rights of women and girls, including in the areas of girls' education, maternal mortality and reproductive health. DFID is one of the three Government Departments responsible for the UK National Action Plan on implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, which was launched on International Women's Day 2006 on 8 March.

Over the next year, we will be looking to see how we can strengthen this work in response to an evaluation of our work on gender and women's empowerment over the past ten years and to current trends in the delivery of international development assistance.

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS

Places of Worship (Listed Buildings)

24. **Tony Baldry:** To ask the hon. Member for Middlesbrough, representing the Church Commissioners what estimate the Commissioners have made of the amount required to maintain and repair listed places of worship in England; and what discussions they have had with English Heritage and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport on this issue. [64565]

Sir Stuart Bell: In 2003, around £101 million was spent on major repairs to churches (a substantial proportion of them listed) and a further £11 million on

Church of England Cathedrals. We are working with English Heritage to identify the areas in greatest need of assistance with repair costs; the results of this exercise will inform our discussions with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport about better State funding arrangements.

Investments

David T.C. Davies: To ask the hon. Member for Middlesbrough, representing the Church Commissioners what steps the Commissioners take to ensure they obtain the best possible return on the investment portfolios which they are responsible for managing. [64561]

Sir Stuart Bell: In the first instance, Her Majesty appoints a Second Church Estates Commissioner.

In the second instance, the aim is to achieve the best possible long-term returns by investing in assets such as equities and property, which generally offer higher long-term returns than bonds and cash deposits. There is a wide spread of assets in the UK and overseas.

Octavia Hill Estate

Simon Hughes: To ask the hon. Member for Middlesbrough, representing the Church Commissioners what sale price was agreed for the Octavia Hill Estate in South London. [64560]

Sir Stuart Bell: The Church Commissioners received £166.967 million for the sale of the properties to Grainger Geninvest on 20th March 2006

Pipe Organs

Steve Webb: To ask the hon. Member for Middlesbrough, representing the Church Commissioners what representations the Commissioners have made to the Department of Trade and Industry on the potential impact of forthcoming EU regulations affecting the replacement of pipe organs. [64181]

Sir Stuart Bell: The Churches Main Committee (the body representing the Christian Churches and the Jewish community in their dealings with Government) have written to express our concerns over the possible adverse impact of on church and cathedral pipe organs of the Restriction of the Use of Certain Hazardous Substances in Electrical and Electronic Equipment Regulations 2005, due to come into force on 1 July 2006.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Departmental Websites

Norman Baker: To ask the Leader of the House if he will list *(a)* the websites operated by his Office and *(b)* the reports placed on the internet in March 2006, indicating in each case whether paper copies were also made available. [65215]

Mr. Hoon: The website www.CommonsLeader.gov.uk is operated by the Office of the Leader of the House of Commons and managed by the private office staff.

The Office has not published any reports.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Independent Broadcasting

1. **Rosie Cooper:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps the Government are taking to ensure a continued public service commitment in the independent broadcasting sector. [64568]

Tessa Jowell: The Government are committed to maintaining strong Public Service Broadcasting provision from both the BBC and other public service broadcasters. That is why, through the Communications Act, we placed on Ofcom a specific duty relating to public service television broadcasting and an obligation to undertake periodic reviews with a view to maintaining and strengthening the quality of public service television broadcasting in the United Kingdom.

Tote

13. **Mr. Laurence Robertson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on her plans to privatise the Tote. [64581]

Mr. Caborn: The Government's objective remains to sell the Tote to a racing trust.

We continue to work closely with the Tote, the Racing Trust and the European Commission to achieve this objective.

Peepul Centre (Leicester)

14. **Keith Vaz:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on support by the Millennium Commission for the Peepul Centre in Leicester. [64582]

Mr. Lammy: Detailed issues relating to Millennium Commission funding of the Peepul Centre in Leicester are primarily a matter for the Commission and I will therefore ask my right hon. Friend, the Minister for Sport, in his capacity as Chair of the Commission, to write to my hon. Friend and arrange for copies of his reply to be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Visitor Attractions

15. **Mr. Ian Austin:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what support her Department is giving to visitor attractions in the UK. [64583]

James Purnell: My Department works closely in support of the attractions sector which attract nearly 500 million visits a year. Visitor attractions are key to British tourism and will be fully reflected in the upcoming DCMS Tourism 2012 Strategy consultation document, which will be issued shortly.

Sport Participation

16. **Philip Davies:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps her Department is taking to increase participation in sport. [64586]

Mr. Caborn: The Department is committed to its public service agreement target of increasing levels of participation in sport by priority groups by 3 per cent. by 2008. Working through Sport England, we are implementing a range of measures to achieve this.

BBC

17. **Derek Wyatt:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she expects to be in a position to bring forward a Bill providing for the proposed increase in the BBC's licence fee and the length of the next BBC charter. [64587]

James Purnell: Neither of these issues will be subject to a Bill. TV licence fees are set in regulations laid before both Houses of Parliament and are subject to negative resolution procedure. The Government are currently conducting a funding review to determine the future level of the licence fee to apply from April 2007. An announcement will be made in due course. As set out in the White Paper, "A public service for all: the BBC in the digital age", the BBC will continue to be constituted by Royal Charter. The new Royal Charter will run for a period of 10 years until 31 December 2016.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she expects to publish the analysis by consultants Pannell Kerr Forster of the BBC's licence fee; and if she will ensure that the publication date provides adequate time to enable interested parties to express views on the proposals before the level of the licence fee is determined. [63797]

Tessa Jowell: We intend to publish PKF's findings subject only to proper consideration of commercial confidentiality and in advance of the seminar on 5 May.

Contracts (Voluntary Sector)

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many contracts are let by her Department to voluntary sector organisations; how many of those are let on an annual basis; and how many of those had received finalised contracts for 2006–07 by 31 March. [63215]

Mr. Lammy: DCMS has one contract within the voluntary sector and this is with YMCA. This is a three-year contract which expires in October 2007.

Correspondence

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she will reply to the letter of 30 January from the hon. Member for West Worcestershire about Stanbrook Abbey (Reference 34865). [64810]

Mr. Lammy: I wrote to the hon. Member on 20 April 2006.

Departmental Televisions

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many television sets are in operation in the Department *(a)* in total, *(b)* in Minister's private offices and *(c)* in each office building in the Department; and how many television licences are held by the Department. [62799]

Mr. Lammy: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has television sets in operation as follows;

(a) 34 in total;

(b) Eight in Ministerial Private Offices at Cockspur Street, including three parliamentary annunciators;

(c) 29 at 2–4 Cockspur Street, two at Grove House, two at Queen's Yard and one at Blandford Street.

Each building holds a television licence that covers one or more sets.

Digital Television (Dundee)

Mr. McGovern: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she expects digital television to be available to every household in Dundee. [64577]

James Purnell: The vast majority of households can, with the appropriate equipment, receive digital TV services via either digital satellite, digital terrestrial or cable.

Currently around three quarters of households in my hon. Friend's constituency are thought to be able to receive Freeview. Digital switchover in Dundee will happen in 2010, which will enable digital terrestrial coverage to match the current 98.5 per cent. analogue level.

Gambling

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the impact on problem gambling of new casinos established under the Gambling Act 2005. [64613]

Mr. Caborn: No premises licences for the three categories of new casino permitted by the Gambling Act 2005 have yet been issued, and we do not expect the competitions for these premises licences to begin until mid-2007 at the earliest. Our intention is to ask the Gambling Commission to make an assessment of the impact of the introduction of these categories of new casino no earlier than three years after the award of the first premises licence. As part of this work, the Commission will assess the impact of the new types of casino on problem gambling.

Licensing

Susan Kramer: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many new licences have been granted in *(a)* Richmond upon-Thames and *(b)* Kingston-upon-Thames under the Licensing Act 2003; and what percentage were 24 hour licences. [65069]

James Purnell: This information is not held centrally.

Millennium Dome

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the cost has been of the Millennium Dome to public funds in each year since its inception. [64942]

Mr. Caborn: The information is as follows.

(1) Grants from National Lottery funds were made by the Millennium Commission to the New Millennium Experience Company (NMEC) as follows.

	Grant (£)
1997–98	449
1998–99	nil
1999–2000	60
2000–01	119
2001–02	nil
2002–03	nil
2003–04	nil
2004–05	[1]nil
2005–06	[2]nil

[1] £24 million (unrequired funds decommitted from NMEC by the Millennium Commission for use on other projects)
[2] £1 million (unrequired funds decommitted from NMEC by the Millennium Commission for use on other projects)

(2) In addition, English Partnerships has been meeting management, maintenance, security and other costs at the site from 1 July 2001, and will continue to do so until the redevelopment of the arena by the Anschutz Entertainment Group is completed, expected in summer 2007, at which time Anschutz takes on full responsibility for the Dome structure and its immediate surroundings.

All of English Partnerships' costs (gross total of around £32 million to date) from July 2001 to the completion of the arena's construction, and including the costs of the entire sale process, are expected to be recovered from sale proceeds, forecast at £550 million over the period of the deal, which lasts for around another 19 years.

The year by year English Partnerships' maintenance and other costs to date have been as follows:

	Maintenance and other costs (£)
2001–02:	2.299
2002–03:	2.952
2003–04:	2.586
2004–05:	1.726
2005–06:	[1]0.364
Total	9.927

[1] To end February 2006.

In addition, English Partnerships spent £6.7 million on decommissioning some of the Dome's contents, £0.558 million on a one off payment for insurance and £14.5 million on the sale process between March 1999 and June 2004.

Music Industry

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what definition her Department uses of the music industry; under what legislation the music industry is regulated; and if she will make a statement. [64663]

James Purnell: The Department works with all businesses and activities which regard themselves part of the music industry. This includes recording, composition and publishing, instrument manufacture, production services, managers, agents and promoters and artists and performers. This work feeds into our support for music as part of our cultural objectives. We do not use an exclusive definition of this industry and there is no specific legislation under which the industry is regulated.

Queen's Birthday

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps her Department is taking abroad to encourage foreign tourism for the Queen's 80th birthday celebration. [63027]

James Purnell: My Department funds the work of VisitBritain in promoting tourism, to both the domestic and international markets, which includes Royal Events.

The events marking the 80th birthday of the Queen have been promoted to the international media by VisitBritain and direct by their press officers overseas. This activity is aimed to encourage more foreign tourists to visit the UK during the Queen's 80th birthday celebrations.

Royal Ballet

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what direct funding the Royal Ballet received from *(a)* central Government and *(b)* Government agencies in 2005–06; and how much such funding is planned for 2006–07. [64646]

Mr. Lammy: The Royal Ballet does not receive funding from central Government. DCMS sponsors Arts Council England to promote and invest in the arts, including dance.

The Royal Ballet is part of the Royal Opera House (ROH) and therefore receives funding through the Arts Council's subsidy to the ROH which is as follows:

	Subsidy (£)
2005–06	24,866,154
2006–07	25,550,000
2007–08	26,252,600

The Arts Council does not direct the ROH management as to how they should allocate their funding across the Royal Ballet and the Royal Opera as well as the additional strands of work the ROH undertakes. Therefore a specific figure for the amount of Arts Council funding to the Royal Ballet Company is not available.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what funding the Royal Ballet has received from *(a)* central Government and *(b)* Government agencies to take the company abroad on tour in each of the last eight years. [64647]

Mr. Lammy: The Arts Council does not direct the ROH management as to how they should allocate their funding across the Royal Ballet and the Royal Opera, as well as the additional strands of work the ROH undertakes. Therefore, a specific figure for the Royal Ballet Company's funding for their touring is not available.

Television Advertising

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many times *(a)* ITV and *(b)* Channel 4 have exceeded agreed limits for the quantity and length of advertisement breaks on television in each of the last eight years. [64648]

James Purnell: The matters raised are principally the responsibility of the Office of Communications (Ofcom) as independent regulator. Accordingly, my officials have asked the chief executive of Ofcom to respond directly to the hon. Member. Copies of the chief executive's letter will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Warships

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on her Department's policy on the ownership of the warships which were previously in the ownership of the Warship Preservation Trust Ltd. [65401]

Mr. Lammy: Following the liquidation of The Warship Preservation Trust Ltd. in February 2006 and the subsequent disclaimer of the ships both by the Liquidator and the Treasury Solicitor (in her capacity as the Crown's Nominee for dealing with bona vacantia), the ships are now effectively ownerless and fall under the control of The Mersey Docks and Harbour Company, in whose possession they are. It will be for the company to decide how to deal with them. The National Historic Ships Unit of the Advisory Committee on National Historic Ships is in direct and regular contact with The Mersey Docks and Harbour Company, and is advising them on policy with regard to a long-term solution. The Department is monitoring the situation.

Water Safety

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the outcomes were of the recent meeting of the Water Safety Forum, with particular reference to adult to children supervision ratios in swimming pools. [65113]

Mr. Caborn: The issue of guidance relating to child admission and parental supervision in public swimming pools has been considered by the National Water Safety Forum (NWSF) at recent meetings.

The NWSF's investigations are ongoing and researchers are consulting with pool users and parents before final conclusions can be drawn.

However, the work to date has suggested that any guidance issued and followed by pool operators needs to be done on a site specific basis and supported by a site specific risk assessment before any admission ratios are set.

Departmental Policies

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will set out with statistical evidence relating as closely as possible to west Lancashire constituency the effects in west Lancashire of changes to her Department's policies since 1997. [64233]

Mr. Lammy: The Department's policies and actions have had a significant impact on west Lancashire since 2 May 1997. Our aim is to improve the quality of life for everyone through cultural and sporting activities, to support the pursuit of excellence and to champion the tourism, creative and leisure industries. Here is a non-exhaustive outline of the effects on the constituency.

In sport, over £3 billion has been invested from the lottery and Exchequer since 1997 to help us achieve our vision of an active and successful sporting nation. We have put in place the first ever comprehensive national school sport strategy which will have benefited from £1.5 billion of joint investment from DCMS and DFES by 2008. To help achieve our challenging targets for increased participation in sport and physical activity, we have invested heavily in our local and community sporting infrastructure, including thousands of new and refurbished public sports facilities. In west Lancashire, sports facilities have benefited from nine Sport England lottery grants totalling £2,347,120.

In addition, west Lancashire has received £192,501 from Awards for All, supporting 51 projects benefiting sport. The Glenburn School Sport Partnership, comprising four local secondary schools and 31 primary schools, has also received £185,063, and an award to the value of £674,259 for September 2005 to August 2008.

In the arts sector we have increased national funding, in real terms, by 60 per cent. from £199 million in 1998–99 to £367 million in 2004–05. Between 1998–99 and 2003–04 Arts Council England investment in the north west region, through Exchequer funding, increased from £7.6 million to £19.6 million, with a total investment of £34.8 million in 2005–06 (2005–06 includes lottery figures). West Lancashire has benefited from grants to arts projects, organisations and individuals, including £17,000 to the Chapel Gallery's education and outreach programme; and £5,000 to Open Arts, based in Skelmersdale.

In the museum sector we have supported the leading north west museum services through the "Renaissance in the Regions Programme", that will invest £1.7 million regionally in 2006–07. West Lancashire also benefits from its geographical proximity to National Museums Liverpool and the free access for all visitors that is on offer.

In heritage, English Heritage offered grants worth £257,555 to a combination of St Thomas the Martyr, Upholland; St John the Baptist, Burscough; Scarisbrick Hall, Ormskirk; and St Michael and All Angels, Dalton, Skelmersdale. In addition English Heritage also gave £75,000 to a Heritage economic regeneration scheme in Ormskirk.

In libraries, in common with all those in the United Kingdom, the public library branches in west Lancashire are connected to the internet through the People's Network which was funded through a £120 million lottery grant and which has put all the United Kingdom's public libraries on-line. In addition, the Department is funding the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council with £5 million over three years to implement the Framework for the Future Action Plan and Library Improvement Programme, which is designed to encourage overall improvement across the public libraries sector in England.

In broadcasting, through our commitment to public service broadcasting we have helped to foster an environment in which a creative, commercially successful broadcasting industry provides a wide range of UK-made, high quality original programmes catering for all viewers and listeners, including those in west

Lancashire. We have ensured a secure funding base for the BBC and Channel 4, while giving them the freedom to develop commercial operations which complement and support their public service remit. The Communications Act 2003 includes provisions to ensure that public service broadcasting will continue to have a key role to play in the digital future.

Furthermore, in November 2000 we introduced free television licences for people aged 75 or over. Precise information on the number of beneficiaries by constituency is not available, although as an indicator, according to Department for Work and Pensions records, the number of households in the west Lancashire constituency with at least one person aged 75 or over claiming the winter fuel payment in 2004–5 was 4,975.

In the creative industries, since 2004 funding has been given to help finance film projects in Ormskirk, Parbold and Merebrow, enabling the production of short films, screenings and digitisation projects, and travel bursaries to international film festivals for sales opportunities. The awards have been in excess of £4,500.

In tourism, west Lancashire has benefited from Government-funded marketing activity. In April 2003 we established VisitBritain with a new domestic marketing remit for England, and we gave strategic responsibility for tourism development to the Regional Development Agencies, including the North West RDA. These changes, together with VisitBritain's successful marketing activities in promoting Britain abroad as an attractive tourist destination, benefit all parts of the country, including west Lancashire.

The Government have also implemented the Licensing Act 2003, the biggest overhaul in licensing law for 40 years. It contains vital measures in the battle against alcohol related crime and disorder while allowing the majority of responsible adults the freedom to enjoy their leisure time. It gives police and local authorities the power to take tougher action against under-age drinking, antisocial behaviour, and to protect residents whose lives have been blighted by disturbance and noise. It will also provide greater choice for consumers, bring regeneration, and increased employment opportunities.

The Gambling Act 2005 will, when implemented, transfer responsibility for licensing gambling premises to local licensing authorities. Local people and businesses will be able to make representations about applications for licences and local licensing authorities will be able to decide not to issue licences for casino premises. These changes will give local communities, including those in west Lancashire, a greater say in the regulation of gambling in their area.

Finally, information from the national lottery distributors indicates that since 2 May 1997 west Lancashire has benefited from over 246 awards totalling over £7.9 million.

Wilberforce 2007 (Hull)

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what central Government support there will be for the Wilberforce 2007 commemoration in Hull. [64584]

Mr. Lammy: Next year is an important opportunity to mark the 200th anniversary of Parliament's abolition of the Slave Trade in the British Empire and I know that Hull's plans are already well advanced. Hull is a key member of the Deputy Prime Minister's Advisory Group on 2007. I am pleased that Hull Museums are a partner in the Understanding Slavery Initiative, sharing £750,000 of DCMS and DfES funding to encourage more informed and effective teaching about slavery in the classroom. To support the preparations the Wilberforce House Museum has recently benefited from a £800,000 award from the Heritage Lottery Fund and £202,400 from the DCMS/Wolfson Museums Improvement Fund.

WORK AND PENSIONS

"A New Deal for Welfare"

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether the consultation deadline for the Green Paper "A New Deal for Welfare" is being extended to take account of the fact that it was not available in accessible format for disabled people until 28 February; and if he will make a statement. [63075]

Margaret Hodge: The Disability Discrimination Act requires service providers to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled people can access their services. In line with this requirement, where individuals and organisations need more time to take part in the consultation, we will extend the deadline of 21 April to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to respond. We will continue to provide support to enable people to complete their response within the deadline.

Adult Disadvantages

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the letter of 19 July 2004 from the hon. Member for Croydon, North to the hon. Member for Arundel and South Downs, if he will recalculate the figures on adult disadvantages to include retirement on 31 December 2004 and 31 December 2005. [56985]

Mr. Timms: The information for 2005 is not currently available. The calculations referred to are based on figures published by UBS Global Asset Management. Figures for 2005 are expected to be published in June. Figures for 2004 are presented in the table.

Since 2004 we have improved the methodology used to calculate these figures. The previous methodology overstated the decline in pension incomes since the early 1990s.

The principal change to the methodology has been to use actual earnings growth data as opposed to using average earnings growth for the entire period between 1963 and 2004. The previous methodology had the effect of overstating investment returns and contribution growth during periods of high inflation and understating them in periods of low inflation.

As the trend in inflation has been steadily downwards since the 1970s the previous methodology introduced a bias towards those with the biggest pension pots in the 1970s, who are those retiring earliest in the data series. It also failed to show the result of the late 1990s boom in equity returns that hid the increase in longevity and consequential fall in annuity rates that can be clearly seen in these tables.

The other change in methodology has been to make the hypothetical individual on whom calculations are based more typical.

Table 1: pension entitlement assuming the fund is wholly in equities throughout the investment period (100 per cent. equities)

Year started contributing	Retire at end of year	Total years of contribution	Lump sum built up (£)	Annuity rate in retirement year (percentage)	Weekly pension at retirement (£)
1964	1994	31	69,017	11.6	153
1965	1995	31	78,860	11.3	171
1966	1996	31	82,797	11.0	175
1967	1997	31	93,624	10.4	187
1968	1998	31	100,623	9.4	181
1969	1999	31	117,617	8.9	201
1970	2000	31	102,767	9.1	179
1971	2001	31	82,036	8.9	140
1972	2002	31	57,991	7.5	83
1973	2003	31	66,096	7.4	94
1974	2004	31	68,395	7.3	96

Table 2: pension entitlement assuming the fund is wholly in bonds throughout the investment period (100 per cent. bonds)

Year started contributing	Retire at end of year	Total years of contribution	Lump sum built up (£)	Annuity rate in retirement year (percentage)	Weekly pension at retirement (£)
1964	1994	31	37,595	11.6	84
1965	1995	31	42,867	11.3	93
1966	1996	31	43,134	11.0	91
1967	1997	31	48,622	10.4	97
1968	1998	31	57,585	9.4	104
1969	1999	31	53,660	8.9	92
1970	2000	31	54,901	9.1	96
1971	2001	31	51,694	8.9	88
1972	2002	31	53,516	7.5	77
1973	2003	31	51,699	7.4	73
1974	2004	31	53,285	7.3	75

Table 3: pension entitlement assuming the fund is half in bonds and half in equities throughout the investment period (50–50 split)

Year started contributing	Retire at end of year	Total years of contribution	Lump sum built up (£)	Annuity rate in retirement year (percentage)	Weekly pension at retirement (£)
1964	1994	31	52,416	11.6	117
1965	1995	31	59,697	11.3	129
1966	1996	31	61,236	11.0	129
1967	1997	31	69,016	10.4	138
1968	1998	31	77,716	9.4	140
1969	1999	31	81,425	8.9	139
1970	2000	31	76,914	9.1	134
1971	2001	31	66,647	8.9	114
1972	2002	31	57,828	7.5	83
1973	2003	31	60,696	7.4	86
1974	2004	31	62,445	7.3	87

Table 4: pension entitlement assuming the fund starts wholly in equities, then switches wholly to bonds five years before retirement (five year immediate switch)

Year started contributing	Retire at end of year	Total years of contribution	Lump sum built up (£)	Annuity rate in retirement year (percentage)	Weekly pension at retirement (£)
1964	1994	31	76,912	11.6	171
1965	1995	31	71,406	11.3	155
1966	1996	31	71,036	11.0	150
1967	1997	31	76,195	10.4	152
1968	1998	31	89,125	9.4	161
1969	1999	31	85,827	8.9	146
1970	2000	31	89,154	9.1	155

Table 4: pension entitlement assuming the fund starts wholly in equities, then switches wholly to bonds five years before retirement (five year immediate switch)

Year started contributing	Retire at end of year	Total years of contribution	Lump sum built up (£)	Annuity rate in retirement year (percentage)	Weekly pension at retirement (£)
1971	2001	31	88,040	8.9	150
1972	2002	31	93,043	7.5	134
1973	2003	31	83,082	7.4	118
1974	2004	31	104,903	7.3	147

Table 5: pension entitlement assuming the fund starts wholly in equities, then switches away gradually from five years before retirement, until it is wholly in bonds at retirement (five year gradual switch)

Year started contributing	Retire at end of year	Total years of contribution	Lump sum built up (£)	Annuity rate in retirement year (percentage)	Weekly pension at retirement (£)
1964	1994	31	67,649	11.6	150
1965	1995	31	72,924	11.3	158
1966	1996	31	72,570	11.0	153
1967	1997	31	81,434	10.4	162
1968	1998	31	97,995	9.4	177
1969	1999	31	92,272	8.9	157
1970	2000	31	99,113	9.1	173
1971	2001	31	94,038	8.9	160
1972	2002	31	94,464	7.5	136
1973	2003	31	82,698	7.4	117
1974	2004	31	79,854	7.3	112

Table 6: pension entitlement assuming the fund starts wholly in equities, then switches away gradually from ten years before retirement, until it is wholly in bonds at retirement (10 year gradual switch)

Year started contributing	Retire at end of year	Total years of contribution	Lump sum built up (£)	Annuity rate in retirement year (percentage)	Weekly pension at retirement (£)
1964	1994	31	64,295	11.6	143
1965	1995	31	72,679	11.3	157
1966	1996	31	72,332	11.0	152
1967	1997	31	79,913	10.4	159
1968	1998	31	94,704	9.4	171
1969	1999	31	88,218	8.9	150
1970	2000	31	90,750	9.1	158
1971	2001	31	85,769	8.9	146
1972	2002	31	88,200	7.5	127
1973	2003	31	82,474	7.4	117
1974	2004	31	82,647	7.3	116

Notes:

1. Lump sums and weekly pensions are all in 2004 earnings terms.
2. The tables above present results from a hypothetical analysis of pension fund investment. The model is based on the following assumptions and underlying data:

A person contributes to a pension fund for 31 years (this is an individual pension fund as opposed to an occupational one). The investment generates returns for 30 years.

Contributions are made at 5 per cent. of gross earnings.

Individuals earn average earnings (£22,000 in 2004 terms) for the entirety of their working life (Annual survey of hours and earnings, Office of National Statistics).

Contributions are made annually at the end of each year.

The return on equities is based on an average of UK equities (FTSE All-Share Index) and Overseas equities (Composite index for representative overseas markets, and FT/S&P World Ex-UK Index from 1987). To be published in Pension Fund Indicators 2004, UBS Global Asset Management.

The return on bonds/gilts is based on an average of UK bonds (FTA Over 15-year Index, and UBS 25-year index up to 1975) and Overseas bonds (JP Morgan Global Bond Index, ex UK). To be published in Pension Fund Indicators 2003, UBS Global Asset Management.

1 per cent. of the value of the fund at the end of each year is deducted from the fund, in order to account for charging/fees.

Upon retirement at the end of the final year of investment, an annuity is purchased at a prevailing market rate. The annuity rates are as at December each year, for a level annuity (for £100,000), male aged 65, single life, guaranteed five years. These have been supplied by Annuity Direct.

Benefit Costs

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the cost was in current prices of *(a)* income support, *(b)* incapacity benefit, *(c)* disability living allowance, *(d)* attendance allowance, *(e)* the social fund, *(f)* retirement pension, *(g)* the state second pension/state earnings-related pension scheme and *(h)* pension credit in each year since 1996–97; and what percentage of these costs was accounted for by administration in each year. [59338]

Mr. Plaskitt: The available information is in the following tables.

Nominal (cash terms) Great Britain

Benefit expenditure (£ million)	*Outturn*				
	1996–97	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*
Income support (under 60 years of age)	10,630	8,193	8,172	8,302	9,026
Incapacity benefit	7,662	7,412	7,251	6,790	6,766
Disability living allowance	4,498	4,953	5,316	5,660	6,044
Attendance allowance	2,393	2,521	2,680	2,823	2,955
Social fund	239	186	199	185	235
Contributory retirement pension-basic	29,239	30,391	31,914	33,378	33,986
Contributory retirement pension-earnings related	2,756	3,166	3,660	4,397	4,731
Income support for people over 60/minimum income guarantee/pension credit	3,815	3,773	3,619	3,781	4,095

Benefit expenditure (£ million)	*Outturn*			*Estimated outturn*
	2001–02	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Income support (under 60 years of age)	9,615	9,753	10,344	10,068
Incapacity benefit	6,749	6,758	6,724	6,676
Disability living allowance	6,580	7,052	7,582	8,078
Attendance allowance	3,124	3,251	3,457	3,678
Social fund	250	301	326	327
Contributory retirement pension-basic	36,565	38,469	39,828	41,389
Contributory retirement pension-earnings related	5,328	5,869	6,648	7,355
Income support for people over 60/minimum income guarantee/pension credit	4,486	4,484	4,851	5,997

Real terms (2005–06 prices) Great Britain

Benefit expenditure (£ million)	*Outturn*				
	1996–97	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*
Income support(under 60 years of age)	13,161	9,852	9,579	9,543	10,242
Incapacity benefit	9,486	8,914	8,499	7,805	7,677
Disability living allowance	5,569	5,957	6,231	6,506	6,858
Attendance allowance	2,963	3,032	3,141	3,245	3,353
Social fund	296	224	233	213	267
Contributory retirement pension-basic	36,201	36,547	37,408	38,369	38,564
Contributory retirement pension-earnings related	3,412	3,807	4,291	5,055	5,369
Income support for people over 60/minimum income guarantee/pension credit	4,723	4,537	4,242	4,346	4,647

Benefit expenditure (£ million)	*Outturn*			*Estimated outturn*
	2001–02	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Income support (under 60 years of age)	10,647	10,467	10,815	10,307
Incapacity benefit	7,473	7,253	7,030	6,835
Disability living allowance	7,286	7,568	7,927	8,270
Attendance allowance	3,460	3,489	3,614	3,765
Social fund	277	323	341	335
Contributory retirement pension-basic	40,490	41,287	41,641	42,373
Contributory retirement pension-earnings related	5,900	6,299	6,951	7,529
Income support for people over 60/minimum income guarantee/pension credit	4,967	4,813	5,072	6,140

Administration cost as a percentage of benefit expenditure (Great Britain)	*Estimated*		
	1996–97	*1997–98*	*1998–99*
Incapacity benefit	4.8	4.0	5.2
Disability living allowance	3.3	3.3	2.2
Attendance allowance	3.4	3.0	2.8
Social fund	21.5	15.3	19.3
Retirement pension	0.9	0.9	0.9
Income support	7.2	6.0	4.9
Income support unemployed only-6 months (replaced by jobseekers' allowance income based in October 1996)	8.8	0	0

Notes:

1. Benefit expenditure figures are rounded to the nearest £ million. The figures do not include administration expenditure.

2. Administration percentages (of benefit expenditure only and not the sum of benefit expenditure and administration expenditure) been obtained from previously published departmental reports (see source). The social fund percentage is of expenditure and loan recoveries, whereas the social fund benefit expenditure figures shown in the tables are net of recoveries. The percentage of income support inc udes

expenditure on the over 60's age group. The 1996–97 administration percentage of income support paid to the unemployed is shown separately. (Jobseeker's allowance-income based replaced income support paid to the unemployed in October 1996. Jobseeker's allowance-income based administration expenditure figures are not shown in the table).

3. Information on the costs (and therefore percentages) of administering benefits from 1999–2000 onwards is not currently available in the format requested. In accordance with the requirements of Resource Accounting and Budgeting the Department now accounts for its administration and benefit expenditure by Strategic Objective, as set out in its public service agreements (PSA), and by individual Requests for Resources (RfRs), as set out in the Departmental Estimates and Accounts.

Sources:

Table 3 DWP expenditure tables published on the internet at http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd4/expenditure.asp. All figures are consistent with the pre-Budget report (5 December 2005).

Administration percentages are from Department for Social Security Departmental Reports, published in April 1998 (1996–97 figure), March 1999 (1997–98 figure) and April 2000 (1998–99 figure).

Capita Group

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what meetings *(a)* he and *(b)* Ministers in his Department have held with directors and senior executives of (i) Capita Group plc. and (ii) its subsidiaries since 1 January 2004; and whether (A) Capita Group plc. and (B) its subsidiaries have provided input (1) in writing and (2) in person to policy discussions in his Department since 1 January 2004. [61140]

Margaret Hodge: Capita Group plc has a large number of trading subsidiaries and this information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Child Support

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many parents have avoided paying the correct amount of child support in *(a)* West Lancashire, *(b)* Lancashire and *(c)* the UK in each year since 1980. [64293]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive, Mr. Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Hilary Reynolds:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency, the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive. As he is currently unavailable, I am responding on his behalf.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many parents have avoided paying the correct amount of child support in *(a)* West Lancashire *(b)* Lancashire *(c)* the UK in each year since 1980.

We cannot provide the information at the requested constituency or county level. Data has therefore only been provided at GB level.

As the Agency only began to operate in 1993, information is not available prior to this point. Subsequent to 1993, data has been provided for the years in which it is available.

There are a variety of ways in which a non-resident parent could potentially avoid paying the correct amount of child support. For example, an NRP could:

Refuse to provide information about their income or circumstances.

By refusing to provide this information they are preventing the Agency from performing a maintenance calculation/assessment and could thus be said to be avoiding paying the correct amount of child support. Where a parent consistently refuses to provide this information, the Agency may impose an Interim Maintenance Assessment (IMA; old scheme) or a Default Maintenance Decision (DMD; new scheme). Information on the number of DMDs and IMAs imposed by the Agency is attached as Table 1.

Under-declare their income and assets. Doing this may result in the establishment of a lower liability for child maintenance than should otherwise have applied, had the non-resident parent's (NRP) true income and assets been declared. In this case the parent with care (PWC) may then apply for a departure or variation (old and new rules respectively) from the standard formula, on the basis that the non- resident parent's lifestyle is inconsistent with the income they are declaring to the Agency. Limitations with management information means that the number of variations applied for is not available. However, the number of departures applied for is attached as Table 2.

Failure to pay the full assessed amount of child maintenance. An NRP who does not pay the full maintenance liability due to them is clearly avoiding paying the correct amount of child support. The number of NRPs who do not pay the full liability for which they have been assessed is attached as Table 3.

Table 1: Interim Maintenance Assessments and Default Maintenance Decisions applied for since 1997

	Interim Maintenance Assessments (old scheme)		*Default Maintenance Decision (new scheme)*	
November	*Number of cases*	*Percentage of all cases with an assessment*	*Number of cases*	*Percentage of all cases with an assessment*
1997	78,000	11	n/a	n/a
1998	77,000	9	n/a	n/a
1999	76,000	8	n/a	n/a
2000	54,000	5	n/a	n/a
2001	47,000	4	n/a	n/a
2002	40,000	4	n/a	n/a
2003	u/a	u/a	3,000	6
2004	32,000	3	6,000	4
2005	27,000	4	7,000	3

Notes:

1. Robust data is not available prior to 1997.
2. Numbers are rounded to the nearest thousand and percentages to the nearest whole percent.
2. 'n/a' indicates the period is not applicable.
3. 'u/a' indicates that data is unavailable due to limitations in management information.

Table 2: Number of Departures applied for in each year since 1999–2000

	Departures applied for
1999–2000	20,000
2000–2001	23,000
2001–2002	21,000
2002–2003	21,000
2003–2004	13,000
2004–2005	8,000
2005–2006 (to Feb 2006)	9,000

Notes

1. A departure can be applied for by either parent where it is felt that a maintenance assessment does not adequately reflect the circumstances of the NRP or PWC. Departures apply to old scheme cases only. The numbers presented therefore cover any

circumstance where a departure has been applied for (as opposed to granted), and not just those where departures were applied for by the PWC.

2. This table shows the number of departures applied for in each year since 1999/2000. Robust figures are not available for periods of time before 1999.

3. Numbers have been rounded to the nearest thousand.

Table 3: Non resident parents in Great Britain who paid the full amount of maintenance, as a proportion of those charged via the Agency's collection service

	Percentage of non-resident parents who paid the full amount of maintenance (Overall Agency)	
Quarter ending	*Old scheme old system*	*New and old scheme*
November 1995	27	
November 1996	36	
November 1997	44	
November 1998	45	
November 1999	47	
November 2000	49	
November 2001	51	
November 2002	54	
November 2003	u/a	u/a
November 2004		46
November 2005		45
December 2005		42

Notes

1. To place these figures into context, it should be noted that, whilst only 42 per cent. of non resident parents paid their maintenance liability in full over the quarter ending December 2005, the Agency obtained some form of payment from 70 per cent. of cases in which maintenance was due via the collection service. Where any such payment was obtained, on average, 90 per cent. of the amount due was collected.

2. Data is not available prior to 1995.

3. 'u/a' indicates that data is unavailable due to limitations in management information.

4. Numbers have been rounded to the nearest whole per cent.

Council Tax Rebate

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much was provided in rebate to properties entitled to 50 per cent. council tax discount in *(a)* Guildford, *(b)* Waverley and *(c)* Surrey in 2005–06. [64353]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is not available.

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) when the council tax rebate savings limit was last *(a)* assessed and *(b)* increased; [64354]

(2) what representations he has received on increasing the council tax rebate savings limit; and what plans he has to increase the council tax rebate savings limit. [64355]

Mr. Plaskitt: I have received numerous representations about the savings limit in council tax benefit. The lower savings limit for people aged under 60 was increased on 1 April of this year from £3,000 to £6,000, in line with the lower savings limit for people aged 60 or over.

There have been no changes to the upper savings limit of £16,000 since the introduction of council tax benefit in April 1993.

Although the savings limits are kept under review, there are no plans to amend the limits further.

Departmental Policies

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will set out with statistical evidence relating as closely as possible to west Lancashire constituency the effects in west Lancashire of changes to his Department's policies since 1997. [64240]

Margaret Hodge: We have undertaken a fundamental overhaul of the welfare system, transforming it to an active system that fights poverty, creates opportunity and helps people become self-sufficient and independent.

Since 1997 the Government have significantly extended and improved civil rights for disabled people in areas such as employment, education, access to goods and services and transport, most recently through the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 which met our commitment to put in place a comprehensive and enforceable set of rights for disabled people. Disabled people in west Lancashire will have benefited from these significant improvements in disability rights.

In 2004–05 we estimate there were around 10 million disabled people in Great Britain, including people with limiting longstanding illnesses. All of these people would meet the definition of disability in the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA).

Information on the numbers of customers in west Lancashire who are in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and Attendance Allowance (AA) is in the table.

	Operational Year			
West Lancashire	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
DLA recipients	5.4	5.5	5.7	5.8
AA recipients	2.3	2.4	2.7	2.6

Source:

DWP Information Directorate.

Figures are rounded to the nearest 100 and are displayed in thousands.

DLA is from DWP Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS) at 31 August each year.

AA is from a five per cent sample at 31 August each year.

Through Jobcentre Plus, we are promoting work as the best form of welfare for people of working age. Since 1997 the number of long-term unemployed in west Lancashire has fallen by 72 per cent. and the number of young people that are unemployed by 38 per cent.

Our new deals have helped lone parents, the young unemployed, the long-term unemployed, disabled people, the over 50s and partners of unemployed people to move from benefit into work. Nationally over 15 million people have been helped into work by the new deals, with over 3,000 in west Lancashire alone.

Significant progress has been made in tackling child poverty. Since 1998–99 the number of children in relative low-income households fell by 700,000 from 3.1 million to 2.4 million on a before housing costs (BHC) basis and 700,000 from 4.1 million to 3.4 million on an after housing costs (AHC) basis.

Since 2001–02 incomes for lone parents in receipt of benefit have risen by more than prices or the cost of living. Child rates in income support and jobseeker's allowance have been increased by 40 per cent. since

2001–02, increasing above inflation in April 2005 in line with child tax credit upratings. All of this has benefited 1,900 families in west Lancashire.

We want all pensioners to have a decent and secure income in retirement and to share fairly in the rising prosperity of the country and our first priority has been to help the least well off pensioners. The Government will be spending over £10 billion extra in 2006–07 on pensioners as a result of measures introduced since 1997. Almost half of this spending going to the least well off third of pensioners.

Our reforms include the state second pension, which helps more future pensioners build up better pensions, especially carers. Pension credit, introduced from October 2003, provides a contribution to a guaranteed minimum income for those aged 60 and over and, for the first time, rewards people aged 65 and over who have made modest provision for their retirement. As of August 2005, around 4,800 pensioners in west Lancashire are receiving pension credit, with an average award of £41.71 per week.

We know that older people, who are often on fixed incomes, value timely help with fuel costs. This winter (2005–06) we have again made available a winter fuel payment of £200 for each eligible household with someone aged 60 or over and £300 if the household includes someone aged 80 or over to help with their fuel bills. In 2004–05, around 19,500 people in west Lancashire received a winter fuel payment.

Since 1997 pensioners have seen a real terms increase in their basic state pension of 9 per cent. As at August 2005, around 18,200 pensioners in west Lancashire have benefited from this increase.

Notes:
1. Pension Credit and State Pension data are as at August 2005.
2. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred and are expressed in thousands.
3. Pension Credit replaced MIG on the 6 October 2003.
4. Average amounts are shown to the nearest penny.

Source:
DWP Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS).

Disability Living Allowance

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many applications for disability living allowance were received in the latest year for which figures are available; how many of these were *(a)* granted and *(b)* rejected; how many of those rejected were appealed; and how many of those appeals were (i) granted and (ii) rejected. [64720]

Mrs. McGuire: Information is not available in the precise form requested. The available information is that in the year to 31 December 2005, some 426,700 claims to disability living allowance were received by the Disability and Carers Service and 423,300 claims were decided. Of these, 198,000 resulted in an award of the allowance and 225,300 were disallowed [1].

In the same period, the Appeals Service received 82,200 appeals against decisions on disability living allowance claims and appeal tribunals decided 71,400 such appeals. Some 35,900 of the appeal tribunal decisions were in favour of the appellant, whilst 34,400 were either against the appellant or upheld the decision made by the Disability and Carers Service. In the remaining 1,200 decisions, appeal tribunals disposed of the appeals in other ways, such as by striking out the appeal or by changing the period for which disability living allowance had been awarded [2].

[1] *Source:*
DWP MIS Computer System, 100 per cent. data. Figures are rounded to the nearest 100.

[2] *Source:*
IAD Information Centre, 100 per cent. sample of the Generic Appeals Service Systems. Figures are rounded to the nearest 100.

Full-time/Part-time Workers

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time workers there were in the UK in each of the last 30 years. [64224]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is not available to cover the whole of the time period requested. Such information as is available is in the table:

The number of full-time and part-time employees in the UK since 1984

Thousands

	In employment: full-time, UK	*In employment: part-time, UK*
1984	19,019	4,985
1985	19,243	5,116
1986	19,286	5,204
1987	19,450	5,392
1988	20,146	5,603
1989	20,780	5,785
1990	20,930	5,854
1991	20,340	5,872
1992	19,631	6,001
1993	19,212	6,069
1994	19,219	6,233
1995	19,449	6,282
1996	19,485	6,516
1997	19,788	6,660
1998	20,001	6,712
1999	20,249	6,803
2000	20,515	6,918
2001	20,708	6,983
2002	20,802	7,064
2003	20,878	7,288
2004	21,023	7,385
2005	21,357	7,319

Notes:
1. The data is taken from the latest Labour Force Survey data.
2. The Labour Force Survey is a survey of the population of private households, student halls of residence and NHS accommodation.

Source:
Labour Force Survey.

Jobcentres

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how much his Department spent on providing jobcentre services in *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06 in the London borough of Wandsworth, broken down by (i) jobcentre and (ii) (A) capital and (B) resource spending; and if he will make a statement; [64397]

(2) how much his Department plans to spend on the Wandsworth JobcentrePlus in 2006–07; and if he will make a statement. [64399]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your questions asking *(a)* what his Department spent on providing Jobcentre services in 2004-05 and 2005-06 in the London borough of Wandsworth, broken down by (i) Job Centre and (ii) (A) capital and (B) resource; and *(b)* how much his Department plans to spend on Wandsworth Jobcentre Plus in 2006-07. This is something that falls under my responsibility as chief executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Jobcentre Plus devolves budgets and accounts for expenditure to district level which, in this case, would cover Lambeth, Southwark and Wandsworth.

As the district boundary does not correspond with that of the London borough of Wandsworth it is not possible to give details of expenditure or budgets for specific London boroughs or individual Jobcentre Plus offices.

Jobseeker's Allowance

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what is the current time taken to process claims for jobseeker's allowance; and if he will make a statement. [63376]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie, dated 20 April 2006:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question asking for a statement on the current time taken to process claims for Jobseeker's Allowance. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Jobcentre Plus measures the time taken to process a claim for Jobseeker's Allowance as the Actual Average Clearance Time. This is measured against a Key Management Indicator which is agreed at the beginning of each year. For 2005/06, this was set at 12 working days. Latest figures show that for the year to February 2006 claims were processed in an average of 14.3 working days.

Jobcentre Plus is transforming the service it provides by making it available via the telephone, via the Internet and through the personal service offered to people in Jobcentre Plus offices. With change on this scale there can be difficulties in the beginning and, as a consequence, average clearance times have temporarily increased. This is clearly causing unacceptable delays for customers and we have taken action to address the delays.

On 30 January we launched a National Action Plan designed to reduce clearance times. The plan requires that:

all delivery units work through a Health Check and address the areas where they are under-performing;

senior managers regularly review and address poor performance; and

delivery units performing below the required level develop a recovery plan to improve performance.

Senior Operational Managers were required to provide a formal assurance at the end of February that all elements of the plan are being complied with, although it has been acknowledged that concentration on backlogs of work may initially cause average clearance times to rise. The Chief Operating Officer is monitoring performance very closely.

In order to focus management attention on this issue, the Actual Average Clearance Times measure, which will remain at 12 days for Jobseeker's Allowance claims, has been added to the suite of Jobcentre Plus Targets for 2006/07.

I hope this is helpful.

Lone Parents

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in west Lancashire constituency have been paid the lone parent work search premium. [64111]

Margaret Hodge: The work search premium pilots are running in eight Jobcentre Plus districts, including west Lancashire. Lone parents participating in the pilot are paid a £20 a week premium for a maximum of 26 weeks to help with the costs associated with searching for work. Participation is voluntary and certain eligibility criteria must be met. Participants agree to undertake intensive work search and will also be entitled to help with the cost of formal childcare while undertaking work search activities.

Between October 2004, when the pilots started, and November 2005, the latest date for which information is available, 407 lone parents in the west Lancashire Jobcentre Plus district had received the work search premium. Constituency information is not available.

An evaluation of the work search premium is being undertaken and a report is expected to be published in spring 2007.

Pensions

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he was first shown the final draft of the parliamentary ombudsman's report "Trusting in the Pensions Promise"; and when the Government's response was given to the ombudsman. [60776]

Mr. Timms: The parliamentary ombudsman sent a copy of her draft report to the Department on 21 December 2005. In line with the ombudsman's timetable, the Permanent Secretary responded on 27 January 2006. The contents of this reply appear at Annex D to the ombudsman's report.

The ombudsman then sent a second draft report on 13 February 2006 and, again in accordance with the ombudsman's deadline, the Permanent Secretary replied on 28 February 2006. This reply appears at Paragraph 7.116 of the report.

Although the Government indicated to the ombudsman how it was minded to respond after considering the two drafts, no final decision was made on the matter until after receipt of the published report.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions why those contracted out of *(a)* SERPS and *(b)* the Second State Pension do not receive the national insurance rebate in the year prior to retirement. [65402]

Mr. Timms: State Second Pension (formerly SERPS) does not accrue in respect of the tax year in which people reach state pension age. Consequently, because the national insurance rebate is intended to replace the state benefit foregone when someone contracts out, age-related rebates made to those contracted out into a personal pension or a defined contribution occupational pension, are not made in respect of that tax year.

In the case of contracted-out occupational pension schemes, both employer and employee pay reduced rate national insurance contributions. Additional costs and administrative burdens would arise for employers if the rebate ceased in the year in which people reach state pension age and a higher national insurance rate became payable. Payment of reduced rate contributions is permitted to continue into the tax year in which state pension age is reached.

Poverty Statistics

Stephen Hesford: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many households with at least one full-time employee in *(a)* Wirral, West, *(b)* Wirral borough and *(c)* England are living in poverty. [62348]

Margaret Hodge: Specific information regarding low income for Government office regions of Great Britain is available in the latest publication of the 'Households Below Average Income (HBAI) 1994/95 to 2004/05', available in the Library. The threshold of below 60 per cent. contemporary median income is the most commonly used in reporting trends in low income.

The seventh annual 'Opportunity for all' report (Cm 6673) sets out the Government's strategy for tackling poverty and social exclusion and reports progress against a range of indicators. The data source does not allow us to provide robust estimates below regional level, therefore estimates for Wirral, West and Wirral borough are not available.

Information on the numbers (in millions) of households in absolute and relative low income with at least one full-time employee in the north west and Merseyside region, and in England is shown in the following table as three-year averages. Relative low income is defined here as below 60 per cent. of the contemporary median income, and absolute low income is defined here as below 60 per cent. of 1996–97 median income which has been fixed in real terms.

Number of households with incomes below 60 per cent. of GB median income and at least one household member in full-time employment in the north west and Merseyside and England—three-year average 2002–03 to 2004–05

Millions

	Relative low income		*Absolute low income (1996–97 terms)*	
	Before housing costs	*After housing costs*	*Before housing costs*	*After housing costs*
North West and Merseyside	0.08	0.10	0.04	0.05
England	0.6	0.9	0.4	0.5

Notes:

1. Figures are provided using a three-year average, as single-year estimates do not provide a robust guide at regional level. Hence, figures may not be consistent with previously published single-year estimates.
2. It is not possible to present estimates from the FRS below Government office region level due to small sample sizes, and the survey design not being fully representative at this level.
3. Regional figures for the north west and Merseyside are rounded to the nearest 10,000 rather than the usual 100,000 as presented in the HBAI publication. This is because the standard approach does not give an informative view of changes over time at this level of disaggregation.

Source:

Family Resources Survey (FRS)

Work Incentives

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps he plans to take to reduce disincentives for unemployed people to return to work resulting from higher effective marginal deduction rates; and if he will make a statement. [64011]

Margaret Hodge: The Government's policies in recent years have already gone a long way to ensuring work pays, for example through the introduction of the national minimum wage and working tax credit, as well as the introduction of the 10p starting rate of income tax.

Since 1997, the number of people facing marginal deduction rates of over 70 per cent. has fallen by half a million and the new increased income disregard in tax credits, of £25,000 from April 2006, means that families receiving tax credits where someone moves into work keep the same entitlement for the rest of the tax year, rather than seeing tax credit payments reduced, even if the job is paid at the average wage.

The Government have also piloted the use of additional transitional support for targeted groups making the move off benefit and into work. We have developed an effective strategy for helping more lone parents make the transition from benefits and into work which combines child care assistance, financial support for those entering work and provision of work focused advice and support.

The £40 in work credit for lone parents has been piloted in a number of Jobcentre Plus districts since 2004, providing support for the first year in employment. The child and working tax credits are helping to tackle child poverty and make work pay for all families, including lone parents.

For incapacity benefit claimants, the Pathways to work pilots include a similar £40 per week return to work credit. The Welfare Reform Green Paper announced in January our intention to rollout Pathways to the remaining two-thirds of the country by 2008–09.

Our analysis shows that many more people are already better off in work than on benefit as a result of tax credits and we believe this and other policies designed to make work pay have contributed to record levels of employment—now at the highest level since records began.

PRIME MINISTER

Engagements

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list the official engagements undertaken overseas by his wife since May 2005. [65170]

The Prime Minister: Since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. Copies of these lists are available in the Library of the House. Information on the number of officials accompanying Ministers on overseas visits is

included in the list. All Ministers' travel arrangements are in accordance with the arrangements for official travel set out in Chapter 10 of the Ministerial Code, and the accompanying guidance document, "Travel by Ministers".

Information for the year 2005–06 will be published as soon as it is ready. Where Mrs Blair has undertaken official visits this will be accounted for in the annual list.

Government Priorities

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list the issues which have been identified as top priority for the Government. [64805]

The Prime Minister: The Government's priorities are set out in the Labour Party manifesto on which we were elected. Copies are available in the Libraries of the House.

Ministerial Travel

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 23 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 539W, on ministerial travel, if he will list the dates since 1 October 2005 when he has deemed it appropriate to travel by train. [65554]

The Prime Minister: I have nothing further to add to the answer I gave the hon. Member on 23 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 539W.

Ministerial Visits

Mr. Amess: To ask the Prime Minister which *(a)* probation offices and *(b)* prisons he has visited since 1997; and for what purposes in each case. [62571]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Hertsmere (Mr. Clappison) on 15 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1103W.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Prime Minister which drug rehabilitation centres he has visited since 1997; and for what purposes in each case. [62572]

The Prime Minister: My visits cover a range of matters including health, education, criminal justice and the economy. I have undertaken a number of visits relating to drug use and rehabilitation. For example I visited Phoenix House Drug Rehabilitation Centre in Glasgow in March 2000, and the Turnaround Project in Glasgow in September 2000.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Prime Minister (1) which schools he has visited in each year since 1997; and for what purpose in each case; [62573]

(2) which hospitals he has visited since 1997; and for what purposes in each case. [62574]

The Prime Minister: Records of official visits are not held in this manner and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. My visits cover a range of matters including health, education, criminal justice and the economy and I have visited many schools and hospitals since 1997.

Parliamentary Questions

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister whether it is his practice personally to approve replies to written parliamentary answers in his name. [65369]

The Prime Minister: Yes.

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister how many and what percentage of written parliamentary questions in 2006 to date he has answered *(a)* by referring the questioner to an earlier answer and *(b)* by using the formula 'I have nothing further to add' to an earlier answer. [65370]

The Prime Minister: This information is not held in the format requested. However, it is a matter of public record and can be found in the *Official Report*.

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister if he will undertake research to compare the amount of information provided by him in response to written parliamentary questions with that provided by his predecessor. [65373]

The Prime Minister: No.

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 400W, if he will provide details of steps he takes to ensure that his answering practices are consistent with the February 2005 Cabinet Office guidance to Departments. [65533]

The Prime Minister: I have nothing further to add to the answer I gave the hon. Member on 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 400W.

Political Operations Section

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to his answer to question 63151, on the political operations section of his office, what the present complement is of staff working there; and what it was in June 1997. [65364]

The Prime Minister: I have nothing further to add to the answer I gave the hon. Member on 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 400W.

United Nations

Mr. Amess: To ask the Prime Minister (1) if he will list the occasions when he has addressed a meeting of the United Nations in each year since 1997; if he will place in the Library the text of the speech made; and if he will make a statement; [64999]

(2) if he will list the occasions when he has chaired a meeting of the United Nations in each year since 1997; what the subject under discussion was; if he will place in the Library the agenda and other papers considered at the meeting; and if he will make a statement. [65000]

The Prime Minister: I have regular discussions with members of the United Nations on a wide range of issues, and have addressed the General Assembly on 14 September 2005, 6 September 2000 and 23 June 1997. Copies of my speeches are available on the No. 10 and United Nations websites.

Visits

Mr. Amess: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list the occasions on which he has visited Australia in an official capacity since 1997; what the purpose of the visit was in each case; what the *(a)* date, *(b)* time, *(c)* location and *(d)* duration was of each meeting held during each visit; and if he will make a statement. [64993]

The Prime Minister: Since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. Copies of these lists are available in the Library of the House. Information on the number of officials accompanying Ministers on overseas visits is included in the list. All Ministers' travel arrangements are in accordance with the arrangements for official travel set out in chapter 10 of the ministerial code, and the accompanying guidance document, "Travel by Ministers". Information for the year 2005–06 will be published as soon as it is ready.

I also refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to my hon. Friend, the hon. Member for Leicester, East (Keith Vaz) on 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 401W.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list the *(a)* grade and *(b)* duties of each official accompanying him on overseas visits since May 1997; and what the costs associated with such staff were in each case. [64995]

The Prime Minister: Since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. Copies of these lists are available in the Library of the House. Information on the number of officials accompanying Ministers on overseas visits is included in the list. All Ministers' travel arrangements are in accordance with the arrangements for official travel set out in chapter 10 of the ministerial code, and the accompanying guidance document, "Travel by Ministers".

Information for the year 2005–06 will be published as soon as it is ready.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Anglian Water

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what discussions his Department's growth areas directorate has had with Anglian Water on the effective implementation of water efficiency measures in new houses. [64727]

Yvette Cooper: Officials from the growth areas division in this Department met senior officials from Anglian Water in London on 27 July 2005. At this meeting, Anglian Water outlined their approach to meeting the demand for its services in the light of proposals for housing growth within its area. My officials were invited to a further meeting with Anglian Water at their headquarters in Huntingdon on 19 September 2005, where the water company provided further details of its plans for meeting increased demand due to housing growth. Water efficiency measures in new homes was raised in the course of these discussions.

Anhydrite Mines

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many local authorities in England have applied to English Partnerships for funding to investigate the stability of anhydrite mines. [64696]

Yvette Cooper: One local authority, Hartlepool borough council, has applied to English Partnerships for funding through the Land Stabilisation Programme to investigate the stability of anhydrite mines.

Article 4 Directions

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when his Department's consultation on proposed improvements to the procedure for making Article 4 Directions is expected to take place. [62959]

Yvette Cooper: We are hoping to issue this consultation after the local elections.

Biodiversity (Mid-Sussex)

Mr. Soames: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the impact on local biodiversity of increased house building in Mid-Sussex. [64449]

Yvette Cooper *[holding answer 19 April 2006]:* The consideration of impacts on local biodiversity of new house building are matters that should be addressed by regional planning bodies and local planning authorities when preparing regional spatial strategies and local development documents. In preparing these plans, they must have regard to national planning policies set out in Planning Policy Statement 9 (PPS9) "Biodiversity and Geological Conservation". PPS9 indicates that plan policies should aim to maintain and enhance, restore or add to biodiversity interests and recognises that it is possible to build in beneficial biodiversity features as part of the design of new developments. PPS9 is also supported by a recently published good practice guide which includes practical examples of how planning authorities can plan positively for biodiversity.

Brixham Council

Mr. Steen: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 16 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 959W, on the Brixham council proposal, what steps he has taken to ensure that a Brixham town council will be established on 1 April 2007; and what steps remain to be taken in order for the council to be operative on that date. [64967]

Mr. Woolas: Officials in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister are considering the recommendation of Torbay council to establish a Brixham town council and they expect to submit this proposal to Ministers for a decision within the next three weeks.

For the town council to be established on 1 April 2007 the Electoral Commission, who are responsible for electoral arrangements, would need to make their order for the electoral arrangements of the town council in time for elections in May 2007.

Council Property (Disabled Facilities)

John Mann: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what guidance has been issued to local authorities on means testing for disabled facilities in council properties that are recommended and approved by a social services occupational therapist; and when this was issued. [64471]

Yvette Cooper: The disabled facilities grant (DFG) programme, which is the responsibility of my Department and administered by local authorities, is the principal means by which Government financial support is made available to help with housing adaptations for disabled people. The grant is a mandatory entitlement for eligible disabled people and applies to all housing tenures including council properties. The grant is subject to a means test and this is set out in legislation which is notified to all local authorities.

In order for the local authority to assess the needs of a DFG applicant an occupational therapist from the social services is often consulted but any advice and recommendation they give would not alter the requirement for the grant to be means tested.

Local authorities have other powers to provide housing adaptations for disabled people but these are discretionary. Many local authorities use these other powers to provide adaptations to their own stock and in this case there would be no necessity to apply a means test.

My Department, jointly with the Department of Health and the Department for Education and Skills issued, in November 2004, a Good Practice Guide entitled 'Delivering housing adaptations for disabled people'. This emphasised the need for local authorities to have a housing adaptations policy which offered the same level of service quality for all tenures with the rights set out in the DFG legislation as at least a minimum standard.

Council Housing

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much was paid in rent into each council housing revenue account in *(a)* 2002–03, *(b)* 2003–04 and *(c)* 2005–06; how much in each year was spent on (i) council administration, (ii) housing repairs and (iii) tenant services; and what the total surplus made available to his Department was in each year. [61697]

Yvette Cooper: A table showing rental income and expenditure on council housing maintenance for 2002–03 and 2003–04 has been made available in the Library of the House. The figures are supplied by local authorities and are unaudited (figures are not yet available for 2005–06).

Expenditure on council administration is a general management function funded through the general fund. The HRA is a ring-fenced account within the general fund; that ring fence prevents the transfer of housing resources for other purposes such as general administration.

No figures are collected on authorities' expenditure on tenant services.

In 2002–03 and 2003–04 the subsidy system did not capture and redistribute surpluses; housing element entitlement was calculated instead as a net amount against rent rebate element entitlement, which was accounted for in the HRA prior to 31 March 2004.

Since 1 April 2004, rent rebates are no longer accounted for in the HRA which is strictly a landlord account.

Some authorities are in surplus and others are in deficit, in addition to moving surpluses to where they are needed most, the Government also provides additional net subsidy of around £200 million each year. The forecast for 2005–06 is for approximately that amount and forecasts for future years are similar.

Council Tax

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the percentage increase in band D council tax has been in each local authority in England between 2003–04 to 2006–07. [64320]

Mr. Woolas: The information requested has been made available in the Library of the House. The table shows the percentage increase in area band D council tax for each billing authority in England between 2003–04 and 2006–07. Information for Wales is available from the Welsh Assembly Government.

Departmental Circulars

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the circulars his Department issued to local authorities in each year since his Department was established. [62869]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister maintains a database of its own circulars, available for public view at: http://www.publications.odpm.gov.uk/pubadvsearch.asp. Enter the keyword "circular" under the "series" search field.

In addition to this resource, the ODPM leads on managing the 'Info 4 Local' website (http://www.info4localgov.uk), which catalogues all types of documents relevant to local authorities, including "circulars/letters". Information for local authorities which appears on the ODPM website now goes onto the Info 4 Local site as a matter of course. The full archive comprises documents released by some 65 organisations, including government departments, agencies and other public bodies, and records cover the preceding two years. A search tool built into the website allows subscribers to search by document type or originating department, and subscription to the website is free.

Departmental Policies

Emily Thornberry: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will set out, with statistical information relating as directly as possible to Islington, South and Finsbury constituency, the effects on Islington, South and Finsbury of his Department's policies and actions since 2 May 1997. [60729]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) does not hold separate expenditure data on Islington, South and Finsbury constituency.

The Department has put in place a considerable programme of reforms and improvements across a wide range of housing, planning and regeneration policy areas since 1997. For example, ODPM is determined that everyone should have the opportunity to have a decent home and our strategy has meant that in 2004 the number of social sector non-decent homes in England had been reduced by around one million. Islington has set up an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) and is receiving additional funding through this for investing in its housing stock. It also has two housing PFI schemes tackling almost 5,000 street properties below the decent homes standard. Islington has reported to ODPM that the number of properties in its stock below the decent homes standard has reduced from 18,911 in 2002 to 15,213 in 2005.

Islington has also received support for tackling deprivation through the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, to enable it, in collaboration with its Local Strategic Partnership (LSPs), to improve services and has narrowed the gap with the rest of the country in its Key Stage 3 and GCSE results.

The following table sets out the main payments made to London borough of Islington since the ODPM was established following the Machinery of Government changes on 29 May 2002. For earlier years, the table shows the amount paid by ODPM's predecessor Departments from programmes which are now administered by the Office. It has been for London borough of Islington to determine how that allocation is spent, in line with its priorities.

In addition to the amounts in the table, the London Development Agency (LDA) has spent some £21.3 million on projects in Islington between 2000–01 (when the LDA was first established) and 2004–05. The LDA receives around 80 per cent. of its funding from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

Funding to LB of Islington

	£ million
1997–98	249.558
1998–99	245.908
1999–2000	247.479
2000–01	250.750
2001–02	284.595
2002–03	289.622
2003–04	328.321
2004–05	351.733
Total	2,247.966

In 2002, Islington signed a local public service agreement with the Government, whereby the Council undertook to achieve more testing targets in top priority services in return for reward grant. The Council will accordingly be paid £4.4 million of reward grant—£2.2 million of which it will receive very shortly.

Islington's local area agreement was signed on 23 March, which will enable Islington and its partners to pool Government funding and work together more flexibly to deliver priority services for local people.

E-enabling

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the target for 100 per cent. of local government services to be e-enabled by 31 December 2005 was achieved. [64281]

Jim Fitzpatrick: By December 2005 the average local authority was 97 per cent. e-enabled based upon returns from all authorities in England. The residual 3 per cent. is accounted for by legal or operational barriers to e-enablement, allowed within the definition of best value performance indicator 157, which measured local authority performance against the 2005 target.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how his Department assesses the cost-effectiveness of e-enabling local government services. [64282]

Jim Fitzpatrick: We commissioned a study to quantify the benefits for six National Projects. The findings were based on the experiences of the local authorities engaged in implementing these solutions. Their experiences provided a sample for analysis from which reasoned conclusions were drawn and validated with local authorities and their suppliers. Local authorities can use the outputs of the projects to achieve quantified cost savings, increases in revenue collection and service quality improvements.

Energy Efficiency

Lynne Jones: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the expected performance against the target to deliver a 40 per cent. increase in the energy efficiency of new homes on 2002 levels; and what estimate he has made of the impact of non-compliance with revised building regulations on expected performance. [63038]

Yvette Cooper: The Regulatory Impact Assessment supporting the April 2006 amendment to raise energy performance standards in Part L of the Building Regulations can be seen on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website www.odpm.gov.uk. Building regulations are a mandatory requirement and this assessment is therefore based upon full compliance.

There is no estimate of the impact that non-compliance could have on expected performance although reports commissioned by ODPM and by others show to some extent that more effort to achieve compliance is needed.

We are therefore continuing to work with building control bodies to see how compliance can be cost effectively improved and are nine months into the largest ever training and dissemination campaign for building regulations.

Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the operation of the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997. [64023]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations came into force in December 1997 and were amended in 1999. Since the introduction of the regulations, the number of fires in non-domestic premises in England and Wales has decreased from over

19,342 in 1997 to 16,212 in 2004. The number of enforcement notices served under section 13(1) of the regulations has increased from 87 in 1998–99 to over 1,100 in 2004–05 which reflects the risk-based approach to enforcement that the fire and rescue authorities have adopted. Although the number of deaths in non-domestic premises has remained fairly static, it is low (18 in 2004). Non-fatal casualities have fallen from 1,159 in 1997 to 724 in 2004.

House Building

Andrew Stunell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proportion of the cost of building a home was paid for on average by public money in the most recent year for which figures are available where the house was built *(a)* as part of a shared equity scheme, *(b)* by a housing association and *(c)* by a local authority. [63434]

Yvette Cooper: In 2003–04 the average public subsidy invested through the Housing Corporation's Approved Development Programme for a social rented unit was over £64,000 and for a shared ownership unit was around £35,000.

The public subsidy includes both grant provided via the Housing Corporation and other public subsidies, such as contributions by local authorities.

We do not hold figures for local authority investment.

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the impact on local biodiversity of increased house building in East Cheshire. [64904]

Yvette Cooper: The consideration of impacts on local biodiversity of new house building are matters that should be addressed by regional planning bodies and local planning authorities when preparing regional spatial strategies and local development documents. In preparing these plans, they must have regard to national planning policies set out in Planning Policy Statement 9 (PPS9) "Biodiversity and Geological Conservation". PPS9 indicates that plan policies should aim to maintain and enhance, restore or add to biodiversity interests and recognises that it is possible to build in beneficial biodiversity features as part of the design of new developments. PPS9 is also supported by a recently published good practice guide which includes practical examples of how planning authorities can plan positively for biodiversity.

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps he is taking to ensure timely development of infrastructure to keep pace with housing construction in *(a)* the borough of Macclesfield and *(b)* Cheshire. [64905]

Yvette Cooper: In the last four years house building has been reduced in Cheshire, and especially in Macclesfield, to focus development on more urban and brownfield sites in the conurbations, encouraging urban regeneration. The infrastructural requirements arising from house building are not, therefore, the same as in growth areas.

Transport infrastructure in the borough is being improved by the enhancement of the west coast main line, currently nearing completion. Beyond that, Cheshire county council has the main responsibility via its Local Transport Plan. The Alderley Edge and Nether Alderley by-pass scheme has provisional approval status from DfT and was identified as a priority scheme in the region's Regional Funding Allocation prepared by the North West Development Agency and the North West regional assembly. A decision on the Regional Funding Allocation will be made by Ministers in due course.

Drainage and water supply are a matter for the provider (United Utilities). Social infrastructure is dealt with via the capital programmes of the county council and other relevant agencies, within the resources available. Those resources can be supplemented by the use of planning obligations, and proposals are in hand to improve that via the Planning Gain Supplement.

Under the new spatial planning regime, the regional assembly and local planning authorities should assess infrastructure requirements, in co-operation with all relevant agencies when preparing their development plans. The Regional Spatial Strategy is under review, has been published in draft, and will be subject to public examination in autumn 2006. It proposes to double the rate of house building in Macclesfield. It will be for the inspectors examining the RSS to come to a view on the feasibility of this, subject to any representations made by the planners and providers of infrastructure, and we will note their recommendations before finalising the Regional Spatial Strategy.

Housing

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate his Department has made of housing growth in *(a)* the county of Greater Manchester, *(b)* Stockport Metropolitan Borough and *(c)* Tameside Metropolitan Borough in each year to 2010. [62200]

Yvette Cooper: The Government has not made estimates of the growth in housing supply at local authority level. Future housing requirements are assessed by regions and local authorities as part of the development of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks. These assessments are expected to take account of factors including the Government's latest projections of household growth.

Household projections down to local authority are available on the ODPM website at: (http://www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1002882&PressNoticeID=2097). These show the additional households up to 2026 that would form if recent demographic trends continue. The household projections contribute part of the evidence for the assessment of housing requirements by regions and local authorities.

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many people in temporary accommodation there have been in each of the last 10 years in Milton Keynes. [54672]

Yvette Cooper: In January 2005, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister published "Sustainable Communities: Homes for All" which set a target to halve the number of households living in temporary accommodation by 2010. Information about English local authorities' actions under homelessness legislation is collected quarterly and is in respect of households rather than people. The number of households in

temporary accommodation arranged by Milton Keynes district council under homelessness legislation on 31 March in each year since 1996 is tabled as follows.

Households in temporary accommodation[1] arranged by Milton Keynes DC under homelessness legislation as at 31 March

	Number
1996	253
1997	284
1998	382
1999	619
2000	889
2001	1,151
2002	1,320
2003	1,592
2004	1,448
2005	849

[1] Households in accommodation either pending a decision on their homelessness application or awaiting allocation of a settled home following acceptance. Excludes those households designated as "homeless at home" that have remained in their existing accommodation and have the same rights to suitable alternative accommodation as those in accommodation arranged by the authority.

Source:
ODPM P1E Homelessness returns (quarterly)

Until 31 March 2004, the council were allocating accommodation on a non secure tenancy basis, mainly in its own stock, once a household was accepted as homeless. From 1 April 2005, the council changed the status of these tenancies to introductory tenancies for both existing and new households where a duty to house had been accepted. This gives households increased tenancy rights, greater stability within a community and greater choice in accessing accommodation.

In addition, the council have adopted an early intervention approach with households threatened with homelessness so that a higher proportion are placed in accommodation on an introductory tenancy before homelessness occurs.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what funding is available for temporary to permanent housing initiatives in the 2006 to 2008 National Affordable Housing Programme; and if he will make a statement. [63416]

Yvette Cooper: The London Housing Board recommended that £20 million of funding be allocated from the London regional housing pot 2006–08 for temporary to permanent housing initiatives. No final decisions have yet been taken on the distribution of these earmarked resources.

We are also considering how the pilot extra homes scheme announced in the Budget 2006 could build on the range of existing and emerging 'temporary to permanent' housing schemes to help families in London move from temporary accommodation into settled homes.

Local Authorities (Chief Executive Emoluments)

Chris Ruane: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what *(a)* salary and *(b)* pension benefits relating to electoral duties were paid to the chief executive of each local authority in each of the last five years. [64925]

Bridget Prentice: I have been asked to reply.

This information is not held centrally. For national elections, the appointed Returning Officer, who may or may not be the chief executive of a relevant local authority, receives a prescribed fee. A full breakdown of Returning Officers fees and charges for the 2005 general election is listed under the Parliamentary Elections (Returning Officers' Charges) Order (SI: 2005 No. 780). This specifies an Returning Officer's fee of £2,500 per constituency for which they are responsible.

It is for local authorities to decide what remuneration is made to Returning Officers at local elections and Electoral Registration Officers for registration duties. It is also for local authorities to make superannuation arrangements for all staff appointed by them.

Local Authority Publicity

Mr. Harper: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity applies to regional assemblies and their officers. [64735]

Yvette Cooper: The Code of Recommended Practice does not apply to regional assemblies or their officers. However, the Government expect that in the course of their duties regional assemblies will give due regard to and operate within the provisions of the Code.

Local Government Pensions

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when the 85 year rule was introduced in the Local Government Pension Scheme. [60118]

Mr. Woolas: A provision in the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) in England and Wales which enabled members to retire at age 60 with 25 years service (on an unreduced pension) was first introduced in 1974.

There were no changes to this 'Rule of 85' until the LGPS Regulations 1997 which introduced the facility, from April 1998, for members (subject to employer consent) to retire and receive unreduced pensions from age 50 if they met the 85 year rule.

Pathfinder Programme

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what changes in average house prices have occurred in pathfinder areas since the start of each programme. [64430]

Yvette Cooper: The following table shows changes in median house prices in each pathfinder between the time that a scheme was agreed and funding announced and the final quarter of 2005. Median house prices have also risen very slightly across the regions.

Pathfinder	*Date scheme agreed/funding awarded*	*Median house price for that quarter (£)*	*Median house price for Q4 2005 (provisional data) (£)*
Birmingham Sandwell	June 2004	86,000	95,000
East Lancashire	March 2004	33,300	54,500
Hull and East Riding	March 2005	60,000	74,950
Manchester Salford	October 2003	47,000	85,000
Merseyside	January 2004	46,500	72,000
Newcastle Gateshead	January 2004	65,000	87,500

Pathfinder	Date scheme agreed/funding awarded	Median house price for that quarter (£)	Median house price for Q4 2005 (provisional data) (£)
North Staffordshire	June 2004	52,500	67,500
Oldham Rochdale	March 2004	45,000	74,950
South Yorkshire	March 2004	55,000	78,000

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much has been awarded to each pathfinder programme to date. [64431]

Yvette Cooper: The following table shows the sums awarded to each of the nine housing market renewal pathfinders for 2004–06 and, where funding decisions have been made, for 2006–08.

Pathfinder	Funding awarded for 2004–06 (£ million)	Funding awarded for 2006–08 (£ million)
Birmingham Sandwell	49.7	[1]—
East Lancashire	72.6	94.9
Hull and East Riding	11.3	[1]—
Manchester Salford	115.4	[1]—
Merseyside	92.6	97.7
Newcastle Gateshead	69.6	64.0
North Staffordshire	32.9	67.5
Oldham and Rochdale	54.4	67.5
South Yorkshire	70.7	90.0
Total	569.2	481.6

[1] Announcement not yet made.

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what progress has been made since December 2005 by the nine pathfinder schemes towards meeting the recommendations made by the Audit Commission in its strategic reviews of market renewal pathfinders. [64434]

Yvette Cooper: All pathfinders are working towards implementing Audit Commission recommendations which have generally been allocated time scales of between six and 12 months for completion. We will be including these recommendations in funding agreements, due to be issued shortly, for the next phase of funding (2006–08) and will be monitoring progress as part of our ongoing performance management process.

Relative Need

John Hemming: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister for what reasons the system was changed from formula spending share to relative need factors. [65415]

Mr. Woolas: I refer the hon. Member to the statement I made to the House when announcing the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement, 5 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 627.

John Hemming: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the formula is for converting relative need factors into monetary amounts. [65416]

Mr. Woolas: The full formula is given in Section 5 of the Local Government Finance Report (England) 2006–07.

A model showing the calculation of formula grant for all authorities can be found on the ODPM website at: http://www.local.odpm.gov.uk/finance/0607/grant.htm.

John Hemming: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total relative needs grant block is for 2006–07; and what the total of needs above threshold is for 2006–07. [65417]

Mr. Woolas: The relative needs amount for 2006–07 is £20,878,123,134. The total needs above the threshold is 0.23098045438450.

A model showing the calculation of formula grant for all authorities can be found on the ODPM website at: http://www.local.odpm.gov.uk/finance/0607/grant.htm

Retrospective Planning Applications

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will introduce measures to speed up the procedures for considering retrospective planning applications. [62740]

Yvette Cooper: Retrospective planning applications are treated in the same way as planning applications, and have a statutory eight-week determination period. We have no plans to shorten this period.

Right To Buy (Yorkshire/Humber)

Mr. Betts: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which rural areas in Yorkshire and Humber are exempt from the Right to Buy. [63571]

Yvette Cooper: No rural areas in Yorkshire and the Humber are exempt from the Right to Buy.

However, section 157 of the Housing Act 1985 allows social landlords to restrict the resale of properties sold under the Right to Buy scheme in specified rural areas. Such properties may only be sold to buyers who have lived or worked locally for at least three years. Alternatively, and with the consent of the Secretary of State, social landlords may require that properties sold under the Right to Buy scheme in these areas must be offered back to the former social landlords if the owners wish to sell them within 10 years of the Right to Buy sales.

In Yorkshire and the Humber, such restrictions may be imposed in the Yorkshire Dales and North York Moors National Parks, the Nidderdale, Howardian Hills and North Pennines Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and the districts of Craven, Harrogate, Scarborough, Ryedale and Richmondshire, excluding settlements with 3,000 or more residents.

Road Maintenance (Legal Proceedings)

Richard Younger-Ross: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much *(a)* district, *(b)* city and *(c)* county councils spent on out-of-court settlements related to injuries sustained due to lack of maintenance of roads and pavements in each year since 2001. [64437]

Mr. Woolas: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not hold the information requested centrally, and could provide it only at disproportionate cost.

Shared Equity Scheme

Stephen Hesford: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many of the people involved in the Shared Equity Scheme are living in Wirral, West. [64317]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not hold this information at constituency level.

Before the launch of the new Homebuy schemes on 1 April 2006, Government supported shared equity schemes consisted of Shared Ownership and the Homebuy equity loan scheme. Since 1997, 177 households within Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council were helped into home ownership through the Government's shared ownership scheme. There were no completions under the old Homebuy scheme.

Shell Haven

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he will make a final announcement on the London Gateway Port at Shell Haven. [64007]

Yvette Cooper: On 20 July 2005, my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Transport, announced that he was minded to approve the proposal from P&O ports for a new container port at London Gateway and, in parallel, my right hon. Friend, the First Secretary of State, announced that he was minded to approve the proposed adjoining logistics centre, subject in particular to resolution of the highways impacts of the development.

We are currently considering the large amount of material submitted by the parties and will make a further announcement in due course.

Smoke Alarms

John McDonnell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many *(a)* fatalities and *(b)* non-fatal casualties have occurred as a result of dwelling fires in the UK (i) where a smoke alarm was present and (ii) where there was no smoke alarm in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available. [64835]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The following table shows the number of *(a)* fatal and *(b)* non-fatal casualties in dwelling fires attended by the fire and rescue service in the UK, by presence and operation of smoke alarms.

Fatal and non-fatal casualties from fires in dwellings by presence and operation of smoke alarms, UK, 1995 to 2004

	Presence and operation of smoke alarm					
	Present, operated and raised the alarm	*Present, operated, but did not raise the alarm*	*Present, but did not operate*	*Absent*	*Unspecified*	*Total*
Fatal casualties[1]						
1995	58	28	71	389	13	559
1996	57	26	82	399	—	564
1997	45	27	84	406	—	562
1998	52	28	79	354	—	513
1999	51	20	87	305	—	463
2000	53	38	81	283	—	455
2001	67	36	99	281	—	483
2002	60	45	84	240	1	430
2003	68	30	88	261	—	447
2004	42	35	97	201	—	375
Non-fatal casualties[2]						
1995	2,205	473	1,188	9,198	44	13,108
1996	2,482	553	1,656	9,498	—	14,189
1997	2,835	574	1,830	9,657	—	14,896
1998	2,838	525	2,163	9,453	—	14,979
1999	3,148	643	2,439	8,394	—	14,624
2000	3,379	684	2,415	7,906	—	14,384
2001	3,440	656	2,495	7,370	2	13,963
2002	3,625	754	2,203	6,881	—	13,463
2003	3,709	705	2,056	6,110	—	12,580
2004	3,848	733	2,061	5,335	—	11,977

[1] Includes fire-related deaths recorded by the MOD and media during industrial action in 2002 and 2003, with estimates calculated for the breakdown by alarm presence.
[2] Includes estimates for non-fatal casualties occurring during industrial action in 2002 and 2003.
Source:
Fire and Rescue Service FDR1 returns to ODPM.

Solar Power

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what measures he plans to adopt to encourage the incorporation of *(a)* photovoltaic cells and *(b)* solar panels in new residential developments. [63067]

Yvette Cooper: In line with commitments made in the Energy White Paper, the Government are raising the energy performance standards in Part L of the Building Regulations. These higher standards coming into effect in April will encourage greater take-up of low and zero carbon systems such as photovoltaic cells and solar panels. To encourage builders to do more, a Code for Sustainable Homes is being developed that will set environmental performance standards higher than those stipulated by regulation. To further promote on-site energy generation, new homes that use renewable technology will gain extra points in the code.

In addition to this, Planning Policy Statement 22 encourages the appropriate development of renewable energy schemes and as part of the launch of the new UK Climate Change Programme published on 28 March 2006, we have announced a package of measures to increase carbon savings through the planning system and the work of local authorities.

Stock Transfers

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much was allocated for *(a)* arm's length management organisations (ALMOs), *(b)* large-scale voluntary transfers (LSVTs), *(c)* debt write-off from LSVTs and ALMOs and *(d)* housing action trusts in (i) 2004–05, (ii) 2005–06 and (iii) 2006–07. [58882]

Yvette Cooper: *(a)* The allocations from the arms length management organisation (ALMO) programme was £577.15 million in 2004–05, and are £850.04 million for 2005–06 and £884.40 million for 2006–07.

(b) The sums paid to registered social landlords in gap funding grant were £7.65 million in 2004–05 and £1.83 million in 2005–06 and are expected to be £57.679 million in 2006–07.

(c) Where a local authority transfers its housing to an RSL and the receipt it receives is not sufficient to repay the outstanding debt attributable to the housing the Office will make a one off payment where the debt is held with the Public Works Loans Board. The one off payment is made to discharge the Office's continued liability, through the Housing Revenue Account, to pay subsidy on an authority's housing attributable debt that remains after the transfer.

Such payments are not made in respect of ALMOs as the local authority's debt continues to be supported through the Housing Revenue Account subsidy system. £592.44 million was allocated to support housing transfers in 2004–05. £275.54 million has been allocated to date in 2005–06. The allocation for 2006–07 is £616 million.

(d) The allocation for the Housing Action Trust programme was £59.37 million for 2004–05, and is £17.6370 million for 2005–06 and £1 million for 2006–07.

Sustainable Buildings

Mr. Soames: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will introduce a mandatory code for sustainable buildings. [64448]

Yvette Cooper *[holding answer 19 April 2006]:* From 6 April 2006, new building regulations that set higher mandatory standards for energy efficiency that every new building must meet. These regulations raise energy efficiency standards for new buildings by 40 per cent. compared to 2002.

In addition we are giving consideration to further ways to increase the take-up of the Code for Sustainable Homes, including the possibility of mandatory assessments against all Code requirements.

We will also introduce mandatory assessment of energy efficiency in all new homes to be included in Energy Performance Certificates.

Unregistered Social Landlords

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many proposals to allow councils to set up unregistered social landlords have been made to his Department in the last 5 years. [61645]

Yvette Cooper: None.

Village Shops (Cornwall)

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many villages in *(a)* Kerrier district and *(b)* Cornwall do not have a village shop. [63631]

Jim Knight: I have been asked to reply.

W do not hold information on how many villages in *(a)* Kerrier district and *(b)* Cornwall do not have a village shop.

The Government have assisted local services by extending mandatory rate relief at 50 per cent. to include sole village public houses, petrol stations and village food shops under the village shop scheme. Qualifying premises are entitled to a 50 per cent. reduction in their business rates bills, and local authorities have the discretion to top-up all other non-domestic premises up to *100* per cent. *provided it has a rateable value of* £14,000 or less.

The Countryside Agency has supported village shops through the Community Service Grants, identified under the Vital Villages programme, (a three year programme of grants that commenced in April 2001). Since April 2005, Defra has devolved funding for some of the Countryside Agency's economic and social regeneration policies, including those hitherto supported by the Vital Villages programme, to the regional development agencies. RDAs, working in partnership, will decide how to spend their resources to meet national targets and address regional and local needs.

Waste Incinerators

Norman Baker: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what requirements there are for planning authorities to take account of available water resources when determining planning applications for incinerators, with particular reference to East Sussex; and what opportunity exists for the views of water supply companies to be considered in such cases. [63152]

Yvette Cooper: Local planning authorities must determine planning applications in accordance with the statutory development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where relevant the availability of water resources will have informed the preparation of the development plan and its policies and could be a material consideration in the determination of a planning application for an incinerator. Water undertakers will be consulted on the preparation of the development plan, and applications for planning permission will be publicised by the local planning authority concerned.

Departmental Policies

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will set out with statistical evidence relating as closely as

possible to west Lancashire constituency the effects in west Lancashire of changes to his Department's policies since 1997. [64234]

Mr. Woolas: The Department has put in place a considerable programme of reforms and improvements across a wide range of policy areas. These changes have resulted in payments made to west Lancashire district council since 2002–03 (when the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was established following the Machinery of Government Changes on 29 May 2002) as shown in the following tables. It has been for the west Lancashire district council to determine how that allocation has spent, in line with their priorities.

£ million

	2002–03	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Revenue Funding for West Lancashire DC			
Neighbourhood Management Pathfinders	0.584	0.438	0.897
Neighbourhood and Street Wardens	0.308	0.308	0.101
Revenue Support Grant	2.760	4.280	4.690
National Non-Domestic Rates	4.630	3.790	2.960
Homelessness Grant	0.020	0.020	0.020
Total	8.302	8.836	8.668
Capital Funding for West Lancashire DC			
Local Government on Line	0.200	0.200	0.350
Housing Corporation Approved Development Programme	0.264	0.338	1.087
English Partnership projects	0.019	0.004	0.013
Total	0.483	0.542	1.450
Housing Capital Allocations			
Housing Supported Capital Expenditure	0.855	0.869	0.910
Disabled Facilities Grant	0.169	0.222	0.243
Private Sector Renewal Grant	0	0	0
Total HIP allocation	1.024	1.091	1.153
Major Repairs Allowance	4.398	4.296	4.302
Total	5.422	5.387	5.455
Total	14.207	14.765	15.573

In addition since 1 April 2006 west Lancashire has been a partner in the local area agreement for the county. This has resulted in allocations as follows:

The Cleaner Safer Greener Fund—£970,000 for 2006–07 and £1,130,000 for 2007–08 to be spent across the borough in order to address 'liveability' issues with a specific focus on narrowing the gap between the best and worst areas.

The Neighbourhood Element Fund—£412,800 for 2006–07 and £516,000 for 2007–08, to be spent with a focus on neighbourhood management within the areas of Digmoor and Tanhouse in Skelmersdale.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Adult Education (Tooting)

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding has been allocated to adult education in Tooting in each year since 1997. [47743]

Bill Rammell: The Department allocates funds for the post-16 education and training sector to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) working through 47 local offices. The LSC was established in 2001 bringing the planning and funding of post-16 education together under one body within a framework set by Government. In 2001–02 the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) spent £2,236 million on adult programmes including Further Education, Work Based Learning, Adult and Community Learning and other programmes in England. This increased to £2,427 million in 2002–03; £2,866 million in 2003–04; and £2,999 million in 2004–05. The Department does not hold figures for adult education funding at local or regional levels. Some of the information you require is available on the LSC's website. As the LSC is responsible for the planning and funding of post-16 learning, Mark Haysom, the council's chief executive has written to my hon. Friend with the information requested and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 19 April 2006:

I write in response to your recent Parliamentary Question regarding funding allocated to adult education in Tooting in each year since 1997. I trust the following information is helpful.

The LSC has calculated that the London Borough of Wandsworth will have received nearly £80 million allocated to adult education as a total funding amount from the LSC inception in 2001/02 to the indicative allocation for 2006/2007.

We are not able to break this down by ward level and, therefore, these allocations are for the whole of Wandsworth and are not based on providers or residents based in the Tooting ward. The local authority itself may be able to provide further detail on adult participation/funding attracted at ward level.

I have provided a table to show the 19+ funding recorded on the LSC allocations payment system (AMPs) from 2002/03 to the present indicative allocations for 2006/07. This has been set out for Further Education, Work Based Learning, and Adult and Community Learning. We have included the figures for 2001/02 assuming these were the same as 2002/03. There may be some small variation in the actual level of 2001/02 allocations, which could be verified if required.

Funding allocations relating to adult education prior to the LSC would require searching the TEC records for WBL contracts, FEFC for further education and the DfES for Adult and Community Learning.

Wandsworth

£

Sector	*2006/07*[1]	*2005/06*	*2004/05*	*2003/04*	*2002/03*	*2001/02*[2]
Work based learning						
RW Rechere	15,000	15,000	10,000	0	0	0
LB of Wandsworth	19,000	19,000	35,000	36,000	29,873	18,201
South Thames College	28,754	29,987	36,802	37,829	29,307	30,000
Jace	128,000	128,000	112,000	120,000	76,911	78,227
Total	190,754	191,987	193,802	193,829	136,091	126,428
Further education						
South Thames College	11,546,996	12,000,568	11,902,864	10,801,014	10,155,823	10,155,823
St. Francis Xavier	118,917	125,543	142,404	132,000	119,800	119,800
Total	11,665,913	12,126,111	12,045,268	10,933,014	10,275,623	10,275,623
Adult and community learning						
LSC funds through LB Wandsworth, including family and Neighbourhood learning programmes	1,783,749	1,908,715	1,907,390	1,838,354	1,736,892	1,736,892
Grand total	13.,640,416	14,226,813	14,146,460	12,965,197	12,148,606	12,138,943
All year total	79,266,435	—	—	—	—	—

[1] Indicative.
[2] Assumed allocations prior to LSC AMPs records.

Asbestos Insulating Board

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will issue interim guidance to schools warning of the potential dangers of inserting drawing pins and staples into asbestos insulating board in walls and ceilings, and advising that the practice should cease immediately, pending the final recommendations of the Working Group on Action to Control Chemicals; and if she will make a statement. [64228]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 19 April 2006]:* Following the advice of the Working Group on Action to Control Chemicals we will shortly be updating our asbestos webpage at www.teachernet.gov.uk/asbestos and issuing a communication to schools. The communication will include unqualified interim guidance to schools not to pin or staple materials to asbestos insulating board in walls or ceilings. The Group identified that this practice produces a risk to teachers and pupils and is an avoidable activity. HSE have advised that under the precautionary principle this activity must stop and that local authorities and governing bodies will need to notify staff not to damage walls and ceilings in this way if asbestos is present.

Brokerage Services

John Penrose: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the cost of brokerage services to be provided from August to link employers needing training to their most appropriate provider. [63272]

Phil Hope: General brokerage support that will support businesses through their Information, Diagnostic and Brokerage (IDB) role is funded by the DTI via the Regional Development Agency. Skills Brokers will receive funding from the Learning and Skills Council. The cost of brokerage is within the overall funding set aside for the National Employer Training Programme and the amounts will vary regionally dependent upon the regional priorities and the current capacity of the network. Detailed information on the estimated cost of brokerage services is not held centrally by the Department. Mark Haysom, LSC chief executive, has written to the hon. Member and a copy of his letter has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 19 April 2006:

I am writing in response to your recent parliamentary question about estimating the costs of the brokerage service which will link employers to the most appropriate provider.

The Train to Gain skills brokerage service is planned to cost a total of 66 million for the period April 2006 to March 2008 and engage with 85,000 employers in training their workforce. The LSC is specifically focusing skills brokers on employers who have not traditionally invested in the skills of their workforce. Brokers will support them in identifying how investing in the skills of their workforce can benefit their business and then help source high quality training to support those skills needs.

Child Protection

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether there are serving headteachers on List 99. [47281]

Ruth Kelly: My Department does not hold the information requested.

List 99 is a confidential document which contains the personal details of people whose employment by a local education authority, school or in other relevant employment has been barred or restricted by the Secretary of State under section 142 of the 2002 Education Act.

Employers have to check the list to make sure they do not appoint someone to a post from which they have been barred. Since 2000 only total bars have been made and no partial restrictions. A person whose employment has been restricted by the Secretary of State may only work in a post which does not contravene the terms of their restriction. I should also point out that further checks, in addition to List 99, should be undertaken before a teacher is appointed. The fact that an individual is not barred cannot in isolation imply their suitability for a post.

As I set out in my statement of 19 January, Sir Roger Singleton's expert panel will review all cases involving a sexual offence or allegation which resulted in a decision not to include in List 99, or which resulted in a restriction or partial bar.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people have been *(a)* referred to and *(b)* included on the (i) Protection of Children Act 1999 list and (ii) the Protection of Vulnerable Adults list since 8 January; and how many of these referrals have been cases of individuals previously referred to each list but not previously included on them. [53091]

Ruth Kelly: Decisions to employ individuals in regulated child care settings are a matter for individual employers. There are strong safeguards in place. For example, enhanced CRB checks are mandatory and provide important protection revealing whether any individual has any past police cautions or convictions as well as other local police information.

Since 8 January, 44 people have been referred to the Protection of Children Act list. Of these 44 none has so far been included as the cases are on-going. One has been referred to Protection of Children Act list previously but not included. No one provisionally listed on the Protection of Children Act list is able to work with children while their cases are being examined.

Since 8 January 13 people have been included on Protection of Children Act list all of which are from referrals made before that date.

Matters to do with the Protection of Vulnerable Adults are for my colleague, the Secretary of State for Health.

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Bill will introduce a new vetting and barring scheme which will strengthen the system still further.

China (Inter-country Adoption)

Mr. MacShane: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what progress has been made in resolving the dispute with the Chinese Government over the terms of the standard letter of no objection for inter-country adoption; and if she will make a statement. [64834]

Maria Eagle: We understand that there are several British expatriates living in China and wanting to adopt through the Chinese domestic system. The Chinese Government has asked for a certificate confirming that these persons are suitable to adopt. In the absence of an assessment completed by an adoption agency in accordance with UK law, it is not possible for the Government to confirm to the Chinese authorities the suitability of such a person to be an adoptive parent. If a certificate were issued without a thorough assessment, this might result in the placement of a child with a person who has not been assessed and approved to adopt—and who could be manifestly unsuitable. Without a certificate, however, the Chinese Government will not allow British expatriates to adopt.

We have agreed to work with the Chinese Government to find a mutually agreeable form of words that do not amount to an assurance of a person's suitability to adopt but would satisfy Chinese law. Although this is taking longer than originally hoped, significant progress has been made and we remain hopeful of bringing this matter to a successful conclusion.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what proportion of *(a)* staff and *(b)* new staff employed in (i) her Department and (ii) each of the agencies for which she has responsibility were registered as disabled in each of the last three years for which data are available. [61371]

Maria Eagle: The Cabinet Office collects and publishes annually statistical information on the civil service by Department. These include data on the number of staff in Departments who have declared a disability.

Declaration of a disability is voluntary.

The latest available information at April 2004 is available in the Library and on the civil service website and the following addresses:

http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management/statistics/publications/xls/disability_apr04_4nov04.xls

for data relating to 1 April 2004, and

http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management/statistics/archive/index.asp

for previous reporting periods.

The number and proportion of new staff employed in my Department who declared a disability in each of the last three years are as follows:

	Number	*Percentage*
2005/06	[1]—	2
2004/05	[1]—	1
2003/04	6	2

[1] In accord with civil service guidelines for disclosing equality data, numbers below 6 are not shown.

Education Maintenance Allowance

John Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils in Easington constituency are in receipt of the education maintenance allowance. [63372]

Maria Eagle: This is a matter for the Learning and Skills Council, who operate education maintenance allowances for the DfES and hold the information about take-up of the scheme. Mark Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive, has written to my hon. Friend with the information requested and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 19 April 2006:

I am writing in response to your Parliamentary Question that asked "how many pupils in Easington constituency are in receipt of the education maintenance allowance?"

Information on the number of young people who have applied, enrolled and received EMA is available at local education authority (LEA) level, but not at constituency level. By the end of February 2006,4,201 young people in the Durham LEA area had received one or more EMA payments in the academic year 2005/06.

I hope this information is helpful and addresses your question.

Educational Standards

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of progress made by schools in *(a)* deprived areas and *(b)* affluent areas in raising educational standards since 1996–97; and if she will make a statement. [41212]

Jacqui Smith: We have seen significant progress in the narrowing of the attainment gap at GCSE between schools in deprived and affluent areas, compared with the situation in 1996–97. The Excellence in Cities (EiC) programme and excellence clusters were introduced in 1999 and 2000, respectively, to target areas of significant deprivation. Between 2001, the year in which the 3rd phase of EiC began, and 2005, the percentage of pupils achieving 5+A*-C at GCSE/GNVQ and equivalents in EiC areas increased by nearly 10 percentage points, rising from 39.8 percentage in 2001, to 49.4 percent (provisional) in 2005. The rate of improvement in non-EiC schools over the same period was around 5 percentage points, rising from 52.2 per cent. in 2001 to 57 percent (provisional) in 2005.

As shown in the following table, performance data also indicate that the schools with the highest proportions of disadvantaged pupils, as assessed by free school meal (FSM) entitlement, have made more improvement than those with the lowest proportions. This improvement is evident, both at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 in English and Maths; and at GCSE/GNVQ.

Improvements in attainment made by low and high FSM schools between 1996 and 2004 across key stage tests

	Schools with Low FSM	*Improvement in attainment between 1996–2004 (percentage)*	*Schools with High FSM*	*Improvement in attainment between 1996–2004 (percentage)*
KS2 English L4+ threshold	8% or less pupils eligible for FSM	14	50% or more pupils eligible for FSM	28
KS2 Maths L4+ threshold	8% or less pupils eligible for FSM	14	50% or more pupils eligible for FSM	28
KS3 English L5+ threshold	5% or less pupils eligible for FSM	10	50% or more pupils eligible for FSM	19
KS3 Maths L5+ threshold	5% or less pupils eligible for FSM	10	50% or more pupils eligible for FSM	27
GCSE/GNVQ 5+ A*–C threshold	5% or less pupils eligible for FSM	5	50% or more pupils eligible for FSM	15

Employer Training Pilots

Kelvin Hopkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 3 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 995W, on employer training pilots, which organisations from the *(a)* private and *(b)* public sector with over 250 staff participated in the employer training pilots in (i) 2004 and (ii) 2005; and how many trainees in each sector took part in the pilots in each year. [59859]

Phil Hope: The information requested is not held centrally by the Department, but is collected by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). Mark Haysom, LSC chief executive, has written to the hon. Member and a copy of his response has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 13 April 2006:

I am writing in response to your recent parliamentary question on the Employer Training Pilots during 2004–05.

Please find attached a table setting out the number of private and public sector employers who participated in the pilots and have more than 250 employees. The table also provides figures on the number of trainees who participated by sector in the pilots during 2004–05.

We are unable provide details of individual employers participating in ETP without first obtaining permission to do so from each employer.

I hope this response is helpful to you.

Employer type	*Employees*	*Employers*	*Learners*
2004			
Private	—	—	80,338
	1 to 49	7,178	34,391
	50 to 249	2,107	25,034
	250 or greater	1,371	20,913
Public	—	—	13,277
	1 to 49	690	3,154
	50 to 249	250	1,786
	250 or greater	433	8,337
2005			
Private	—	—	89,972
	1 to 49	7,828	34,435
	50 to 249	2,483	26,568
	250 or greater	1,755	28,969
Public	—	—	15,878
	1 to 49	710	2,627
	50 to 249	281	2,562
	250 or greater	550	10,689

Head Teachers/Principals

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many vacancies there were on average for headteacher positions in *(a)* Kingston upon Hull and *(b)* Hull, North constituency in each year since 1997. [64105]

Jacqui Smith: The following table gives the number of full-time head teacher vacancies in maintained schools in The City of Kingston Upon Hull local authority and England, in each January 1997 to 2005, the latest information available.

Information on teacher vacancies is not available at constituency level.

Full-time head teacher vacancies[1] in maintained nursery, primary, secondary and special schools, January 1997 to 2005

	Local authority	
	City of Kingston upon Hull	*[2] England*
1997	0	180
1998	1	250
1999	1	250
2000	0	230
2001	0	190
2002	0	170
2003	1	130

Full-time head teacher vacancies[1] in maintained nursery, primary, secondary and special schools, January 1997 to 2005

	Local authority	
	City of Kingston upon Hull	[2] England
2004	0	120
2005	0	170

[1] Advertised vacancies for permanent appointments (or appointments of at least one term's duration). Posts filled by somebody on a contract of a term or more are not counted as being vacant.

[2] England figures have been provided to help put local authority figures into perspective.

Figures for England are rounded to the nearest 10.

Source:

DfES annual survey of teacher numbers and vacancies, 618g

John Penrose: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether *(a)* the Government or *(b)* local education authorities can direct a school governing body to dismiss a head teacher. [64461]

Jacqui Smith: In almost all circumstances the dismissal of a head teacher is a matter for the governing body of the school. However, in exceptional circumstances, there is limited scope for this decision to be taken in conjunction with the local authority, or at their suggestion. This may happen when the school's delegated budget has been suspended or it is determined that the head teacher has failed to secure the National Professional Qualification for Headship within set limits. Additionally, in the most extreme circumstances the Government can become directly involved. Where it can be clearly shown that a governing body has acted illegally in not dismissing a head teacher, the Secretary of State has the power under Section 496 and 497 of the Education Act 1996 to intervene and direct the Governing Body to dismiss the head teacher.

John Penrose: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether primary legislation will be needed in order for learning and skills councils to direct a governing body of a further education college to dismiss the principal. [64457]

Bill Rammell: Yes. This power does not currently exist. We plan to bring forward legislation to give the Learning and Skills Council powers to do this.

Liverpool Learning Service

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on *(a)* the finances of and *(b)* the redundancy programme announced at the Liverpool Learning Service. [65403]

Phil Hope: The responsibility for the finances and staffing of the Liverpool Adult Learning Service rests with Liverpool City Council. Overall we have made clear in the White Paper, "Further Education: Raising Skills, Improving Life Chances" that our priorities for the funding of adult learning are high quality learning opportunities targeted at those who need help most—adults without effective literacy and numeracy or without the employability skills embodied in a first full Level 2 qualification. It is the responsibility of the Learning and Skills Council to meet these national priorities in the light of local needs, ensuring that it only contracts for good quality provision.

Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities Fund

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research her Department has undertaken into the social profile of people accessing learning provided through the Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities Fund. [65433]

Phil Hope: Although there is no specific research on the social profile of people accessing learning provided through the Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities (NLDC), by its very nature money is targeted at the poorest neighbourhoods in the country to reduce worklessness and crime and to improve the health, housing and physical environment of local residents. It is an important part of a suite of programmes designed to support successful regeneration. In 2004/5 the NLDC funded 30,000 new learners on programmes including 13,000 helped into Skills for Life provision.

Pupil Referral Units

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of pupil referral units; and if she will make a statement. [64485]

Jacqui Smith: Evidence on the effectiveness of pupil referral units is available, as for other schools, from inspections undertaken by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted). The latest Ofsted Annual Report, published in October 2005, found that 25 of the 38 pupil referral units inspected in 2004/05, 25 were good or better, providing effectively for the young people they serve. Of the remaining 13 units, 10 were found to be satisfactory and three were unsatisfactory. Ofsted also found that the quality of teaching was good or better in 29 of the units, and unsatisfactory in only one, that the units generally provided a curriculum that meets the particular needs of their pupils, and that the quality of accommodation in units continues to improve. Subject to parliamentary assent, the measures within the Education and Inspections Bill will require local authorities to take faster and more decisive action to turn round schools in special measures or requiring significant improvement. These expectations will also apply to pupil referral units which fail an Ofsted inspection.

We are also undertaking research on alternative provision generally which will identify examples of good practice which we will disseminate.

School Exclusions

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils have left school due to permanent exclusion in West Lancashire constituency since 1997. [64326]

Jacqui Smith: The number of permanent exclusions from maintained primary and secondary schools in West Lancashire constituency from 1996/97 to 2003/04 is given in the table.

Figures for the number of permanent exclusions during 2004/05 academic year should be available in June 2006.

Maintained Primary and Secondary Schools: Number of Permanent Exclusions 1996/97 to 2003/04
West Lancashire Parliamentary Constituency

	Number of permanent exclusions			
	Primary		Secondary	
	Number [1]	Percentage	Number [1]	Percentage
1996/97	4	0.04	13	0.21
1997/98	[2]	[2]	13	0.21
1998/99	[2]	[2]	15	0.24
1999/2000	[2]	[2]	11	0.17
2000/01[3]	[2]	[2]	13	0.21
2001/02[3]	3	0.03	19	0.30
2002/03[3]	0	0.00	23	0.37
2003/04[3]	[2]	[2]	20	0.32

[1] The number of exclusions expressed as a percentage of the total number of pupils on the school roll in January of the same school year. Excludes dually registered pupils.
[2] 1 or 2 exclusions, or a rate based on 1 or 2 exclusions.
[3] There are known quality issues with exclusions data for these years. Figures shown here are as reported by schools but are unconfirmed and should be used with caution.
Source: Annual Schools Census.

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the effect on schools which lose funding when children are excluded; and if she will make a statement. [64486]

Jacqui Smith: We have made no specific assessment of the effect on schools of losing funds when children are permanently excluded. The principle is well established that funding must follow a permanently excluded pupil to their new education provider to ensure that the pupil's education continues. The amount that transfers from the school is calculated according to a formula which is set out in regulations. Local authorities, however, may deduct an additional amount in accordance with discretionary arrangements made under their local funding formula. The Department does not control these local arrangements. The total amount that a school loses will depend on the factors included in any funding formulae and the date in the financial year when the exclusion takes effect.

Specialist Schools

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many specialist schools there were in *(a)* England and *(b)* Taunton constituency in each year since 1997. [64350]

Jacqui Smith: The following table shows the number of schools there were in *(a)* England and *(b)* Taunton constituency in each year between 1997 and March 2006.

Operational date	England	Taunton
Pre 1997	149	0
1997	223	1
1998	306	3
1999	383	3
2000	519	4
2001	670	4
2002	977	4
2003	1,440	7
2004	1,949	7
2005	2,379	7
2006	2,502	7

All of the maintained secondary schools in Taunton constituency have achieved specialist school status.

Student Finance

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average debt incurred by students on leaving university was in the last year for which figures are available; what the average time taken to pay off the debt has been to date; and what assessment she has made of the impact of the student loan scheme on the application for university places from children from working-class homes. [62313]

Bill Rammell: In 2005–06, the average amount of publicly-owned student loan debt in the UK on reaching statutory repayment due date (SRDD) was £8,350. Borrowers reach SRDD in the April following graduation or otherwise leaving their course.

The latest Student Income and Expenditure Survey 2004/05, which covered full-time and part-time undergraduate students in higher education institutions in England and Wales, found that full-time final year students' average anticipated total debt on graduation was £7,918 in 2004/05. Debt in this instance is defined as total borrowings offset with total savings. Borrowing included student loans, overdrafts, credit cards, commercial loans and informal loans.

The average time to repay a mortgage style loan (primarily loans taken out before 1998), for all those who have fully repaid to date, is five years (figure to nearest whole year). This is based on the time taken from a student reaching their SRDD until the loan account is fully repaid. Customers who repay early before reaching their SRDD have, for the purposes of the analysis, been treated as having a repayment time of zero.

It is too early in the scheme to provide a meaningful average for the time taken to repay an income contingent loan, as this scheme is relatively new and only 2 per cent. of these loan borrowers have repaid their loan in full to date.

No specific assessment has been made of the impact solely of the student loan scheme on the application for university places by children from working class homes. However, the following table shows that the proportion of entrants from the lower socio-economic groups has increased steadily over time, a trend which continued during the period when tuition fees and income contingent loans were introduced.

Proportion of young (under 21) UK domiciled entrants to full-time first degree courses at UK HEIs

	Proportion of entrants to higher education from:			
	State schools	Lower social classes (IIIM, IV, V)	Lower socio-economic groups (4–7)	Low participation areas
1997/98	81.8	24.9	n/a	12.1
1998/99	85.0	25.1	n/a	12.3
1999/2000	84.9	25.3	n/a	12.4
2000/01	85.7	25.4	n/a	12.5
2001/02	86.0	25.8	n/a	13.1
2002/03	87.2	n/a	28.4	13.3
2003/04	86.8	n/a	28.6	13.9

n/a = Not available.
Note:
The socio-economic group classification was introduced in 2002/03 to replace the social class groupings. The two classifications are not directly comparable.
Source:
Performance Indicators in Higher Education.

Repayment of income contingent loans is linked to income after leaving university or college so that leavers only repay as and when they can afford to do so, and not until income is over £15,000 per year. Under the new system from 2006/07, students from low-income backgrounds will be entitled to a maintenance grant of up to £2,700 per year, and an institutional bursary of at least £300.

Sunday Trading

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the possible effects on *(a)* parental involvement in children's education and *(b)* parent-child contact time of easing or removing Sunday trading restrictions. [64484]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The DTI issued a press and website notice in January asking for views and evidence on all aspects of Sunday trading.

Teacher Pensions

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the employer contribution rates to the teachers' pension scheme are; what assumed rate of return underlies those contribution rates; and what the contribution rate would be if the assumed rate of return was in line with current redemption yield on index-linked gilts. [61398]

Bill Rammell: The employer contribution rate, as established at the 2001 valuation of the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS), is 13.5 per cent.

The assumed rate of return methodology for the TPS is known as SCAPE (Superannuation Contributions Adjusted for Past Experience). Instead of tracking the returns of invested pension funds, the method of crediting investment returns to the notional fund is now based on a rate of return which the Government Actuary advises as being appropriate for the valuation of a public service pension scheme. For the purpose of the 2001 valuation, the Government Actuary used a real rate of return of 3.5 per cent. per annum.

It is not possible to estimate an employer contribution based on different rate of return assumptions because of the disproportionate cost.

Trust Schools

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the powers of the sponsor will be in relation to trust schools; and what the equivalent powers are in relation to academies. [64686]

Jacqui Smith: A trust school will be a maintained foundation school that has acquired a charitable foundation or trust to help it improve standards for its children. Trusts must be incorporated charities with specified objects and characteristics. The role of trust partners, who may be voluntary or private sector organisations and can include local authorities, will be to set up the trust in accordance with the legal requirements and appoint trustees to carry out the trust's functions. The functions of the trust will be to appoint governors to the school and to hold assets on trust for the school. The school's governing body—which will include representatives of parents, staff, the local authority and the wider community as well as governors appointed by the trust—will retain day-to-day responsibility for the school. A trust school will not have sponsors as such, as there is no requirement for trust partners to contribute financially to the capital costs of the school as academy sponsors do.

An academy is a state funded independent school set up as a company with charitable status. The academy principal sponsor is a member of the academy trust (company), appoints a number of further persons to the academy trust and also appoints sponsor governors, one of whom can be the principal sponsor him/herself. The maximum number of members of the academy trust and sponsor governors that can be appointed by the principal sponsor is specified in the academy's articles of association, in accordance with the funding agreement between the Secretary of State and academy trust,. The Governing Body has responsibility for running the academy on behalf of the academy trust.

World Cup (Complimentary Tickets)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many complimentary tickets her Department has received for games taking place at the FIFA World Cup 2006 in Germany. [63913]

Maria Eagle: To date and according to our records, the Department for Education and Skills has not received any complimentary tickets for World Cup matches taking place in Germany this summer. Departmental Ministers do not intend to attend any of the FIFA World Cup matches in Germany this year in an official capacity.

HEALTH

Ambulance Services

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to ensure that when three-star ambulance trusts are merged with other ambulance trusts the standards of the merged trust are equal to those of the existing three-star trust. [62384]

Mr. Byrne: Should our proposals for reconfiguration of ambulance trusts proceed, the new ambulance trusts would still be required to meet national performance requirements. The new trusts would be expected to learn from and use best practice from the current trusts. Local innovations and successes would not only be preserved but also shared to benefit all patients.

Audiology Tests

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the average waiting time from a patient being referred by a GP to an audiologist and a hearing test taking place in the last period for which figures are available. [62053]

Mr. Byrne: The data requested is not centrally available.

Cancer

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting time was from diagnosis to first treatment for people from York diagnosed with *(a)* breast and *(b)* all cancers in (i) 1997 and (ii) on the latest date for which figures are available. [64335]

Mr. Byrne: Average waiting times for the treatment of cancer patients are not collected centrally. A cancer waiting times standard of a maximum wait of 31 days from diagnosis to first cancer treatment was introduced for breast cancer from December 2001 and for all cancer patients from December 2005. Data for York Hospitals National Health Service Trust show that in the last quarter, October to December 2005, 100 per cent. of women with breast cancer and 97.2 per cent. of all cancer patients were treated within this standard. Data on cancer waiting times were not collected centrally in 1997.

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much has been spent in improving cancer services in York since 1997. [64336]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not held centrally. Local health economies are responsible for determining how to use their resources to meet the health needs of their local population, including investment in cancer services. An exercise to track additional cancer investment carried out in 2005 showed that in 2003–04 there was new investment in cancer services across the Yorkshire cancer network of £2.669 million.

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many specialist cancer *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses were employed by the NHS in York in (i) 1997 and (ii) in the latest year for which figures are available. [64338]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is shown in the table.

Hospital, Public Health Medicine and Community Health Services (HCHS): Doctors [1] working within the six main cancer specialties in North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire strategic health authority

England at 30 September each year		*Number (headcount)*	
		1997	*2004*
England		5,180	7,597
of which:			
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	Q11	90	173
of which:			
York Hospitals National Health Service Trust	RGB	19	27
Selby and York Primary Care Trust	5E2	0	2

[1] Doctors includes (among others) consultants, non-consultant career grades and doctors in training and equivalents.

Source:

NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre—medical and dental workforce census

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many children in *(a)* Hull, North constituency and *(b)* Kingston-upon-Hull have had to wait more than (i) one month, (ii) two months and (iii) three months for an appointment with the child and adolescent mental health service in the last 12 months. [64091]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not held centrally.

Cholesterol

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the percentage of adults in West Lancashire with high cholesterol levels. [64112]

Mr. Byrne: The information is not available in the format requested. Data on cholesterol levels are available from the Health Survey for England (HSE). The most recent data available on cholesterol are for 2003, as this is the last year where the HSE focused on cardiovascular disease.

The results in the table show the mean total cholesterol levels for adults for England and the North West Government Office Region, broken down by gender for 2003.

Mean total cholesterol levels[1] of adults[2] (age standardised), by gender, England and North West Government Office Region, 2003

Aged 16 and over with a valid cholesterol measurement

Blood cholesterol (mmol/l)	*England*	*North West*
Men	5.5	5.4
Women	5.6	5.5
Bases (weighted)		
Men	4,020	551
Women	4,249	568

[1] Include people on lipid-regulating drugs.

[2] Adults aged 16 and over.

All blood sample data are weighted for non-response with a weight specifically applied to all those whose gave a blood sample.

Source:

Health Survey for England 2003. Department of Health

Choose and Book System

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the letter from her Department's Director of Access of 26 January 2006, on Choose and Book, which NHS trusts are unable to implement an integrated patient administration systems solution; for what reasons these Trusts are unable to do so; and if she will make a statement. [48846]

Mr. Byrne: For valid technical or commercial reasons, a small number of national health service trusts are currently not expected to be able to achieve a fully compliant integrated solution during 2006. Details are shown in the table.

NHS Trust	Detail
Gateshead Health NHS Trust Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust Heart of England NHS Foundation Trust Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	Current PAS supplier has no plans to make a compliant system
Clatterbridge Center for Oncology NHS Trust	As a specialist hospital receiving mostly tertiary referrals, no plans to move to a compliant PAS
Trafford Healthcare NHS Trust Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital Chelsea and Westminster Healthcare NHS Trust Southampton University Hospitals NHS Trust Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals NHS Trust Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals Trust	Current PAS cannot be made compliant but plan indicates that the local service provider's PAS will be available for Choose and Book in March 2007
Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases	Very low volume booking so business case for moving to integrated PAS is not viable

In due course, a fully compliant integrated solution will be implemented in these trusts. In the meantime, the choose and book indirectly bookable services' solution will be utilised.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health for what reasons her Department's aims of achieving 90 per cent. of general practitioner referrals through Choose and Book by the end of December 2006 have been postponed to March 2007. [48847]

Mr. Byrne: The end point of March 2007 for getting to 90 per cent. of referrals made through choose and book aligns the objective with the incentives contained within the 2006–07 general practitioner contract, the negotiations for which were recently concluded between NHS Employers and the British Medical Association.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she plans to take to encourage greater uptake by general practitioners of the choose and book IT system. [53515]

Mr. Byrne: The Department is taking a number of steps to encourage greater uptake by general practitioners (GPs) of the choose and book service. A key step is the newly agreed general medical services contract, which will reward general practices, through a directed enhanced service payment, for utilisation of the choose and book service.

Over 210,000 GP referrals have been made through choose and book to date with over 3,800 GP practices having made at least one referral as at 21 March 2006.

Consultancy Fees

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the total cost to her Department of consultancy fees in relation to *(a)* restructuring and *(b)* private finance initiatives has been since 1997. [32200]

Mr. Byrne *[pursuant to the reply, 27 March 2006, c. 783–84W]:* I regret that my previous reply was incorrect. It should read as follows:

The Department does not collect information that would allow for an analysis of the consultants engaged in restructuring and could not obtain this information without incurring disproportionate costs.

The total spend on consultancy work directly related to private finance initiative in each year is shown in the table.

£

Financial year	Cost
1999–2000	108,824
2000–01	60,379
2001–02	168,277
2002–03	207,171
2003–04	892,859
2004–05	89,698
2005 to date	47,856

Dentistry

Mr. Walter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists in North Dorset constituency have declined the NHS dentist contract; and if she will make a statement. [63222]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 20 April 2006]:* Information on the number of dentists who have declined to provide national health service dental services from 1 April 2006 is not yet available centrally.

Provisional management estimates on the number of accepted and rejected contracts are available centrally. These show that, as at the start of April in North Dorset Primary Care Trust (PCT), 14 contracts had been accepted and three contracts had been rejected.

The contract numbers do not read across to numbers of individual dentists who may have agreed or rejected contracts. Contracts can be at practice or individual dentist level. Typically, many of the accepted contracts are with practices covering a number of dentists, whereas rejected contracts are more likely to be for individual practitioners.

In North Dorset PCT, the rejected contracts represent an estimated 7.1 per cent. of the total NHS services represented by all the contracts offered by this PCT, based on weighted courses of treatment or units of dental activity.

PCTs are using the funding associated with rejected contracts to commission additional services from other dentists. The information available centrally does not include any services commissioned since the information given above was collected at the start of April.

Jeff Ennis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists are practising in *(a)* Barnsley and *(b)* Doncaster; and how many of these have not signed the new NHS dental contract. [64684]

Mr. Byrne: Figures are not yet available at a primary care trust level. 198 national health service dental contracts have been signed in the South Yorkshire strategic health authority (SHA) area, and six contracts have been rejected. The signed contracts account for 99 per cent. of NHS dental service in the SHA.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was spent on external consultants and advisers by *(a)* her Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) executive agency for which her Department is responsible and *(c)* each independent statutory body, organisation and body financially sponsored by her Department in each year since May 1997. [39068]

Mr. Byrne: The total cost of external consultancy services procured by the Department, where in-house resources were not available, is shown in the table.

£000

	Cost
1999–2000	8,718
2000–01	6,852
2001–02	7,056
2002–03	7,266
2003–04	10,031
2004–05	12,800
2005–06 to date	[1]4,658

[1] The 2005–06 spend is lower because the Department has rectified some miscoding against the expenditure category codes to provide a more accurate figure of external consultancy spend to 31 January 2006.

Note:
Information is not available prior to 1999–2000.

The Department holds no central record of spend on external consultancy services by non-departmental public bodies, executive agencies, independent statutory bodies or organisations financially sponsored by the Department. The annual accounts for these organisations may include expenditure on consultants; copies of accounts can be obtained from individual organisations.

Departmental Policies

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will set out with statistical evidence relating as closely as possible to the West Lancashire constituency, the effects in West Lancashire of changes to her Department's policies since 1997. [64124]

Mr. Byrne: The Government have put in place a programme of national health service investment and reform since 1997 to improve service delivery in all parts of the United Kingdom. There is significant evidence that these policies have yielded considerable benefits for the West Lancashire constituency.

For example:

At the end of February 2006, the number of people waiting more than six to eight months for in-patient treatment within West Lancashire Primary Care Trust (PCT) had fallen to zero from 530 in June 2002;

At the end of December 2005, the number of patients waiting over 13 weeks for out-patient treatment within West Lancashire PCT had fallen to zero from 597 in June 2002;

Figures for December 2005 show that all patients within West Lancashire PCT are able to be offered an appointment with a primary care professional within two working days, an improvement from 64.7 per cent. in June 2002;

West Lancashire PCTs financial allocation increased to £136.4 million for 2006–07, a real terms increase of 6.3 per cent.;

In June 2003, at Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust 92.9 per cent. of patients spent less than four hours in accident and emergency (A&E) from arrival to admission, transfer or discharge. Figures for December 2005 show an improvement to 99.4 per cent.;

Between September 2000 and June 2005, the number of consultants at Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust has increased from 81 to 87. The number of nurses increased from 895 to 910;

In the West Lancashire local authority (LA) area, death rates from cancer per 100,000 population have fallen to 177.5 in 2003 from 193.4 in 1997;

In the West Lancashire LA area death rates from coronary heart disease per 100,000 population have fallen to 124.7 in 2003 from 168.5 in 1997;

A NHS treatment centre at a cost of £3.8 million opened in 2004 in Ormskirk. The centre provides 3,400 surgical procedures;

Ormskirk General Hospital has new services totalling £17 million NHS capital:

- treatment centre offering urology out-patients, endoscopy, minor and day surgery and pain services;
- 12 bed antenatal ward, eight bed delivery suite and 22 bed postnatal ward;
- neonatal unit of 12 cots with intensive care nursery; and
- new paediatric services including dedicated A&E department, 28 bed children's ward and children's out-patient department.

Two additional wards at Southport Hospital and

A replacement magnetic resonance imaging scanner for Southport and Formby District General Hospital.

Diabetes

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many calls received by NHS Direct were on diabetes-related issues in each of the last three years. [59069]

Mr. Byrne: This information is not centrally held. It may be available from NHS Direct Special Health Authority and the hon. Member may wish to contact the Chairman of NHS Direct for details.

Grievance Procedures

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many grievance procedures have been initiated in the Department in each of the last three years. [63537]

Mr. Byrne: The Department has records of eight grievances in 2005. For reasons of confidentiality, the number of cases has been suppressed for 2006. None was initiated in 2004.

Harassment Complaints

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many complaints of *(a)* bullying and *(b)* sexual harassment have been investigated in the Department in each of the last three years; and how many complaints have been upheld. [63538]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested on complaints of bullying is suppressed on grounds of confidentiality. There have been no complaints of sexual harassment.

Health Services (North Northamptonshire)

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions her Department has had with the growth areas directorate in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister concerning additional provision of NHS health care in North Northamptonshire. [64726]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has had no direct discussions with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister concerning additional provision of national health service health care in North Northamptonshire. However, the Department has regular six-monthly meetings with the growth area team at the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

Health Treatment Centres

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has for the expansion of independent sector treatment centres. [61715]

Mr. Byrne: There are 15 contracts currently under way for the provision of 30 independent sector treatment centre (ISTC) facilities, with the remainder being fully operational during 2006 and 2007. A second phase of procurement was launched in March 2005 and this additional capacity will be provided through a variety of facilities, such as existing ISTCs, newbuild centres, refurbishments and existing national health service facilities over the next five years.

Hearing Aids

Mr. Betts: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how the 18 week waiting target will apply to those applying for a digital hearing aid who currently have an analogue one. [63574]

Mr. Byrne: The Department is considering the results of a recent listening exercise on the principles and definitions to govern the 18-week pathway. In the light of comments received, we will publish conclusions shortly.

Infant Formula

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what her Department's policy is on trials of infant formula with particular reference to the Patch test; what guidance she has issued to hospitals on their role in recruiting mothers for such trials; and if she will make a statement. [51668]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 14 February 2006]:* While the Department does not issue guidance to hospitals on their role in recruiting mothers for such trials, the dignity, rights, safety and wellbeing of participants must be the primary concern in any research study.

The Department is legally required to ensure that independent research ethics committees are in place to approve research proposals, which involve national health service patients, their organs, tissues or data, to ensure that the studies comply with recognised national and international ethical standards.

Malnutrition

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what responsibility *(a)* GPs, *(b)* district nurses and *(c)* care workers have in (i) monitoring older patients for malnutrition and (ii) introducing measures to combat malnutrition; [64285]

(2) which health and social care workers have responsibility for identifying and implementing action to combat malnutrition in people over the age of 65 *(a)* in primary care, *(b)* in care homes, *(c)* who are hospital in-patients and *(d)* who are hospital out-patients; and what action she is taking to implement this policy. [64286]

Mr. Byrne: The primary responsibility for monitoring the health of individuals, including their nutritional status, rests with clinicians.

I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave on 28 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 1523W, which stated that, it is the responsibility of the appropriate regulatory bodies that set standards for health and social care education and training to determine how much knowledge registrants require of specific health and social care issues such as nutrition and malnutrition.

The General Medical Council for example, requires that all pre-registration house officers must demonstrate competence across a range of factors, including nutrition in considering treatment options they discuss with patients. The Nursing and Midwifery Council also stress the need for specialist community public health nurses to understand, among other things, the importance of nutrition.

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence and the National Collaborating Centre for Acute Care published a clinical guideline on 21 February 2006 to help the national health service identify patients, who are malnourished or at risk of malnutrition.

Mary Seacole Award

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much funding *(a)* NHS Employers and *(b)* the Department of Health has provided for the Mary Seacole Leadership and Development Awards since their inception; what the aims of the awards are; and whether similar leadership and development opportunities are available to non-black and minority ethnic NHS staff. [61271]

Mr. Byrne: Since their inception in 1994–95, the Department has provided funding of £25,000 annually for the Mary Seacole Leadership Awards. From 2006–07, these awards will become the Mary Seacole Leadership and Development Awards, with additional funding of £25,000 being provided by NHS Employers.

The awards are focused on nurses, midwives and health visitors in clinical and professional practice in the national health service in England. They contribute to positive action that the Department and partner NHS organisations take in order to help black and minority

ethnic NHS staff develop their careers in the NHS. The context for this is the difficulties that some black and minority ethnic staff experience in this regard and which do not apply in the same way to other groups.

Maternal and Child Health

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects the findings of the confidential enquiry into maternal and child health to be published; and if she will make a statement. [64370]

Mr. Byrne: The confidential enquiry into maternal and child health runs a series of programmes which report at different times. It plans to publish its annual perinatal mortality monitoring report for 2005 by the end of 2006.

Medical Students (Jobs)

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of *(a)* the number of medical students without jobs allocated from August 2006 and the reasons for delay in allocations, *(b)* the effectiveness of the Multi-Deanery Appointment process and *(c)* the number of 2006 medical graduates that will not have jobs as junior doctors by 1 August 2006. [54503]

Mr. Byrne: Recruitment to foundation programmes in August 2006 is a two stage process—to date only stage one has been completed.

In the first round of applications, over 5,000 candidates were matched to posts. A small number of applicants, including about 465 United Kingdom applicants, will need to go through a second stage of the recruitment process. There are about 490 vacancies available in the second round.

The multi-deanery appointment process is a computer system designed to handle the many applications received by postgraduate deans. For the 2006 recruitment round it was adopted by eight out of 14 deaneries in England. It is not intended to make decisions on, or score, applicants. This is done by senior doctors.

We are confident that there are enough Foundation places for all UK graduates in good standing.

Multiple Sclerosis

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many multiple sclerosis patients have commenced beta interferon and glatiramer treatment in the West Lancashire area in each of the last five years. [64291]

Mr. Byrne: There have been no prescriptions for either of these preparations during the period March 2001 to February 2006 (the most recent data available) by prescribers in West Lancashire Primary Care Trust.

NHS and Mental Establishments (Visits)

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the *(a)* mental health and *(b)* NHS establishments she has visited in the last six months; and on what days she visited them. [61565]

Mr. Byrne *[pursuant to the reply, 27 March 2006, c.798W]:* I regret my previous reply was incomplete. It should read as follows:

The Secretary of State visited the following national health service establishments in the last six months:

Highgate Mental Health Trust—18 October 2005

The Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust—18 October 2005

The Gateway Surgical Centre—15 November 2005

Homerton University Hospital Foundation Trust—24 December 2005

The James Wigg Practice—13 January 2006

Liverpool Street Commuter Walk in Centre—24 January 2006

Merrydale Primary Care Centre—3 February 2006

Barts and the London NHS Trust—8 March 2006

The Thelma Golding Health centre—15 March 2006

NHS Direct

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the policy of NHS Direct is on confidentiality in cases where a caller discloses information that may suggest that a crime has been committed. [60706]

Mr. Byrne: NHS Direct considers any such instances on a case-by-case basis, in line with the principles of the Caldicott Committee report on the review of patient identifiable information 1997 and Confidentiality: NHS Code of Practice 2003.

Copies of both documents are available from the Department's website at:

Confidentiality: NHS Code of Practice—www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/06/92/54/04069254.pdf.

Caldicott Committee Report—www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/06/84/04/04068404.pdf.

NHS Expenditure

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what initial estimate was made of the cost to the NHS of *(a)* the new contract for consultants, *(b)* the new contract for GPs and *(c)* the Agenda for Change reforms in (i) 2005–06 and (ii) 2006–07; and what her latest estimate is of the costs in each case. [62598]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 30 March 2006]:* The consultant contract was a three-year deal. It was costed on a methodology agreed with the British Medical Association. On that basis, the estimated cost of the contract (and the funding provided) was £133 million in 2003–04 rising to £250 million in 2005–06. In late 2004, we adjusted the tariff for 2005–06 by £150 million in response to suggestions from the service that there was a further cost pressure. However, our national survey, published in February 2005 and based on returns from 95 per cent. of trusts on the position as at 29 October 2004, indicated that the actual additional cost to the service was around £90 million.

The new contract for general practitioners was backed by a guaranteed 36 per cent. increase in resources in England, rising from £5 billion in 2002–03 to £6.8 billion in 2005–06. The overall increase in resources is now forecast to be more than 40 per cent. for the three-year period, equating to spend on primary medical care services of around £7.6 billion in 2005–06. For 2006–07, the equivalent forecast cost is £7.9 billion.

The agreed funding envelope for agenda for change in 2005–06 and 2006–07 was £950 million and £1.4 billion respectively. It is estimated that in the first 12 months direct earnings costs exceeded those originally estimated by 0.5 per cent. of the agenda for change pay bill, or around £120 million in cash terms. In the same period, it is estimated that the indirect earnings costs of replacing additional hours and leave arising from agenda for change exceeded those originally estimated by some £100 million.

NHS Finance (Hospitals)

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what account is taken of the variation of fixed capital costs in the formulae for funding NHS hospital trusts through payment by results. [62510]

Mr. Byrne: The national tariff is currently based on average reference costs, which are calculated from individual returns from every national health service trust, NHS foundation trust and primary care trust which provides services. NHS reference costs are based on a full absorption methodology and therefore include cost of capital. In addition, the annual tariff uplift includes an assessment of the increase in statutory capital charges payable and charges payable on new private finance initiative investments.

NHS Redress Scheme

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the fifth report of session 2005–06 from the Constitutional Affairs Select Committee on Compensation culture: NHS Redress Bill, what the basis is for her Department's view that only genuine cases will be eligible for the redress scheme and that the vast majority of opportunistic claims will be easily rejected. [64741]

Jane Kennedy: There are a number of criteria which must be satisfied before a case may be eligible for the NHS redress scheme and these are clearly laid out in the Bill. The criteria include that:

the case must involve a liability in tort under the law of England and Wales arising out of qualifying services provided as part of the NHS in England;

the liability is in respect of personal injury or loss arising out of a breach of a duty of care in relation to the diagnosis of illness or the care or treatment of any patient; and

the liability must arise as a consequence of any act or omission by a health care professional.

The scheme to be established under the powers in the Bill will not create any new legal rights; the scheme only provides a basis for settling claims where existing qualifying liabilities arise. It is a way for individuals who have low monetary value claims to seek redress without having to go to court. Under the scheme, the same tests for negligence will be applied to cases as are applied under current tort law.

If patients do not wish to use the NHS redress scheme or if an offer is not made, or is rejected, their right to pursue a claim through the courts will remain in being, unaffected by the scheme.

Patient Transfers

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the Department of Health Winter Report 2005–06, page 18, how many critically ill patients have been transferred between hospitals for non-clinical reasons in each year since 2000. [62555]

Mr. Byrne: Statistics on the total number of critically ill patients transferred for non-clinical reasons are not collected centrally. However, self-reported management information received by the Department does indicate that the number of transfers was significantly lower in 2005 than in 2000 and critical care bed capacity has increased significantly since 2000.

Payment-by-results

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which hospitals she identified before the introduction of payment by results as being at risk of deficits as a result of its introduction; and what percentage deficit she expected for each one. [62679]

Mr. Byrne: The movement from local prices to a national tariff means that the income of most national health service providers will change. We undertook an exercise to estimate changes in income for organisations to inform the transition from local prices to national tariff. Transitional arrangements channel extra funds into organisations which lose income under payment by results, to give them time to adjust to the new arrangements.

Pension Provision

Mr. Lilley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of expenditure by the NHS is accounted for by the cost of pension provision. [61572]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 27 March 2006]:* Pension contributions made by employers amount to 14 per cent. of the pensionable payroll. This equates to 5.3 per cent. of gross departmental expenditure on the national health service in 2004–05.

Mr. Lilley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the annual cost of pensions is for *(a)* general medical practitioners, *(b)* consultants and *(c)* NHS staff covered by Agenda for Change. [61573]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 27 March 2006]*: The information requested is not available centrally.

Mr. Lilley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the estimated increase in the level of pensions is that will be payable on retirement on average to *(a)* GPs as a result of the new contract, *(b)* consultants under their new contract and *(c)* other NHS staff as a result of Agenda for Change. [61574]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 27 March 2006]:* The information is not available in the form requested.

Mr. Lilley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the estimated additional accrued pension liability to the NHS is as a result of the *(a)* GPs' new contract, *(b)* consultants' new contract and *(c)* Agenda for Change; [61575]

(2) what assessment she has made of the potential impact of new contracts *(a)* for GPs, *(b)* for consultants and *(c)* under Agenda for Change on the cost of pensions for the NHS; and if she will make a statement. [64359]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 27 March 2006]:* The information requested is not available, but the Government's actuary Department has valued the total liabilities of the NHS Pension Scheme as at 31 March 2005 to be £127.9 billion. They are in the process of preparing a detailed actuarial valuation of the scheme as at 31 March 2004 which will be published later this year which will include analysis of the factors leading to any change in valuation.

Mr. Lilley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much of the additional funding for the NHS in each year since 1999 has been absorbed by the increase in the cost of pensions. [61577]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 27 March 2006]:* The NHS pension scheme is revalued periodically to take account of overall scheme liabilities. The last valuation was based on 1999 data, and a further valuation, based on 2004 data will be completed shortly. Contribution rates have not therefore increased in this period as a result of changes to scheme liabilities. A change was however made in employer contributions in 2004 to take account of the transfer of responsibility for the indexation of national health service pensions, together with the associated funding, from HM Treasury to the NHS.

Postgraduate Medical Education and Training Board

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much has been collected from doctors by the Postgraduate Medical and Education Training Board since its creation. [62567]

Mr. Byrne: The postgraduate medical education training board as of 28 March 2006 has collected £1,585,315 from doctors since its creation.

Potters Bar Community Hospital

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many beds are not available for the treatment of patients at Potters Bar Community Hospital. [64733]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not held centrally.

Prostate Cancer

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when cryotherapy treatment was approved by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence for use in early prostate cancer; where in the Hampshire and the Isle of Wight strategic health authority area such treatment is available; and on what date the treatment became available in each case. [64808]

Caroline Flint: In November 2005, the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) issued interventional procedure guidance on the use of cryotherapy as a primary (first) treatment for prostate cancer. The guidance concluded that the current evidence appeared to support the use of this treatment provided that normal arrangements are in place for consent, audit and clinical governance.

NICE also recommended that further research and audit of this treatment should address quality of life, clinical outcomes and long-term survival.

Cryotherapy treatment is not available in national health service organisations in the Hampshire and Isle of Wight strategic health authority area.

Radiotherapy

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the impact on patients' prognoses of delays in the commencement of radiotherapy treatment; and what steps she plans to take to speed up the commencement of treatment for those patients requiring radiotherapy. [64480]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Data on waiting times for radiotherapy are not collected centrally, nor is the impact of delays in radiotherapy treatment. We know from a recent audit by the Royal College of Radiologists, that waiting times for radiotherapy in some parts of the country are unacceptably long but that the situation is improving. The NHS Cancer Plan sets out maximum waiting time targets for cancer treatment which may include radiotherapy where this is given as a first definitive treatment. From December 2005, there is a maximum two-month wait from urgent referral to treatment and a maximum one-month wait from diagnosis to first treatment for all cancers.

To tackle radiotherapy waiting times, we are increasing the numbers of therapy radiographers in post and in training, making better use of existing staff, making unprecedented investment in new radiotherapy equipment, and streamlining the patient journey. Professor Mike Richards, the national cancer director, is also currently working with Royal Colleges, professional bodies, cancer networks and trusts through the National Radiotherapy Advisory Group, who are looking into radiotherapy provision and will be reporting in the summer on recommendations for long-term solutions for the future.

Salt Intake

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment her Department has made of the likely impact on the future incidence of *(a)* strokes and *(b)* heart disease in the UK of the revised salt reduction targets. [65272]

Caroline Flint: High salt intakes are associated with high blood pressure, which is one of a number of risk factors that contribute to the incidence of cardiovascular disease. There are also other risk factors which contribute to high blood pressure such as being overweight, physical inactivity, and excess alcohol consumption. It is difficult to accurately separate out the impact of salt reduction, from other factors, on the incidence of strokes and heart disease and my Department has not made an evaluation of this type.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what estimate her Department has made of the achievability of lowering the average daily salt intake of children to a maximum of 3g for 4 to 6-year-olds and 5g for 7 to 10-year-olds; [65273]

(2) what assessment her Department has made of the impact of the revised salt reduction targets for various foods on the aim to reduce average salt intake in adults to a maximum of 6g per day. [65274]

Caroline Flint: Achievement of the Government's targets for reducing salt intakes of adults and children will be dependent upon a range of factors. In addition to the Food Standards Agency's (FSA) voluntary salt reduction targets, changes in consumption patterns and reductions in the amount of salt added to foods by consumers will have an impact. It is not possible to predict accurately exactly when the targets for dietary intakes will be met for adults and children.

The FSA's salt reduction targets, however, cover those foods that contribute most of the salt in the diet of both adults and children, and have been set at levels that are both challenging and will have a real impact on consumers' intakes. The FSA aims to monitor reductions in consumers' salt intakes using urinary monitoring and will review the salt reduction targets in 2008 to ensure continued progress towards the dietary intake targets.

Section 64 Funding

Mr. Vara: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Hornsey and Wood Green (Lynne Featherstone) of 13 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 2028W, on section 64 funding, when she expects the review to start; and how long she expects it to last. [63597]

Mr. Byrne: A review of departmental funding to the third sector will take place during 2006–07 but detailed plans are not yet in place. An announcement will be made when arrangements have been finalised. This will include information on consultation and how the third sector can get involved.

Social Exclusion

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funding streams her Department plans to finance in 2006–07 to tackle social exclusion. [56086]

Mr. Byrne: Social exclusion is a multi-faceted problem. Many of the Department's funding streams will help to tackle the causes and consequences of social exclusion. For example, the weighted capitation formula, used to inform the 2006–08 revenue allocations to primary care trusts, takes account of need and some element of unmet need, and so targets funding towards disadvantaged areas across the country.

Suppliers (Bill Payments)

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the average time each trust hospital took to pay bills to outside suppliers in 2004–05. [62067]

Mr. Byrne: The Department does not currently collect specific information on the period of time national health service trusts take to pay suppliers.

However, NHS trusts are required to comply with the Confederation of British Industry's better payment practice code and have been given a target of paying 95 per cent. of undisputed invoices within contract terms or 30 days where no terms have been agreed.

In 2004–05, NHS trusts paid 83 per cent. of their bills within 30 days or contracted terms.

Tariffs

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on direct access tariffs in the NHS. [65108]

Mr. Byrne: Direct access services are currently outside the scope of payment by results. Funding for services outside the scope of payment by results continues to be negotiated locally.

Temporary/Agency Staff

Kelvin Hopkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the cost of employing temporary and agency staff in her Department in 2005–06. [36920]

Mr. Byrne: The Department does not collect information that would provide an analysis of temporary staff. To date in 2005–06, the total cost of agency staff employed directly on departmental administration work, where in-house resources were not available, is £6.489 million.

Wider Partnerships Initiative

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much revenue *(a)* her Department and its arm's length bodies and *(b)* the NHS have generated through the wider partnerships initiative. [57518]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not held centrally and can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Worcestershire Royal Hospital

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 2 February 2006, *Official Report*, c. 726W, on Worcestershire Royal Hospital, when the West Midlands South Strategic Health Authority will write to the hon. Member for west Worcestershire as indicated in the reply. [64896]

Ms. Rosie Winterton: West Midlands South Strategic Health Authority wrote to the hon. Member on 19 April 2006.

York Hospital

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients were on the waiting list for elective admissions to York Hospital in March in each year since 1997. [64321]

Mr. Byrne: The information is shown in the following table.

Patients waiting for elective admission, all specialties, York Hospitals National Health Service Trust

Period	*Total waiting list*
March 1997	6,846
March 1998	8,445
March 1999	6,715
March 2000	6,477
March 2001	6,317
March 2002	6,354
March 2003	6,425
March 2004	5,714
March 2005	5,211
February 2006	4,775

Source:
Department of Health form KH07 and monthly monitoring

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting time was for patients waiting for elective admissions to York Hospital at the end of March in each year since 1997. [64322]

Mr. Byrne: The information is shown in the following table.

Patients waiting for elective admission, all specialties, York Hospitals National Health Service Trust—estimated average waiting time

Period	*Median time waiting so far (weeks)*
March 1997	12.0
March 1998	15.9
March 1999	13.1
March 2000	15.2
March 2001	15.7
March 2002	16.8
March 2003	14.6
March 2004	11.7
March 2005	10.2
February 2006	8.5

Source:
Calculated using data from Department of Health form KH07 and monthly monitoring

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday 25 April 2006

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Accidents (Animals)

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will introduce legislation to make it a defence in law for owners whose horses and other animals are involved in accidents to show that they have taken reasonable steps to avoid such accidents; and if she will make a statement. [63776]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* The Animals Act 1971 currently has the effect of placing strict liability on the owner of animals that cause harm whatever the circumstances. This appears to be inconsistent with current liability law in other areas which allows for a general defence of reasonable care. The Government have acknowledged that there may be a case for an amendment to the Animals Act and expects to launch a consultation shortly on this matter.

Air Quality

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent assessment she has made of air quality standards in Hull, North constituency. [64097]

Mr. Bradshaw: Local authorities have a duty under Part IV of the Environment Act 1995 to review and assess the current, and likely future, air quality in their areas. Where local authorities consider that one or more of the nationally prescribed air quality objectives for each of the seven pollutants is unlikely to be met by the relevant deadline, they must declare an air quality management area (AQMA), covering the area where the problem is expected. These local authorities must then take action, along with other agencies and organisations, to work towards meeting the air quality objectives.

Kingston-upon-Hull city council submitted their last Updating and Screening Assessment (USA) in July 2003. The authority subsequently carried out a Detailed Assessment in respect of nitrogen dioxide, particles (PM10), and sulphur dioxide, which was submitted to my Department in May 2004. In light of the conclusions of the Detailed Assessment, Kingston declared an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in respect of nitrogen dioxide, in August 2005. Kingston is currently developing their air quality action plan, which will set out measures to work towards meeting the air quality objective. They have included measures within Hull city council's local transport plan, which should improve the capacity to deliver cleaner air within the AQMA.

The next round of review and assessments has now started and local authorities are asked to submit a new Updating and Screening Assessment by end of April 2006, which will be considered by my officials. My Department will be assessing Kingston-upon-Hull's report as part of this exercise.

Animal Welfare

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many *(a)* allegations have been reported, *(b)* investigations taken place and *(c)* prosecutions pursued under (i) the Protection of Badgers Act 1992, (ii) the Zoo Licensing Act 1981, (iii) the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, (iv) the Pet Animals Act 1951, (v) the Wild Mammals Protection Act 1996 and (vi) the Deer Act 1991 in each year since 1996. [64284]

Mr. Bradshaw: Since 1996, no allegations have been reported, investigations conducted or prosecutions pursued by Defra under these pieces of legislation. The enforcement responsibility for these areas lies primarily with the police and local authorities.

Avian Influenza

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent assessment she has made of the *(a)* the potential for an outbreak of the H5N1 virus in the UK and *(b)* the potential impact of an outbreak on (i) the poultry industry and (ii) domestic poultry keepers. [63841]

Mr. Bradshaw: H5N1 avian influenza was confirmed in a sample from the partially decomposed body of a Whooper swan found on the causeway at Cellardyke, Fife, Scotland. The swan is the first case of H5N1 detected in a wild bird in the UK and our current hypothesis is that it originated outside Great Britain. Ongoing intensified surveillance across the UK has not identified any other positive live or dead wild bird. There is also no evidence that the virus is present in domestic poultry.

Poultry keepers within a 2,500 sq km wild bird risk area around the area where the swan was found have been required to house their birds. All bird keepers throughout the UK are encouraged to continue their efforts to maintain high levels of biosecurity and develop their plans to bring their birds indoors should that become necessary.

The implications of the Whooper swan finding have been discussed with ornithologists and a revised veterinary risk assessment has been published. It concludes that the current measures put in place throughout Scotland are adequate and proportionate at present. The situation will continue to be reviewed.

We are monitoring the market impact of avian flu closely. The European market is currently volatile, and the knock-on effects of significant downturns in some member states (notably Italy and France) are being felt domestically in terms of lower prices. So far, however, consumption of poultry products has not been significantly affected in the UK.

Cattle Exports

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what

publicity her Department has undertaken to notify farmers of the regulations with which they must comply in order to export cattle; [63089]

(2) what discussions she has had with farming groups on the facilitation of the export of cattle to the EU once the ban is lifted; [63090]

(3) whether farmers will need a licence to export cattle to the EU; [63091]

(4) if she will make a statement on the regulations with which cattle farmers must comply in order to export cattle to the EU; [63092]

(5) what diseases cattle will need to be tested for prior to export to the EU. [63093]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* On 8 March 2006, the EU's Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health unanimously approved a Commission proposal to allow the UK to export:

cattle born or reared in the UK on or after 1 August 1996;

beef and beef products derived from such cattle slaughtered on or after 15 June 2005;

beef containing vertebral column, or products derived from vertebral column from cattle slaughtered on or after the date that the EU Regulation enters into force.

Such exports may take place on the same basis as other member states and will be subject to strict health and welfare requirements. We expect the EU Regulation to enter into force on 2 May and exports to be able to resume from 3 May.

In preparation for the lifting of the ban, Defra officials have held numerous meetings with key stakeholders from industry and animal welfare organisations to discuss the health and welfare requirements for exports. Defra has circulated to industry draft guidance on procedures for completing the necessary export health certification and route plans. The finalised versions of this guidance will be published shortly on Defra's website at <http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/int-trde/default.htm>

Requirements for export include testing for bovine tuberculosis in Great Britain when applicable, and when exporting to certain countries, for infectious bovine rhinotracheitis. Cattle from Northern Ireland must also be tested for brucellosis. In addition, cattle intended for export must be identified in accordance with EU law, with an official tag in each ear and a valid cattle passport.

All exports must comply with the conditions laid down in EU and domestic legislation relating to animal and animal products exports, the welfare of animals during transport, BSE and cattle identification.

Chewing Gum

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to tackle chewing gum-related antisocial behaviour; and if she will make a statement. [63362]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 specifically addresses this type of antisocial behaviour. Chewing gum is clearly defined as litter under the Act, and all local authorities have the power to fine people caught dropping gum.

The Chewing Gum Action Group—which brings together chewing gum manufacturers, the Local Government Association, the Chartered Institution of Wastes Management, ENCAMS (who run the 'Keep Britain Tidy' campaign), Department for Education and Skills (DfES), the Improvement and Development Agency and Defra—recently announced funding for 15 local authorities across England to support campaigns aimed at helping them deal with the problem of gum litter.

The campaigns will use a mixture of advertising, alternative disposal and enforcement measures to reduce gum litter in these areas.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what representations she has received from private business regarding chewing gum-related antisocial behaviour; [63363]

(2) what representations she has received regarding chewing gum-related crime; and if she will make a statement. [63364]

Mr. Bradshaw: Private industry is represented on the Chewing Gum Action Group. The Department has also received a number of representations from private businesses regarding the production and marketing of chewing gum disposal solutions.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much less chewing gum there was on relevant streets at the end of the Chewing Gum Action Group campaign pilot period. [63996]

Mr. Bradshaw: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 25 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 211OW.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much private funding the Chewing Gum Action Group campaign pilots received; and how much is estimated to be available in the future. [63997]

Mr. Bradshaw: The chewing gum pilot campaigns received £378,873 of private funding. An additional £600,000 of private funding will be available to help support 15 further campaigns, beginning in May.

Climate Change

Stephen Hesford: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the impact of the climate change levy on the environment; and if she will make a statement. [64315]

John Healey: I have been asked to reply.

The climate change levy (CCL) is playing a crucial role in enabling the UK to meet its Kyoto Protocol target.

An independent evaluation by Cambridge Econometrics, commissioned by HM Revenue and Customs and published alongside Budget 2005, has examined the effect of the levy since its announcement in Budget 1999 and introduction in April 2001. It concluded that the levy could deliver cumulative savings

to 2005 of 16.5 million tonnes of carbon (MtC) and by 2010, annual carbon savings of over 3.5 MtC a year—well above the 2 MtC estimated at the time of its introduction.

Correspondence

Mr. Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she will reply to the letter of 7 March 2006 from the hon. Member for Walsall, North regarding a constituent. [64740]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* I apologise for the delay in replying to the hon. Member's letter. A response was issued on 24 April.

Emissions

Mr. Illsley: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) pursuant to the answer of 21 October 2004, *Official Report*, column 824W, on emission levels, whether local authorities are obliged to include conditions which represent the best available techniques when issuing a permit under the Pollution Prevention and Control Act 1999; [64081]

(2) what steps her Department intends to take to ensure compliance with Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control SG2 for new glass-making facilities. [64154]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations require local authorities, in deciding what conditions to include in a permit, to take account of various principles, including that installations "should be operated in such a way that all appropriate preventive measures are taken against pollution, in particular through application of the best available techniques". It is for local authorities to decide on the facts of each individual case, having regard to any guidance issued to them by the Secretary of State, what constitutes the best available techniques in that case.

Statutory guidance note SG2 sets out the Secretary of State's views on what constitute the best available techniques for the generality of glass manufacturing activities. Regulators must have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State. It does not specify the standards that must be included in individual permits.

Exercise Hawthorn

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when the results from Exercise Hawthorn will be made known. [64866]

Mr. Bradshaw: Exercise Hawthorn was scheduled to take place between 5 and 6 April. As soon as we confirmed that highly pathogenic H5 virus had been discovered in a dead swan in Cellerdyke, Scotland on the afternoon of 5 April, the exercise was brought to an end to ensure that we could bring all our resources to bear on this situation.

Although we are disappointed that the exercise could not be concluded, useful results have been gathered, and we will publish these in the summer.

Flooding

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 20 March 2006 to Question 61242, on flood defences, whether she has discussed these funding levels with the Treasury. [62714]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* Funding levels for flood risk management are set by Defra following Treasury decision in the 2004 Spending Review on the overall spending limits for the Department for 2005–06 to 2007–08. An effective flood risk management service is a priority for Defra and funding for this was discussed with Treasury during the 2004 Review. There has been no specific discussion since on the level of flood spend.

The level of spending on flood risk management will be considered in the context of the comprehensive spending review in 2007 as will the level of the Department's spend across all areas.

Fly-tipping

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many incidents of fly-tipping were reported in *(a)* Hull North constituency and *(b)* Kingston-upon-Hull in each year since 1997; how many prosecutions were made as a result; and if she will make a statement. [64096]

Mr. Bradshaw: Defra has worked with the Environment Agency to establish Flycapture, the national database of fly-tipping incidents, which has been operational since April 2004. No national data were previously available on illegal waste disposal or fly-tipping. Flycapture collects data at local authority level only.

The data are probably an underestimate and will increase as authorities get better at collecting and reporting the data.

Kingston-upon-Hull city council reported 4,929 incidents of fly-tipping between June 2004 and March 2005 (an average of 493 incidents a month) and 7,199 between April 2005 and February 2006 (an average of 655 a month). The Environment Agency investigated five incidents between June 2004 and March 2005 in Kingston-upon-Hull.

The data submitted for prosecutions are incomplete, but show that Kingston-upon-Hull city council took forward five prosecutions in 2004–05 and a further 16 in 2005–06.

GM Crops/Food

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which EU states are in favour of co-existence between GM and non-GM crops; and what clarification of the position was achieved at the recent Vienna Conference. [65058]

Mr. Morley: It is generally recognised that if GM crops are to be grown commercially then coexistence measures will be needed. In Article 26a of Directive 2001/18/EC member states agreed that the Commission

should develop guidelines on coexistence. However, member states have different views as to what precise form coexistence measures should take.

The European Commission has recently published a report on the implementation of national coexistence measures and this is available at www.europa.eu.int/comm/agriculture/coexistence/com104_en.pdf.

The concluding remarks from the recent EU conference in Vienna are at http://europa.eu.int/comm/agriculture/events/vienna2006/concl_en.pdf.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with the European Commission following its proposals to allow organic food to include up to 0.9 per cent. GM. [62494]

Mr. Bradshaw: A Council Working Group to discuss the EC proposal for a Council regulation on organic production and labelling of organic products to replace the current Regulation 2092/91 has met five times and discussions are continuing.

Horseracing

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether she has plans to review the regulation of the horseracing industry, with particular reference to the avoidance of deaths of horses on race days. [63952]

Mr. Bradshaw: Regulation of the horseracing industry is being transferred from the Jockey Club to the Horseracing Regulatory Authority (HRA). The Department welcomes the transfer and views it as a vital step towards the modernisation of the sport. We are confident that the HRA will work closely with the industry to continually assess and improve measures to protect racehorses from harm.

The Protection of Animals Act 1911 already protects the welfare of racehorses. Under this Act it is an offence to ill treat or cause any unnecessary suffering to any domestic or captive animal. The maximum penalty is a fine of £5,000 or six months' imprisonment, or both.

The Animal Welfare Bill will extend these powers by introducing a duty of care for those who are responsible for animals. This will allow action to be taken, even if the animal is not currently suffering. Under the Bill, we have proposed that the maximum penalty for an offence of cruelty will be raised to a fine of up to £20,000 or imprisonment for 51 weeks, or both.

Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control Regime

Mr. Illsley: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what advice and support her Department provides to local authorities dealing with applications under the Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control regime; [64151]

(2) whether her Department has mechanisms in place to ensure consistency in enforcement of the Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control regime across local authorities. [64153]

Mr. Bradshaw: Defra provides a range of support to local authorities in discharging their responsibilities under the Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations. These include the publication of statutory guidance, published advice on procedures and interpretations, and technical and other support in response to queries. All relevant written material, which is aimed at maximising consistency of local authority practice and assisting with effective and efficient discharge of their functions under this legislation, can be found on the Defra website at http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/ppc. It is necessary for the Department to exercise caution in advising on individual cases, because to do so might prejudice the decision on any appeal that might come before the Secretary of State.

Landfill

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her Department's estimate is of the number of cubic metres of landfill required for one tonne of waste. [63439]

Mr. Bradshaw: It would depend on the density of the waste. If my right hon. Friend would like to write to me with more details I will provide a fuller answer.

Recycling

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what *(a)* steps her Department has taken and *(b)* targets the Department has established to encourage Swindon borough council to recycle (i) domestic waste, (ii) commercial waste and (iii) plastic; and what percentage of waste was recycled in the Borough over the last five years. [61004]

Mr. Bradshaw: The information requested is as follows.

Domestic Waste

There are two targets for local authorities to achieve in respect of domestic waste.

The first is to meet the challenging national target set by the EU Landfill Directive.

By 2010 to reduce biodegradable municipal waste land filled to 75 per cent. of that produced in 1995

By 2013 to reduce biodegradable municipal waste landfilled to 50 per cent. of that produced in 1995

By 2020 to reduce biodegradable municipal waste landfilled to 35 per cent. of that produced in 1995.

This target is being delivered through a combination of measures/drivers designed to assist and encourage local authorities. In particular the Government have established the Waste Implementation Programme (WIP) with an aim of driving waste management solutions up the waste hierarchy, improving the sustainability of waste management. WIP delivers this through the following nine work-streams:

1. Local Authority Support Unit
2. Local Authority Funding
3. Waste Minimisation (managed by WRAP [1])
4. Efficiency
5. Education (managed by WRAP)
6. Kerbside recycling (managed by WRAP)
7. Research

8. Data

9. New Technologies

[1] WRAP—Waste Resource Action Programme

Recycling is towards the top of the waste hierarchy, together with minimisation and reuse, and each of the work-streams includes effort towards these areas.

Local authorities are responsible for meeting the EU targets and contribute individually to the overall target through compliance with the Local Authority Trading Scheme (LATS) scheme. This provides landfill allowance allocations for each authority and measures their performance against these targets. The scheme allows authorities to trade their allowances (buying, selling, or borrowing from future years) with penalties applied to those who fail to meet the scheme requirements.

The second target is the Defra PSA6 target to:

Enable at least 25 per cent. of household waste to be recycled or composted by 2005–06, with further improvements by 2008.

Although looking more widely than biodegradable waste this target focuses on household—rather than municipal—waste.

WIP monitors and assists with the delivery of this target in a number of ways but in particular through programmes of work delivered through WRAP, and the work undertaken by the Local Authority Support Unit programme.

Commercial Waste

The current targets, and therefore WIP remit, does not extend to commercial waste. Current policy is for local authorities to manage commercial waste through the usual commercial processes.

Plastics

The Biodegradeable municipal remit of WIP does not extend plastics, however WRAP are using other Defra funding to engage with industry to develop recycling markets.

Recycling/Composting Performance for Swindon borough council

The Recycling/Composting Performance for the last five years for Swindon borough council is outlined in the following table:

	BVPI 82a+b (recycling+composting)
2004–05	19.55
2003–04	15.4
2002–03	14
2001–02	13
2000–01	13

Jessica Morden: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the average cost to local authorities of recycling a tonne of kerbside waste. [61298]

Mr. Bradshaw: DEFRA does not gather information on the cost of recycling kerbside waste. The cost of recycling will vary depending on a number of factors, including the collection method used by a local authority, the materials collected and the market for recycled materials.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much funding Lancashire county council has received to support recyling in each year since 1997. [63197]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* The main source of funding for local authorities' waste management services is the Environmental, Protective and Cultural Services (EPCS) block of annual Government grant. It is for local authorities to decide what proportion of the block is invested in waste management services, including recycling. Funding is also provided from DEFRA and a variety of other sources to support sustainable waste management at a local level, including through partnerships with other local authorities. The amounts allocated to Lancashire county council are set out in the table.

£ million

	2002–03	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06*	*2006–07*	*2007–08*
Waste Minimisation and Recycling Fund	61,689+ [1]2,418,363	[1]2,033,201	[1]5,000,000	—	—	—
Waste Performance and Efficiency Grant	—	—	—	500,415	1,318,058	1,380,942
Grant to Relieve Spending Pressures on Waste	—	—	269,914	—	—	—
Household Incentives Pilots Scheme	—	—	—	[1]280,000	—	—
Direct Consultancy Support through DEFRA's Waste Implementation programme	—	—	[1]25,761	—	—	—
DEFRA's Waste and Resources Action Programme	—	154,650	74,999+ 477,100	—	—	—

[1] As part of a partnership with other local authorities.

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what steps her Department is taking to increase the proportion of waste recycled by business; [63276]

(2) what estimate she has made of the proportion of waste recycled by business in the last 12 months. [63284]

Mr. Bradshaw: Most recent data from the Environment Agency (2002–03) indicate that 44 per cent. of waste produced by business in England and Wales was recycled. This level of recycling exceeds what is being achieved for household waste, and is up from 37.5 per cent. in 1998–89.

The Government have identified a need for further action on recycling by businesses and producer responsibility makes an important contribution to increasing recycling. The policy is aimed at ensuring that businesses take responsibility for the environmental impact of products that they place on the market, particularly once they become waste. Recent waste legislation, such as that implementing EC directives on packaging and end-of-life vehicles, places various requirements on producers, including recovery and recycling targets.

Government funding from the Business Resource Efficiency and Waste (BREW) Programme is another significant element of the Government programme to increase recycling by businesses, by funding resource efficiency and waste minimisation programmes. Various BREW delivery bodies are charged with returning £284 million, from additional landfill tax receipts, to business over three years.

Initiatives already under way to encourage recycling by businesses, under BREW and other programmes, include:

work by the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP), to improve the range and quality of recycled products and to increase the demand for them;

a WRAP-led pilot of sector-specific help for small businesses. Following this pilot, DEFRA will consider how recycling services for small businesses might best be developed;

work by Envirowise to provide resource efficiency advice to businesses;

the DTI Technology Programme, which facilitates research and development into resource efficiency, including in the area of waste management; and

the Environment Agency's pilot of an online internet service for small businesses: 'What do I do with my waste?'. The pilot is working as an extension to the Agency's existing guidance service for small and medium sized enterprises ('NetRegs').

The Government are currently reviewing its Waste Strategy for England. On 14 February 2006, DEFRA issued a consultation document on the review which suggested various proposals to increase business waste recycling and recovery. The proposals include a wider role for local authorities in fostering better recycling services for small businesses, better integrating municipal and business waste management and continuing to develop markets for recycled materials. The consultation period ends on 9 May. Following the consultation, DEFRA will issue a revised strategy which will take account of comments received from stakeholders.

The Government do not have an estimate of the proportion of waste recycled by business in the last 12 months. However, the Environment Agency estimates that 53 per cent. of all business waste regulated under the Pollution Prevention and Control (PPC) regime was recycled or re-used in 2004. DEFRA is developing a data strategy to provide future data on waste arisings and recycling.

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what Government policy is on the recycling of batteries; [63518]

(2) what plans she has to encourage companies to recycle the batteries which they *(a)* produce and *(b)* sell, with particular reference to batteries of three kilos or more. [63521]

Mr. Bradshaw: There is currently no legislative requirement to recycle spent batteries. However, the Government support the development of the proposed EU Batteries Directive as its objectives are consistent with those in the Government's Waste Strategy and Sustainable Development Strategy. Both aim to reduce the quantity of hazardous and non hazardous waste batteries going to landfill and increase the recovery of waste materials.

The proposed directive, which might be expected to come into force in the UK in 2008, sets targets for the collection and recycling of all waste batteries. We expect that producers of batteries will have collection and recycling obligations to meet. The exact form these may take will not be decided until the directive has been finalised and we have completed formal domestic consultation with all parties concerned. It is expected that producers will need to work closely with waste management companies and local authorities, among others, in order to collect and recycle waste batteries in line with the likely obligations under the directive.

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the local authorities which have provision for battery recycling; and how many battery recycling schemes there are in England. [63519]

Mr. Bradshaw: DEFRA has commissioned the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) to work with 12 partner organisations in 13 local authority areas across the UK to trial the kerbside collection of waste household batteries. The following local authorities and organisations are taking part in the scheme in England:

Barnsley—Rabbit Recycling (North Barnsley) Ltd
Calderdale—Kerbside Calderdale
East Devon—East Devon District Council
Eastleigh—Eastleigh Borough Council
Harlow—Environmental Conservation Co-operative Ltd (ECCO)
Liverpool—Energywise Recycling
Stockton on Tees—Stockton on Tees Borough Council
Trafford—EMERGE Recycling

The trial is likely to be extended in the future.

A number of local authorities currently provide collection facilities for spent batteries. These include:

Brighton and Hove Council
Bristol City Council;
Cambridgeshire County Council;
Ceredigion Council;
Cheshire County Council;
Gloucestershire County Council;
Hampshire County Council;
Kingston upon Hull Council;
Lancashire County Council;
Newport City Council;
Powys County Council;
Sheffield City Council;

Suffolk County Council
Surrey County Council;
The London Borough of Barnet;
The London Borough of Brent
The London Borough of Sutton
The London Borough of Waltham Forest; and
West Sussex County Council.

In addition, a number of schools have become involved in the collection of spent portable batteries in Lancashire.

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many local authorities in England have made recycling compulsory. [63883]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department does not hold the information requested. It is up to each local authority to decide how to go about meeting the challenging recycling targets in their local area.

Compulsory recycling will not be suitable for all local authorities, but Defra will watch those that try such schemes with interest. We are continuing to investigate options for influencing householder behaviour, with particular emphasis on positive incentives to help authorities encourage householders to reduce, re-use and recycle their waste.

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to encourage local authorities to recycle plastic. [64098]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government have set challenging household waste recycling targets for local authorities and is proposing to increase them as part of the current Waste Strategy Review consultation. 60 per cent. of English local authorities provided plastic collection facilities in 2004. The Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) is supporting the efforts of local authorities by increasing domestic plastic recycling capacity and developing markets for recycled plastic products. WRAP'S ROTATE programme also gives local authorities free advice on collection programmes and local communications and awareness programmes. This will include advice on plastics recycling facilities if applicable.

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many recycling points there are per 1,000 population in *(a)* Swindon borough council area and *(b)* England. [64279]

Mr. Bradshaw: Requested figures, based on 2003–04 DEFRA Municipal Waste Management Survey and 2003 mid-year population estimates, are shown in the following table:

	Recycling points per 1,000 population
Swindon Borough Council	0.24
England	0.41

Note:
Recycling points are civic amenity and recycling sites.

Research Contracts

Mark Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the research contracts granted by her Department to research facilities in Wales in each of the last 20 years. [63960]

Mr. Bradshaw: A full response to this question could be made only at disproportionate cost. DEFRA and its predecessor Departments have substantial research programmes. DEFRA currently spends around £160 million annually on research and at any one time has in the order of 1,500 ongoing projects with a large number of contractors.

However, DEFRA proactively publishes large amounts of data on its R and D projects through its website http://www2.defra.gov.uk/research/project_data/Default.asp This includes information on "live" projects and those completed over recent years. It is also possible to access separate information on research contractors used through this site.

Ring Rot

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the *(a)* correspondence and *(b)* meetings the Department has had with representatives from the Royal Netherlands embassy in connection with the outbreak of ring rot of potatoes in 2003 in Wales. [63183]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* A list of correspondence between the Department and representatives from the Royal Netherlands embassy, in connection with the outbreak of potato ring rot in Wales in 2003, is as follows. This includes some correspondence associated with subsequent outbreaks. There have been no meetings between the Department and the Royal Netherlands embassy to discuss this issue.

List of correspondence between DEFRA and Royal NL embassy concerning the 2003 ring rot outbreak

Type of correspondence	*Date*	*Between*	*Subject*
Letter	1 April 2004	McIntosh/Thissen	Inviting contributions to the lessons learned review
e-mail	14 May 2004	McIntosh/Thissen	Extension to lessons learned review
Letter	26 May 2004	Thissen/McIntosh	Response to lessons learned review
Letter	9 June 2004	McIntosh/Thissen	Providing draft copy of lessons learned report
Letter	18 June 2004	McIntosh/Thissen	With thanks for contributing to the lessons
e-mail	27 August 2004	Thissen/McIntosh	Thanks for copy of draft lessons learned review
Letter	8 September 2004	Hunter/Thissen	State of affairs
Letter	13 September 2004	McIntosh/Thissen	Providing a copy of the final lessons learned review
e-mail	12 October 2004	Thissen/McIntosh	State of affairs
e-mail	6 December 2004	McIntosh/Thissen	State of affairs
e-mail	5 January 2005	McIntosh/Thissen	State of affairs
e-mail	17 January 2005	Rikken/McIntosh/Thissen	State of affairs

List of correspondence between DEFRA and Royal NL embassy concerning the 2003 ring rot outbreak

Type of correspondence	*Date*	*Between*	*Subject*
e-mail	25 January 2005	Rikken/McIntosh/Thissen	State of affairs
Letter	2 February 2005	Van Opstal/Thissen/Hunter	New notification Regulations
e-mail	26 April 2005	Rikken/McIntosh/Hunter	State of affairs

Single Payment Scheme

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will take steps to ensure farmers threatened with bankruptcy proceedings by British banks due to delays with Single Farm Payments are offered a guarantee from the Government to the bank up to the level of the sums owing together with interest; and if she will make a statement. [65020]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* My noble Friend Lord Bach met the British Bankers' Association and other representatives of the major lending banks on 30 March to discuss the situation of farmers awaiting payment under the Single Payment Scheme. The banks re-emphasised on that occasion that

> "no viable business is being refused additional financial support and, as a result, no viable businesses are failing because of uncertainty about the payments timetable".

I am sure that farmers who have not yet received a payment will have joined the leaders of the NFU, CLA and TFA in welcoming the announcement made by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State on 19 April 2006, *Official Report*, column13WS, that partial payments will be made to them as soon as it is operationally possible to do so.

Southern Water

Derek Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with Southern Water on the continuing leakage from the two reservoirs at Halfway on the Isle of Sheppey. [65777]

Mr. Morley: Defra has had no discussions with Southern Water concerning leakage from the two reservoirs at Halfway on the Isle of Sheppey.

However, I understand that the Consumer Council for Water (CCW) has been contacted about this issue. CCW advised those concerned to contact Southern Water directly, who has a duty to maintain reservoirs under their ownership. Southern Water responded directly to these individuals' concerns.

Waste

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when her Department will publish guidance on the definition of waste; and if she will make a statement. [64048]

Mr. Bradshaw: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 35W.

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to raise awareness for waste disposal purposes of hidden batteries which are inbuilt in products. [63520]

Mr. Bradshaw: Batteries that are inbuilt into products will have to be removed under the requirements of the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive. The directive requires the selective treatment of WEEE delivered to authorised treatment facilities, and one of the treatments specified is the removal of batteries. Defra has prepared draft WEEE permitting regulations and guidance. We will introduce the regulations before the introduction of the producer responsibility requirements of the DTI WEEE regulations. The DTI expects to consult on draft WEEE regulations later this spring.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for what reasons Herefordshire Council has not received funding from the Waste Minimisation and Recycling Fund; and if she will make a statement. [64601]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Waste Minimisation and Recycling Fund was challenge based, and in each of the three bidding rounds applications were received from a large number of local authorities. Defra considered in full each application against set criteria agreed with an expert advisory panel, comprising key representatives from across the industry.

The panel separately assessed each application and Defra officials took into account their recommendations before final decisions were taken by the Minister of State.

Support was given to the best local authority projects designed to either minimise the amount of household waste generated, or those that aimed to provide more new or improved facilities for re-use and recycling and composting.

Herefordshire council submitted a bid in round 2 of the Fund (2003–04) that was unsuccessful. However, the council did not submit a bid in either the first or third rounds.

The Government's Waste Implementation Programme (WIP) provides a range of support, analysis and assessment work to compliment the funding and help local authorities deliver the best waste minimisation and recycling services.

Herefordshire council has received funding for a number of different projects from Defra, which are detailed in the following table:

Funding type	*Start date*	*End date*	*Amount (£)*
Waste Performance and Efficiency Grant	1 April 2005	31 March 2006	132,415
Household Incentives	1 April 2005	31 March 2006	61,800
Household Incentives	1 April 2005	31 March 2006	20,583

In addition, in December 2005, Defra wrote to all local authorities regarding the Waste Performance and

Efficiency Grant (WPEG). This is a 3-year targeted grant totalling £260 million over 3 years, which is replacing the Waste Minimisation and Recycling Fund from 2006.

Every English local authority with waste management responsibilities received a portion of the £40 million allocation in 2005–06. The allocations for the next two years were announced at the end of 2005.

Under this grant, Herefordshire Council is set to receive £348,944.18 in 2006–07 and £365,548.83 in 2007–08. Further information, and a full list of allocations to local authorities is available on the Defra website at the following address: http://www.defra.gov.uk/Environment/waste/localauth/funding/index.htm.

Wild Birds

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has made for a ban on the import of captive wild birds. [64868]

Mr. Bradshaw: The UK cannot make a decision to ban imports of wild birds unilaterally. It is for the European Commission to consider, in conjunction with the views or representations of all European Union (EU) member states.

A temporary ban on the import of captive wild birds into the EU from third countries is currently in place until 31 May 2006. The Government are currently seeking views from interested parties on issues relating to this ban. Any representations to the Commission about extending it will be made after thorough consideration of any comments received.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether seizures of wild birds illegally imported into the UK have increased since the introduction of the EU ban on the import of live captive birds. [64975]

Mr. Bradshaw: There is no evidence to suggest that there has been an increase in seizures of wild birds illegally imported into the UK since the introduction of the EU ban.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether the Government will be making representations for an extension of the EU ban on the import of live captive birds beyond 31 May. [64976]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government are currently seeking views from interested parties on issues relating to the ban. Any representations to the European Commission about extending the ban will be made after thorough consideration of any comments we receive.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Bank Accounts

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what research the Department has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the introduction of a universal service obligation guaranteeing citizens access to a basic bank account; and if he will make a statement. [64393]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I have been asked to reply.

In December 2004, the banks and the Government agreed to work towards the shared goal of halving the number of adults in households with no bank account of any kind and of having made significant progress in that direction within two years. The Financial Inclusion Taskforce has been asked to monitor progress toward this goal and its recent report concluded that steady progress had been made.

Developments will be reviewed at the end of the two year period to see whether further initiatives are needed.

China

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on the level of UK trade with China. [61790]

Ian Pearson *[holding answer 30 March 2006]:* UK Trade with China is growing strongly. Chinese figures for the first 11 months of 2005 shows that UK exports grew by 15 per cent.—higher than any of our major European competitors (Germany 1 per cent., Italy 9 per cent.). Chinese exports of goods to the UK totalled £12.835 billion in 2005.

Ensuring that UK business is best placed to take advantage of the new opportunities that are becoming available as China's economy develops is a key priority for this Government. There are currently a number of government-to-government dialogues taking place between China and the UK, namely, the Chancellor's Asia Task Force, the China Task Force and the UK-China Joint Economic Trade Commission (JETC) which aim to tackle barriers to trade and promote two-way trade and investment.

The UK is one of the largest investors in China (and the largest EU investor in China and Hong Kong combined) with a total of 4,834 British invested projects as of November 2005.

GMOs

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations he has received *(a)* supporting the free trade of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and *(b)* requesting that markets remain free of GMOs; and if he will make a statement. [63663]

Ian Pearson: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has received *(a)* no recent representations supporting the free trade of genetically modified organisms and *(b)* a considerable volume of correspondence as part of a campaign calling for my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry to support the right of European countries to ban genetically modified food and crops and call for disputes over environmental, social and health issues to be dealt with by alternative institutions to the World Trade Organisation.

Home Computing Initiative Scheme

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many individuals have participated in the Home Computing Initiative Scheme in each year since 1999, broken down by region. [64165]

Alun Michael *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* I am unable to provide a statistical breakdown of how many Individuals have participated in the Home Computing Initiative Scheme in each year since 1999 or by region. This information is not available.

A recent estimation provided by the HCI Alliance (BT, Intel and Microsoft) indicates that over 500,000 units have been loaned under the Home Computer Initiative Scheme since 1999.

Notaries Public

Mr. Howard: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will seek an amendment of European regulations to ensure that British notaries public are allowed to work in all EU member states; and if he will make a statement. [63984]

Ian Pearson: I refer the right hon. and learned Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Christchurch (Mr. Chope) in response to a similar question, on 21 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 302W.

The Government continue to support the inclusion of notary services within the European Commission's proposal for a directive on services in the internal market.

South West Regional Development Agency Offices

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the cost was of running the South West of England Regional Development Agency offices in Australia, China, Japan and North America in each of the last five years; and what the budget is for these offices for the 2006–07 financial year. [64899]

Alun Michael: The South West of England Regional Development Agency has provided the information on the cost of overseas offices as follows:

£

	Australia	*China*	*Japan*	*North America*	*Total*
2001–02	0	0	180,846	451,873	632,719
2002–03	0	0	264,938	448,698	713,635
2003–04	0	0	410,732	409,939	820,671
2004–05	67,000	50,000	339,530	145,470	601,999
2005–06	70,000	82,000	398,405	122,187	672,592
2006–07	70,000	80,000	400,000	125,000	675,000

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the work of the overseas offices of the South West Regional Development Agency in Australia, China, Japan and North America. [64901]

Alun Michael: These offices are funded by the South West of England Regional Development Agency in support of its statutory purposes under the Regional Development Agencies Act 1998, subject to financial arrangements and reporting requirements also set out in the Act.

The Agency assesses its overseas teams principally in terms of their contribution to foreign direct investment in the South West of England economy, which for 2005–06 was:

Country	*Number of projects*	*New/safeguarded jobs*
USA	7	over 360 new jobs and over 800 jobs safeguarded
Japan	6	over 90 new jobs and over 540 jobs safeguarded
Australia	5	35 new jobs and 15 jobs safeguarded

The Chinese economy is growing at almost 10 per cent. per annum and there is a recognition that the UK lags behind US, Japan and Germany in terms of identifying and exploiting opportunities for investment, trade and collaboration between academic institutions.

The China office aims to seek investment opportunities as its economy evolves from being predominantly a destination for foreign direct investment into an overseas investor itself. It has a role developing partnership opportunities and collaboration on research and development and teaching in support of regional universities. It also works to support UK Trade and Investment to ensure that trade opportunities for South West of England from this rapidly developing market are encouraged and supported.

The Agency plans an independent review of its overseas teams during this financial year. The review will inform the Agency before it commits to any funding beyond March 2007 and will explore the direct and indirect benefits that the overseas offices provide to attracting and retaining investment in the South West region.

Westinghouse Electric Co.

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on the progress of the sale of Westinghouse Electric Co. to Toshiba Corporation; and when he expects the sale to be completed. [63804]

Barry Gardiner *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* The sale of Westinghouse to Toshiba is proceeding smoothly. The parties are working to complete the transaction speedily with timing still dependent on obtaining the necessary regulatory clearances (which began last week with the US anti-trust and CFIUS filings). We currently still expect completion of the sale by end September 2006.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Parliamentary Network

Mr. Drew: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission on how many occasions the parliamentary network has been inaccessible from *(a)* the parliamentary estate and *(b)* remote locations in the last 12 months; and what plans the Commission has to ensure service improvements. [64962]

Nick Harvey: During 2005 there were eight occasions when the Parliamentary Network was not accessible from within Parliament, five occasions when it was not accessible from remote locations using the VPN (virtual private network), and eight occasions when it was not accessible from either location. Most were instances of planned maintenance for which users of the network are normally given seven days' notice, and which is normally undertaken either at weekends or before 9am and after 7pm on weekdays. Over the year overall network availability, excluding planned maintenance, was 99.65 per cent. and including planned maintenance was 98.59 per cent.

Since late January 2006 the performance of the VPN remote access service has deteriorated. The Parliamentary ICT service is, as a matter of priority, working to identify the root cause of slow running experienced on occasions by many users. In the medium to longer term the Parliamentary ICT service has begun a fundamental re-assessment of the technologies used and services offered to remote users. A key objective of this work is to provide more assured access and performance than can be guaranteed at present.

TRANSPORT

Air Quality (Fines)

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* cars and *(b)* ministerial cars have been fined for leaving their engine running unnecessarily under the air quality management areas since this provision came into effect; and if he will make a statement. [65854]

Derek Twigg: No fines for breaking local air quality management regulations have been issued to the Government Car and Despatch Agency for its ministerial cars or any other vehicles it operates.

Aviation White Paper

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether the planned timetable for the publication of the review of the Aviation White Paper will be affected by the postponement of the consultation on railway alternation at Heathrow airport. [64865]

Derek Twigg: In the Air Transport White Paper, we said that by the end of 2006 we would report progress generally on the White Paper policies and proposals. There are no plans to change this timetable in view of the postponement of the consultation on mixed mode at Heathrow airport.

Blackpool Tramway

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether it is his policy to fund the renewal proposals for the Blackpool tramway. [58915]

Derek Twigg: Our policy is to support tram schemes, where they are the right solution, and where they represent value for money. In July 2004, the Department rejected a bid to convert the Blackpool system to a modern light rail system, because the scheme did not represent value for money. We asked the promoters to re-examine lower cost alternatives.

Last year, Blackpool borough council and Lancashire county council submitted a business case to the Department for upgrading the Blackpool tramway. We are considering the proposals based on value for money, including the wider benefits, affordability and region advice.

Bridge Construction (A27 Beddingham)

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects construction to begin on a bridge to replace the level crossing at Beddingham on the A27. [65548]

Dr. Ladyman: A decision on the Inspector's Report following last year's public inquiry is the next stage in the statutory processes of this scheme. The earliest date construction could start of the A27 Southerham to Beddingham improvement, which includes a bridge to replace the Beddingham level crossing, is in late summer this year. This is subject to a favourable decision, completion of statutory procedures, and the availability of funds.

Contracts (Voluntary Sector)

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many contracts are let by his Department to voluntary sector organisations; how many of those are let on an annual basis; and how many of those had received finalised contracts for 2006–07 by 31 March. [63214]

Derek Twigg: This information could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

The Department provides local authorities with financial support for the provision of transport services but it is at their discretion how much of this goes to the voluntary and community sector.

Disability Access

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how the implementation of the voluntary code of practice on disability access on aeroplanes and ships is being monitored by his Department. [64470]

Derek Twigg: The Department for Transport, in conjunction with the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee, has commissioned research projects to monitor both sectors' compliance with the voluntary codes. These projects are due to report shortly.

We are committed to legislation if the codes prove ineffective. The provisions in the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 enable us to do this without further primary legislation.

Disabled Access

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to encourage train operating companies to create disabled access facilities at railway stations. [64482]

Derek Twigg: I refer my hon. Friend to the Written Statement to the House on the Railways for All Strategy on 23 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 39–40WS.

Grievance Procedures

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many complaints of *(a)* bullying and *(b)* sexual harassment have been investigated in his Department in each of the last three years; and how many complaints have been upheld. [63549]

Derek Twigg: There has been a total of 33 complaints of bullying across the Department and its Executive Agencies over the past three years, nine of which have been upheld, and five of which are ongoing. There have been six complaints of sexual harassment, four of which have been upheld. Owing to the low number of cases, and the need to maintain confidentiality, it is not possible to break these figures down further.

These figures include the Government Car and Despatch Agency throughout the period, even although it only became part of the Department for Transport in November 2005. They exclude the Highways Agency, who have not to date recorded this information centrally, although they will do so from 1 April 2006.

The Department's Staff Handbook contains guidance on procedures to be followed in cases of bullying and harassment, and this was supplemented by a Diversity Briefing Note that was published by the Department's Equality and Diversity Unit in June 2005.

The Department has a network of Harassment Contact Officers, who are able to investigate complaints in a confidential manner. We have also run events covering the issues of Bullying and Sexual Harassment as part of our Valuing Diversity series of events in DfT (Central), and the agencies have also included this aspect into their diversity training.

Homeland Security

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 28 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 855W, on homeland security, what the *(a)* lessons learnt and *(b)* improvements made were from the Merseyrail exercises for emergency preparedness in January 2006. [63885]

Derek Twigg: It is not appropriate to discuss the detail of any exercises undertaken or security arrangements in place.

Railways

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to reopen the Sheffield Woodhead to Manchester railway line to freight traffic; what timescale he envisages for making a decision; and if he will make a statement. [65516]

Derek Twigg: We are aware of private sector initiatives to reopen the line but no formal proposal has been put to the Department.

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when *(a)* he and *(b)* his officials last met Arriva Trains Wales to discuss (i) capacity and service provision on the South Wales mainline, (ii) improving connecting services west of Cardiff, (iii) overcrowding on trains and (iv) improvements to station facilities and security. [60824]

Derek Twigg: Ministers meet representatives from the train operating companies from time to time and a wide range of issues are discussed.

There is no specific obligation, within the ATW Franchise Agreement, to enhance station facilities although there is an obligation to enhance security provisions at car parks to railway stations along this route.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he next plans to carry out a *(a)* national and *(b)* regional survey of railway station usage. [62456]

Derek Twigg: The Department for Transport has been collecting usage data from all stations across Great Britain as part of the National Rail Travel Survey. Results from this survey should be available in autumn 2006, and will build both a national and regional picture of rail travel and station usage.

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Meriden of 7 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1280W, on railways, what the levels of overcrowding in peak hours were on train lines on each *(a)* line and *(b)* franchise in each year since 1996–97, broken down by passenger transport executive area. [63976]

Derek Twigg: Figures for Passengers in Excess of Capacity (PIXC), a measure which applies to weekday commuter trains arriving in London between 07:00 and 09:59 and those departing London between 16:00 and 18:59 for the train operators, are available in the Libraries of the House.

The PIXC measure does not apply to other services and the additional information requested could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the implications for direct railway services between Leeds and London of the decision to start direct railway services between Sunderland and London; and if he will make a statement. [65517]

Derek Twigg: An assessment of the decision is being carried out by Network Rail on direction from the Office of Rail Regulation. It is expected to be completed by June.

Road Accidents (Essex)

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many people were *(a)* killed and *(b)* injured in road accidents in Essex between 1995 and the latest available date. [64624]

Dr. Ladyman: 832 people were killed and 70,816 were seriously and slightly injured in personal injury road accidents in Essex (excluding the unitary authorities of Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock) between the years 1995 and 2004 (the latest for which figures are available).

School Run

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate the Department has made of the total number of miles driven to take children to and from school over the last five years. [65990]

Dr. Ladyman: Data from the National Travel Survey showing the number of miles travelled by car drivers for the purpose of escorting others to education are given in the following table. Data are provided on a single-year basis to 2002. Prior to this, the NTS sample was too small to give reliable single-year estimates. Data have therefore been presented for 1999–2001 as a three-year average.

Million

	Total mileage
1999–2001 average	3,940
2002	3,802
2003	3,947
2004	4,422

Speeding (Motorcyclists)

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps he *(a)* is taking and *(b)* plans to take to reduce the chances of motorcyclists being charged for speeding on the basis of inaccurate evidence; and if he will make a statement. [65856]

Dr. Ladyman: Evidence of speeding for possible use in court must be provided by equipment that has been type-approved by the Home Secretary. No equipment receives type approval unless it has successfully passed rigorous and comprehensive tests both operationally and in the laboratory. No specific test is prescribed that involves motorcycles, or any other particular sort of vehicle, because they are not considered to present any distinct problems. The operational tests do, however, involve measuring the speed of any passing traffic including motorcycles. The Home Office are wholly satisfied that when used in accordance with their type approval, the manufacturers' instructions and the Code of Practice issued by the Association of Chief Police Officers all type approved devices are accurate and reliable on motorcycles and in the evidence they produce.

Television Sets

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many television sets are in operation in the Department *(a)* in total, *(b)* in Ministers' private offices and *(c)* in each building in the Department; and how many television licences are held by the Department. [62808]

Derek Twigg: The Department for Transport has 218 television sets. There is one television in the office of each Minister and one in the private office of each Minister. The breakdown on the number of television sets in each building has been placed in the Libraries of the House. 69 television licences are held by the Department.

The number of television sets will not in all cases strictly correspond to the number of licences held because of Crown exemption in situations where the equipment is used for official purposes.

Data have not been provided for the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency, an Executive Agency of the Department, as the requested information is not held centrally and can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Football (Role Models)

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what responses she received to her letter of 2004 to football club chairmen on reminding them of the responsibility players have as positive role models. [65819]

Mr. Caborn: The purpose of my letter of 9 August 2004 to the chairmen of the 92 Premier and Football League clubs was to remind them of the huge impact football can have on wider society.

No formal response was required. However, those chairmen who did respond agreed with the sentiments expressed in my letter and assured me that they would take the opportunity to convey my message to both their players and manager.

Olympic Games

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) if she will make a statement on progress with site assembly at the Olympic Park and planned changes to the configuration of the park; [65114]

(2) what recent discussions her Department has had with the Reuben Brothers on site assembly at the Olympic Park; and what assessment she has made of the future options for site assembly. [65115]

Mr. Caborn *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* Good progress continues to be made in assembling the land for the Olympic Park. More than 80 per cent. of the land needed is already in public authority control. The London Development Agency (LDA) is responsible for the process of land assembly and its preferred option for acquiring land continues to be through reaching private agreements with landowners. Given the size and complexity of the site, the LDA has decided that it is necessary to exercise its powers of compulsory acquisition so as to be sure of securing possession of the land when required. A Public Inquiry for this Compulsory Purchase Order will begin on 9 May 2006.

The Olympic Delivery Authority are continuing to test and validate their plans to ensure that they can deliver the best Games and legacy facilities. No wholesale changes are being proposed, but there may be some adjustments to the layout of facilities within the existing Olympic Park area. Any such changes are likely to be announced before the summer.

The Department has had no discussions with the Reuben Brothers on the process of land assembly.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Abortion

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make it her policy to exclude counselling for abortion and abortifacient birth control to school pupils; and if she will make a statement. [64251]

Beverley Hughes: The Government support the provision of school-based health services where the school identifies a need. The decision to provide such services, and the content of that service, is for the individual school governing body in consultation with pupils, parent and the wider school community.

Capital Expenditure

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the total capital expenditure has been for each school in the 100 *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools with the (i) highest and (ii) lowest percentage of children receiving free school meals in the past 10 years. [66087]

Jacqui Smith: Capital allocations are made on a local authority basis, and information is not held centrally on individual schools. Expenditure on individual schools is determined by each local authority in accordance with priorities set out in its asset management plan, utilising funding allocated by the Department for Education and Skills and other sources available to the local authority.

Capital allocations from the Department to local authorities in England have increased from less than £700 million in 1996–97 to a planned £6.3 billion in 2007–08, rising to £8 billion by 2010–11.

Class Sizes

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average *(a)* class size and *(b)* pupil to teacher ratio was in (i) primary schools and (ii) secondary schools in (A) Taunton constituency, (B) Somerset and (C) England in each year since 1992. [64346]

Jacqui Smith: The following table provides the average class size and pupil-teacher ratios in maintained primary and secondary schools in Taunton constituency, Somerset local authority and in England, January 1992 to 2005, the latest information available.

Pupil-teacher ratio information prior to 1997 is not available at constituency level.

Average class size[1] and pupil-teacher ratios[2] in maintained primary and secondary[3] schools in Taunton constituency, Somerset local authority and England: January of each year

	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Taunton constituency							
Average class size							
Primary	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	28.3	28.8
Secondary	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	[illegible]	24.4
Pupil-teacher ratio							
Primary	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	23.7	24.5
Secondary	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	17.9	17.9
Somerset local authority							
Average class size							
Primary	26.8	27.0	26.9	27.0	27.3	27.6	27.8
Secondary	21.4	21.5	22.1	22.5	23.2	23.2	23.9
Pupil-teacher ratio							
Primary	22.3	22.5	22.6	22.6	23.2	23.5	23.9
Secondary	16.0	16.3	16.6	17.0	18.0	18.0	18.1
England							
Average class size							
Primary	26.4	26.6	26.9	27.1	27.3	27.5	27.7
Secondary	20.6	20.9	21.4	21.5	21.7	21.7	21.7
Pupil-teacher ratio							
Primary	22.2	22.4	22.7	22.9	23.2	23.4	23.7
Secondary	15.8	16.1	16.4	16.5	16.6	16.7	16.9

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Taunton constituency							
Average class size							
Primary	28.9	28.4	27.1	26.5	26.4	26.3	25.8
Secondary	24.3	24.5	25.4	25.1	25.2	25.1	24.6
Pupil-teacher ratio							
Primary	24.7	23.9	22.8	22.2	22.6	22.3	21.5
Secondary	18.3	18.6	18.9	18.7	19.0	18.4	18.0
Somerset local authority							
Average class size							
Primary	28.0	27.6	26.9	26.0	26.2	26.1	25.8
Secondary	23.9	23.6	23.9	23.5	23.5	23.6	23.3

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Pupil-teacher ratio							
Primary	24.3	23.7	22.9	22.2	22.1	22.2	21.9
Secondary	18.4	18.6	18.5	18.2	18.2	18.1	17.9
England							
Average class size							
Primary	27.5	27.1	26.7	26.3	26.3	26.2	26.2
Secondary	21.9	22.0	22.0	21.9	21.9	21.8	21.7
Pupil-teacher ratio							
Primary	23.5	23.3	22.9	22.5	22.6	22.7	22.5
Secondary	17.0	17.2	17.1	16.9	17.0	17.0	16.7

[1] Classes taught during the one selected period in each school on the day of census in January.
[2] The within-school PTR is calculated by dividing the total FTE number of pupils on roll in schools by the total FTE number of qualified teachers regularly employed in schools.
[3] Includes middle schools as deemed.
n/a = Not available.
Source:
Annual School Census

Early-years Education

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) whether the levels of guaranteed unit of funding per child for free nursery education places in 2006–07 will take into account the increased entitlement for nursery education to 38 weeks per year; [65284]

(2) what criteria the Department used to allocate guaranteed unit of funding per child for free nursery education places in 2005–06; [65286]

(3) what the guaranteed unit of funding per child was for free nursery education places in Nottinghamshire for *(a)* 2005–06 and *(b)* 2006–07. [65287]

Jacqui Smith: For 2005–06, the Schools Formula Spending Share (FSS) system was used to distribute resources for nursery education between local authorities. The formula for under 5s used pupil numbers, weighted for deprivation, area costs and sparsity to divide up the overall total of resources for under 5s. That resulted in a unit of funding for under 5s of £2,980 for Nottinghamshire. For 2006–07, the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) replaced Schools FSS, and £82 million was added to the total of DSG to fund the increased entitlement for nursery education from 33 weeks to 38 weeks per year. DSG has a single unit of funding for all pupils from 3 to 15: the baseline figure for Nottinghamshire for 2005–06 was £3,246 per pupil; and the figure for 2006–07 is £3,457 per pupil, which takes account of the additional funding for the increased entitlement for nursery education.

Examinations (Permitted Languages)

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills in what languages other than English examinations may be taken; and how many students took examinations in a language other than English in each of the last eight years. [64816]

Jacqui Smith: Examinations leading to general qualifications offered by the three England-based unitary awarding bodies must normally be taken in the medium of English, except where competency in another language is being examined, for example, in the case of modern foreign languages. A very small number of students also take some examinations with those awarding bodies in the medium of Welsh or Irish (Gaeilge), but information about the numbers is not collected centrally.

List 99

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Havant (Mr. Willetts), of 20 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1622W, on List 99, on what basis her Department's policy not to identify anyone below Secretary of State level was formulated; and if she will make a statement. [47952]

Ruth Kelly: The powers under section 142 of the Education Act 2002 (whether or not to make a direction that an individual should be added to List 99) are exercisable by, and expressed in terms of, the Secretary of State. Responsibility lies with and was accepted by the Secretary of State and was confirmed in her statement of 12 January 2006. The case of Carltona, Ltd v Commissioners of Works and Others, [1943] All ER 2, recognised the principle of delegation but stated that,

> "The Minister is responsible. It is he who must answer before Parliament for anything that his officials [and junior Ministers] have done under his authority."

Pupil Expenditure

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much was spent per pupil in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in (i) England, (ii) Hull and (iii) East Riding in the last year for which figures are available. [65463]

Jacqui Smith: The following table contains the available information:

	Primary school based expenditure per pupil[1] (£)	*Secondary school based expenditure per pupil[2] (£)*	*Combined local authority and school based expenditure per pupil[3] (£)*
City of Kingston upon Hull	2,990	4,030	4,160
East Riding of Yorkshire	2,760	3,510	3,800
England	2,910	3,800	4,140

[1] School based expenditure includes only expenditure incurred directly by local authority schools. This includes the pay of teachers and school-based support staff, school premises costs, books and equipment, and certain other supplies and services, less any capital items funded from recurrent spending and income from sales, fees and charges and rents and rates. This excludes the central cost of support services such as home to school transport, local authority administration and the financing of capital expenditure. The pupil data are drawn from the DfES Annual Schools Census adjusted to be on a financial year basis.

[2] Combined local authority and school based expenditure includes all expenditure on the education of children in local authority maintained establishments and pupils educated by the authority other than in maintained establishments. This includes both school based expenditure and all elements of central LA expenditure except youth and community and capital expenditure from revenue (CERA). Certain elements of central local authority expenditure cannot be attributed to a particular phase of education and consequently a sector breakdown is not available. Pupil figures include all pre-primary pupils, including those under 5s funded by the authority and being educated in private settings (only available from 1999–00), pupils educated in maintained mainstream schools and any other local authority maintained pupils. All pupil numbers are adjusted to be on a financial year basis.

Notes:

2004–05 figures are as reported by local authorities in their section 52 outturn statements as at 20 April 2006 and are subject to change. All figures are shown in cash terms and rounded to the nearest £10.

Pupil:teacher Ratios

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the pupil to teacher ratio has been in West Lancashire *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in each year since 1980. [64297]

Jacqui Smith: The following table provides the pupil teacher ratios in maintained nursery and primary and secondary schools in west Lancashire constituency, in each January from 1997 to 2005, the latest information available.

Pupil to teacher ratio information prior to 1997 is not available at constituency level.

Pupil-teacher ratios[1] in maintained primary and secondary schools in West Lancashire constituency: January of each year

	Nursery and Primary	*Secondary*
1997	23.4	16.7
1998	23.3	17.1
1999	22.8	16.9
2000	23.2	16.6
2001	22.5	16.8
2002	21.2	16.4
2003	20.9	16.8
2004	20.9	16.2
2005	21.2	15.6

[1] The within-school PTR is calculated by dividing the total FTE number of pupils on roll in schools by the total FTE number of qualified teachers regularly employed in schools.

Source:

Annual School Census

School Admissions

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 28 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 888W, on school admissions, what powers *(a)* schools adjudicators and *(b)* admissions forums will have to ask for details of admissions other than in response to objections. [65945]

Jacqui Smith: The provisions set out in clause 42 of the Education and Inspections Bill will permit the schools adjudicator to consider any aspect of a school's admission arrangements in addition to the aspect which is the subject of the objection. The Bill does not give the adjudicator any power to consider schools' admission arrangements where he has not received an objection.

Admission forums have a different remit. They are required by regulations to give advice to admission authorities on their admission arrangements, and where this advice is not followed, clause 38(8) of the Bill will enable them to refer objections to the adjudicator. As part of this process, they should see all local schools' admission arrangements and will be able to request these where they have not been supplied.

Admission forums will also be able to prepare and publish reports on how well an area's admission arrangements engender fair access and work in the interests of parents and children. The local authority, neighbouring local authorities, and admission authorities in their area will be required by regulations to provide the admission forum with any information they hold that will enable them to produce their report.

School Music Facilities

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funding her Department has made available for school music facilities in *(a)* Kingston upon Hull and *(b)* Hull North in each academic year since 1997. [64104]

Jacqui Smith: The answer to my hon. Friend's question on school sport facilities (64103) addresses the issue of capital funding allocations.

In addition, since 1999 we have provided considerable revenue funding support for music provision through Music Standards Fund (MSF) allocations to local authorities. The purpose of the MSF is to enhance opportunities for pupils to access musical education of high quality.

(a) Since 1999 the following Music Standards Fund payments have been made to Kingston-upon-Hull:

	Allocation (£)
1999–2000	512,000
2000–01	512,000
2001–02	512,000
2002–03	512,000
2003–04	522,000
2004–05	512,000
2005–06	522,000
2006–07	522,000

The allocations for 2003–04, 2005–06 and 2006–07 include an additional £10,000 for the development of a Kingston-upon-Hull Wider Opportunities programme. The allocation to Kingston-upon-Hull's music services for 2007–08 will be £512,000.

In addition, in December 2005 we announced an increase of £30 million over the years 2006–07 and 2007–08, intended specifically to support instrumental and vocal tuition for Key Stage 2 pupils. Of the £3 million available for 2006–07, £16,533 has been allocated to Kingston-upon-Hull schools. In 2007–08 the allocation will be £126,750.

(b) We do not hold figures for how much of the funding allocated to Kingston-upon-Hull was spent on school music provision in Hull North.

Skills Training

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people aged *(a)* 30 to 39 years, *(b)* 40 to 49 years and *(c)* 50 years and over received skills training in (i) Hull North constituency and (ii) Kingston-upon-Hull in each year since 1997. [64100]

Phil Hope: The following table shows the numbers of non-academic long courses of more than 24 weeks duration undertaken in Hull North and in Kingston-upon-Hull by academic years and for the age bands requested.

	Hull North			*Kingston-upon-Hull*[1]		
	30–39	*40–49*	*50+*	*30–39*	*40–49*	*50+*
1997/98	800	530	364	2,590	1,648	1,083
1998/99	877	501	343	2,720	1,604	1,126
1999/2000	777	480	389	2,432	1,528	1,163
2000/01	727	500	436	2,271	1,514	1,255
2001/02	856	592	527	2,645	1,777	1,469
2002/03	999	688	564	2,902	2,050	1,680
2003/04	872	632	531	2,533	1,904	1,637
2004/05	876	630	538	2,565	1,885	1,640

[1] Figures for Kingston-upon-Hull include Kingston-upon-Hull North. The other Kingston-upon-Hull constituencies are Kingston-upon-Hull East and Kingston-upon-Hull West and Hessle.

Source:

Individual Student Record 1997/98 to 2001/02 and Individual Learner Record 2002/03 to 2004/05.

Teachers

Willie Rennie: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what provisions exist for the *(a)* suspension and *(b)* banning of teachers (i) accused and (ii) convicted of sexual assault. [65404]

Ruth Kelly *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* All LEAs and educational establishments should have procedures for dealing with allegations against staff that aim to strike a balance between the need to protect children from abuse, and the need to protect staff and volunteers from false or unfounded accusations. Any decision to suspend or dismiss a teacher is taken locally, School Staffing (England) Regulations 2003 give both the governing body and the head teacher the power to suspend any person employed or engaged to work at the school. Usually such action is agreed by the governing body, though where a decision should not be delayed, the head teacher may use their discretion to remove a teacher by suspending or terminating their employment with immediate effect.

Employers have a statutory duty, under the Education (Restriction of Employment) Regulations 2000, to make a report to my Department when a person is dismissed from employment on the grounds of misconduct or resigns in circumstances which would have led to their dismissal if they had not resigned. With the support of the panel of experts chaired by Sir Roger Singleton Panel it is then the responsibility of the Secretary of State to consider whether to prohibit the person from working with children in the future by placing them on List 99.

Where an individual who states they are employed to teach or work with children is convicted of a sexual assault, the police also report this for consideration. A number of convictions are considered sufficiently serious to warrant an immediate and automatic bar from working with children—'an offence contrary to section 3 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (sexual assault)'—is a conviction that would result in an automatic bar from teaching.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment her Department has made of the number of *(a)* male and *(b)* female teachers in (i) Southend, (ii) Essex, (iii) Greater London and (iv) England who left the profession as a result of stress in each year since 1997. [64252]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested is not collect centrally.

Research into the factors affecting teachers' decisions to leave the profession, commissioned by the Department and published in 2003, found that stress was cited as 'of great importance' by around 37 per cent. of primary leavers and around 34 per cent. of secondary leavers in England in calendar year 2002. The full report can be found at http://www.dfes.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/RR430.pdf

The Department has looked closely at stress issues and tackling the sources of stress, such as excessive workload, by providing practical guidance and practical support:

Workforce reform—as well as any reduction in overall hours, reducing administration, more support staff, limits on cover and guaranteed planning, preparation and assessment time will have a positive impact.

Encouraging better behaviour and attendance—improving pupil behaviour has a direct impact on reducing teacher stress.

We have also encouraged better management of teacher health matters through improved occupational health guidance for schools and LEAs, and have worked with employers directly in relation to early intervention to avoid ill-health retirements.

We have supported the setting up of the Teacher Support Network's (TSN) telephone helpline since its launch in 1999. In March 2006, the service was expanded to provide online support as well.

We have since November 2003 also supported the TSN's 'well-being' pilot in London schools, which focuses on sustainable improvements in staff well-being and the development of management practices aimed at creating healthy workplaces.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Affordable Dwellings

Andrew Stunell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average *(a)* land cost and *(b)* building cost was for an affordable dwelling in each region in England in the most recent year for which information is available. [63433]

Yvette Cooper: The following table shows the average land cost and works cost in each Government office region in 2003–04 through Social Housing Grant via the Housing Corporation for new build schemes only.

£

Region	Average Land cost	Works cost
East Midlands	26,283	50,344
Eastern	23,465	71,470
London	40,779	90,392
Merseyside	6,455	71,629
North East	6,912	68,533
North West	9,988	70,876
South East	30,034	70,481
South West	19,238	67,888
West Midlands	16,343	61,405
Yorkshire and Humberside	7,599	71,927

Source:
Housing Corporation

Includes projects for social rent, intermediate rent and sale through Approved Development Programme and Local Authority Social Housing Grant.

Compulsory Purchase

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many compulsory purchase orders have been made in each year since 1991, broken down by region. [64432]

Yvette Cooper: Data on compulsory purchase orders is not available for the whole of this period. The following table sets out the number of confirmed CPOs submitted by local authorities from 1994 to 2005.

Confirmed local authority compulsory purchase orders

Region	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
East Midlands	6	9	7	6	8	5	6	5	3	3	3	24
East of England	3	6	4	5	2	4	4	10	4	9	4	5
London	9	10	21	16	22	23	27	22	22	15	33	24
North East	10	7	14	16	11	21	14	5	5	8	9	3
North West	49	43	58	62	56	42	55	45	47	39	48	30
South East	11	8	7	10	11	13	10	5	2	4	3	1
South West	4	6	15	7	2	2	4	3	4	5	4	6
West Midlands	13	12	17	31	34	24	12	13	19	17	16	12
Yorkshire and the Humber	13	5	15	10	17	13	≥0	7	12	6	8	3
Total	118	106	158	163	163	147	135	115	118	106	128	109

E-enabling

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the level of take-up for individual e-enabled local government services is recorded. [64289]

Mr. Woolas: Data on the level of website usage and take-up of selected e-enabled local government services is collected from individual local authorities in England as part of implementing electronic Government returns. The results from IEG6 statements in April 2006 are currently being analysed. The results from IEG5 statements in December 2005 show that in 2005–06 local authorities accepted 2.7 million online e-payment transactions and 24,000 online planning applications, whilst over 13 million people now visit local authority websites each month.

In addition, research activity commissioned as part of the ODPM take-up campaign due to launch nationally on 8 May 2006 will monitor levels of citizen awareness and take-up of local government e-services.

Homelessness

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many households were classified as homeless in *(a)* Beverley and Holderness, *(b)* London and *(c)* England in each of the last 10 years; and if he will make a statement. [62362]

Yvette Cooper: Information about local authorities' actions under homelessness legislation is collected quarterly at local authority level. The constituency of Beverley and Holderness is contained within the East Riding of Yorkshire district council.

The Government are committed to reducing homelessness and halving the number of households in temporary accommodation by 2010. Its strategy for achieving this is set out in "Sustainable Communities: settled homes; changing lives".

The number of households accepted by the district council as eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in priority need for each year since 1996, and the number of households in temporary accommodation arranged by the council under homelessness legislation as at 31 December in each year is tabled as follows. Information is also collected on the number of people who sleep rough—that is, those who are literally roofless on a single night—and these are also presented in the table.

The duty owed to a person accepted as eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in priority need is to secure suitable accommodation. If a settled home is not immediately available, the authority may secure temporary accommodation until a settled home becomes available. As an alternative to the provision of temporary accommodation some authorities arrange for

households to remain in their current accommodation (homeless at home), until a settled solution becomes available.

Households accepted[1] as homeless during the year, households in temporary accommodation[2] at the end of the year, and numbers of rough sleepers[3]

	East Riding of Yorkshire district council			London		
	Households accepted during the year	*Households in TA as at 31 December*	*Rough sleepers*	*Households accepted during the year*	*Households in TA as at 31 December*	*Rough sleepers*
1996[4]	[5]—	6	[5]—	25,730	24,600	[5]—
1997	247	62	[5]—	24,370	25,120	[5]—
1998	318	56	0	26,310	29,120	621
1999	283	53	0	28,380	35,900	635
2000	320	48	2	28,230	41,540	546
2001	332	59	2	30,590	44,970	357
2002	462	37	0	28,830	51,030	321
2003	503	44	0	30,510	56,950	267
2004	462	38	0	28,050	61,670	265
2005	440	72	0	22,700	63,800	221

	England		
	Households accepted during the year	*Households in TA as at 31 December*	*Rough sleepers*
1996	113,590	42,220	[5]—
1997	102,000	44,870	[5]—
1998	104,630	53,790	1,850
1999	105,370	62,180	1,633
2000	111,340	73,080	1,180
2001	117,830	77,510	703
2002	123,840	85,140	596
2003	135,590	94,610	504
2004	127,770	101,030	508
2005	100,170	98,730	459

[1] All households eligible under homelessness legislation, found to be unintentionally homeless and in a priority need category, and consequently owed a main homelessness duty.

[2] Households in accommodation either pending a decision on their homelessness application or awaiting allocation of a settled home following acceptance. Excludes those households designated as "homeless at home" that have remained in their existing accommodation and have the same rights to suitable alternative accommodation as those in accommodation arranged by the authority.

[3] Number of persons sleeping rough, based on local authority mid-year counts or estimates. Data not collected prior to 1998.

[4] Reflects households accepted and housed under homelessness provisions of the 1985 Housing Act; subsequent years includes cases accepted under the 1996 Housing Act.

[5] Denotes data not available.

Source:

ODPM PIE Homelessness returns (quarterly) and HSSA returns (annual).

Key Worker Initiative

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the *(a)* take-up and *(b)* occupation rates of accommodation built under the Government's key worker initiative scheme. [51074]

Yvette Cooper: As at 28 February 2006, 2,817 new homes have been provided through the Key Worker Living programme. Of these 65 per cent. have been taken up and are occupied with a further 8 per cent. reserved/under offer.

Where there are vacant units the reasons for these vary from scheme to scheme but to date common features include:

many units have been only recently completed and are just being marketed

some units have been affected by market conditions including competition from developers who are offering large discounts on private units as a short term expedient to shift their stock

limited eligibility criteria in some parts of the country

failure of some RSLs to effectively market the units

To address this, the eligibility criteria for all Key Worker Living new build units was expanded from 14 November to include:

all clinical NHS staff (except doctors and dentists),

teachers in schools, further education and sixth form colleges,

police officers and community support officers,

uniformed staff in Fire and Rescue Services,

prison and probation service staff,

social workers, occupational therapists, educational psychologists, speech and language therapists, rehabilitation officers for the visually impaired and qualified nursery nurses,

local authority employed clinical staff (e.g. nurses) and;

local authority planners.

In addition Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) can consider grant neutral changes to tenure and expanded eligibility criteria.

In addition 23 new Homebuy Agents are now in place across the country to improve marketing and information to first time buyers. This will make it easier for first time buyers and key workers to find out about local schemes, and also for RSLs to respond in a more flexible and informed way to local demand.

National Affordable Housing Programme (Coventry)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what funding is available for temporary to permanent housing initiatives in the 2006 to 2008 National Affordable Housing Programme, in Coventry; and if he will make a statement. [64750]

Yvette Cooper: At present no funds have been made available in Coventry for temporary to permanent housing initiatives through the Affordable Housing Programme 2006–08.

ODPM supports innovative schemes which provide settled housing solutions for households in temporary accommodation. Where these schemes offer value for money but require capital investment ODPM would encourage regional housing boards to support bids for Affordable Housing Programme funding.

Overcrowed Accommodation (Lancashire)

Mr. Evans: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many *(a)* households and *(b)* children in (i) Lancashire and (ii) Ribble Valley are living in overcrowded accommodation. [65919]

Yvette Cooper: There are two measures of overcrowding—the statutory definition and the bedroom standard.

The most recent estimate of the number of households failing the bedroom standard in Lancashire county is 10,000. This is taken from an ad hoc report based on combined data from both ODPM's 'Survey of English Housing' and the Department of Work and Pension's 'Family Resources Survey' for the three years 2000–01, 2001–02 and 2002–03.

Reliable estimates for the number of children living in overcrowded accommodation in Lancashire are not available. Separate data for Ribble Valley are also not available.

A one-off estimate was made in the autumn of 2001 that there were approximately 25,000 households across the whole of England that were in conditions of overcrowding that breached the statutory standard. This estimate was based on data from the 'Survey of English Housing' for the period 1997–98 to 1999–2000 and from the 1996 'English House Condition Survey'.

Recycling (Swindon)

Mr. Wills: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much funding Swindon borough council received to support recycling in each year since 1997. [60997]

Mr. Bradshaw: I have been asked to reply.

Swindon borough council have received the following funding in respect of waste minimisation and recycling since 1997.

2005–06

£40,000 CA site grant from the Waste Resources and Action Programme (WRAP)

£19,923.80 for Direct Consultancy Support from the Local Authority Support Unit.

£142,622.94 allocated from the Waste Performance and Efficiency Grant (WPEG)

I can additionally confirm that they have been allocated £378,206.25 from WPEG in the forthcoming 2006–07 financial year and will be receiving £396,244.28 in 2007–08.

Right to Buy

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proportion of right to buy receipts were *(a)* paid to his Department and *(b)* retained by councils in each year since 1997; and how much of the total revenue was spent on housing. [61701]

Yvette Cooper: The following table shows total capital receipts from right-to-buy sales of local authority dwellings in England in the years 1997–98 onwards. The figures are net of discount and are as reported by local authorities.

The table also shows the value of housing capital receipts set-aside by local authorities to repay debt. Until the introduction of the pooling regime in 2004–05, set-aside was the mechanism that allowed a proportion of housing capital receipts to be redistributed for investment elsewhere.

As can be seen from the following table, since 1997 the Government have consistently invested more in housing than they have received in receipts. In 2004–05 the amount paid to Government from all housing receipts (not just right to buy) was £1.7 billion. The amount invested in housing was £4.1 billion i.e. almost 2½ times the amount received in receipts. The ratio is expected to increase substantially in the future.

	Total housing capital receipts (£ million)	*Set aside/pooling (£ million)*	*Set aside/pooling as percentage of housing capital receipts*	*Capital investment (£ million)*	*Investment greater than set-aside/ pooling by £ million*
1997–98	1,438	943	66	1,894	951
1998–99	1,630	1,085	67	2,098	1,013
1999–2000	2,249	1,477	66	2,173	696
2000–01	2,441	1,626	67	2,866	1,240
2001–02	2,244	1,382	62	2,696	1,314
2002–03	3,474	1,626	47	2,943	1,317
2003–04	3,622	No data	n/a	3,964	n/a
2004–05	3,193	1,700	53	4,135	2,435
2005–06	No data	[1]840	n/a	[2]5,223	4,383
2006–07	No data	[1]801	n/a	[2]5,347	4,546
2007–08	No data	[1]753	n/a	[2]5,665	4,912

[1] Estimated pooled housing capital receipts.

[2] Programmed expenditure.

Note:

Pooling replaced set-aside as the mechanism to invest housing capital receipts in 2004–05.

Supporting People

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the budget of the Supporting People programme was for *(a)* north Yorkshire and *(b)* city of York in (i) 2005–06 and (ii) 2006–07. [65540]

Mr. Woolas: The information requested is set out in the tables.

North Yorkshire

£000

	Supporting People Programme Grant	*Supporting People Administration Grant*
2005–06	15,584,012	385,412
2006–07	15,274,485	385,412

City of York

£000

	Supporting People Programme Grant	*Supporting People Administration Grant*
2005–06	8,640,941	243,102
2006–07	8,436,979	243,102

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the impact of the reduced level of funding for the Supporting People programme on *(a)* homelessness, *(b)* social inclusion and *(c)* social welfare in (i) west Yorkshire and (ii) city of York. [65542]

Mr. Woolas: Supporting People grant funding is paid to local authorities to enable the provision of housing-related support for vulnerable people. All authorities are expected to manage their funding effectively and efficiently, based on local needs and priorities. To support and provide a platform for that, authorities have been required to review all of their existing services and to develop a five year strategy for their local programme. Within this context, it is for individual authorities to decide how to appropriately manage any changes in funding.

World Cup (Complimentary Tickets)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many complimentary tickets his Department has received for games taking place at the FIFA World Cup 2006 in Germany. [63901]

Jim Fitzpatrick: None.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Swaziland/Lesotho

13. **James Duddridge:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the effects of the withdrawal of the high commissioner from Swaziland and Lesotho. [65131]

Ian Pearson: We enjoy full diplomatic relations with the Governments of Lesotho and Swaziland. The right hon. Paul Boateng, our high commissioner in Pretoria, is accredited as non-resident high commissioner to both countries. We also maintain regular contact with the high commissioners of Lesotho and Swaziland in London.

Mauritania

14. **Daniel Kawczynski:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Mauritanian Government on the illegal immigrants coming to the UK from Mauritanian ports. [65132]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has not had any discussions with Mauritania on this subject. The Government take illegal migration seriously. Engaging with source and transit countries in Africa on migration was a priority for our EU presidency.

The UK has offered to co-fund with the European Commission, through a contribution of €81,000, a UNHCR project in Mauritania, which aims to improve Mauritanian capacity to manage migration.

European Constitution

15. **Mr. Bone:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on his plans for a referendum on any new treaty establishing a constitution for Europe. [65133]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Government have made it clear that the EU constitutional treaty will only be ratified in the UK after a referendum of the British people. There is no other treaty, so discussion of other referendums would merely be abstract speculation. The EU needs to continue its focus on delivering economic reform and tackling the challenges of globalisation.

Sudan

17. **Malcolm Bruce:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps he is taking to impose sanctions on the Government of Sudan in response to alleged war crimes in Darfur. [65135]

Ian Pearson: The UK is a leading proponent of sanctions against those who violate human rights or impede the peace process in Darfur. We have identified several individuals from all sides to the conflict who we believe meet this criteria and have proposed to the Security Council that they face targeted sanctions under UN Security Council resolution 1591. We hope that a Security Council resolution imposing these measures will be passed within a day or so.

Middle East

18. **Michael Gove:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on his policy towards Islamist organisations in the middle east. [65136]

Dr. Howells: There are a wide variety of Islamist organisations in the middle east. We encourage political groups to pursue their agendas within the democratic process and to embrace universal principles of human rights, including the rejection of violence as a means to achieving political objectives.

19. **Michael Connarty:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of Israel on Israel's occupation of Palestinian land as defined by the 1967 boundaries. [65137]

Dr. Howells: The territory which Israel occupied in June 1967 remains occupied territory. UN Security Council resolution 242 (1967), which the UK supported, calls for the withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the conflict. The building of settlements and the barrier on this land are both illegal. We have made our concerns clear to the Israeli Government.

The final determination of borders is for both parties to negotiate.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions his Department has had with representatives of Hamas; and if he will make a statement. [64748]

Dr. Howells: We have had no recent discussions with representatives of Hamas.

Iran

20. **John Penrose:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on Iran's nuclear programme. [65138]

Dr. Howells: I refer to the answer my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary gave earlier.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the International Atomic Energy Agency on Iran's nuclear programme. [64746]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and senior Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials are in frequent contact with the Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and his staff concerning Iran's nuclear programme. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary most recently spoke to Dr. El-Baradei on 14 April.

The United Nations Security Council has asked Dr. El-Baradei to report by 28 April on Iran's compliance with the measures required by the IAEA Board of Governors. The Security Council will consider next steps after that.

Kashmir

21. **Mr. Paul Goodman:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the government of Pakistan and India about Kashmir. [65139]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary regularly discusses a broad range of issues, including Kashmir, with the Governments of both India and Pakistan. He discussed Kashmir with President Musharraf during his visit to Islamabad on 14 February 2005 and with the then Indian Foreign Minister, Natwar Singh, during the latter's visit to London on 27 June 2005.

Kosovo

22. **Mr. Randall:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress has been made with the talks on the final status of Kosovo; and if he will make a statement. [65140]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: We continue to support the status process led by UN Status Envoy, Martti Ahtisaari. We are encouraging both Belgrade and Pristina to engage constructively in this process.

My right hon. Friend, the Foreign Secretary, chaired a ministerial contact group meeting in London on 31 January. The statement which issued forms the basis for the British Government's approach to the Kosovo status process. It has been placed in the Library of the House.

David Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the future governance of Kosovo. [64831]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The future governance of Kosovo is an issue that will be determined by the United Nations-led status process. The former President of Finland, Martti Ahtisaari, has been appointed the UN status envoy and is leading this political process on behalf of the international community. On 31 January 2006 in London, a Ministerial Contact Group statement emphasised that a multi-ethnic settlement is the only workable option. A copy of the statement has been placed in the Library of the House. Contact Group Ministers (United States, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy and Russia together with representatives of the European Union) also re-stated the international community's willingness to establish, for an interim period after the settlement, appropriate civilian and military structures to help ensure compliance with the settlement's provisions.

David Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the movement of people in and out of Kosovo since the commencement of NATO action there. [64832]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: During the NATO campaign, persecution by the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia military led to the temporary exodus of over 500,000 Kosovo-Albanian refugees moving to Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania. Shortly after the campaign ended a large majority of those Kosovo-Albanian refugees returned. However, after the end of the campaign an estimated 65,000 to 70,000 Kosovo Serbs left Kosovo.

Since 1999 the overall numbers of Kosovo-Serbs, previously displaced from their homes, returning to Kosovo has remained disappointingly low. Uncertainty over the outcome of the final status process and its impact on the sustainability of returns create significant disincentives to return to Kosovo. Economic security remains very limited. Weak property rights protection, discouragement from the authorities in Belgrade and shortages of social housing all contribute to an atmosphere of uncertainty and insecurity. We are encouraging Kosovo's Provisional Institutions to take the essential actions necessary to enable those who wish to return to do so and create an environment conducive

to facilitate returns. We are also urging the Government in Belgrade to sign the protocol on returns agreed in September 2005.

Colombia

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has held with *(a)* the Secretary of State for Defence and *(b)* others about (i) human rights and (ii) the personal security of trade unionists in Colombia. [64787]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has had no recent discussions with my right hon. Friend the Defence Secretary about these issues. However, my noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, with responsibility for Latin America, has discussed human rights, including the legitimate security concerns of Colombian trade unionists, with both British and Colombian trade unionists on 6 March and 6 February respectively. He has also raised human rights in discussions with the Colombian Vice-President on 28 November 2005, the Colombian embassy in London and non-governmental organisations. Human rights are at the heart of our policy towards Colombia. We will continue to work with our EU partners, the Colombian Government and other stakeholders, including civil society, to help improve the human rights situation there. Our embassy in Bogota is actively pursuing this objective

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to the Government of Colombia about the murder of trade unionists in that country; and if he will make a statement. [64788]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Through our embassy in Bogota we frequently raise human rights issues, including the murder of trade unionists, with the Colombian authorities. We also sponsored a visit to the UK. by a group of senior Colombian trade unionists in February to demonstrate support to Colombian unions. We believe and have consistently stated that civil society, including trade unionists, human rights defenders and community leaders, have an important role to play in helping tackle Colombia's inter-linked problems of internal armed conflict, illegal drugs trade and human rights abuses. My noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, with responsibility for Latin America, raised the importance of respect for human rights and the role of civil society when he met Vice-President Santos of Colombia in London in November 2005.

Craig Alden (Imprisonment)

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations have been made by the Government regarding the imprisonment of Craig Alden in Brazil; and if he will make a statement on the UK Government's position on the case. [64969]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: On 30 March 2005, my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary wrote to the Brazilian Foreign Minister in support of Craig Alden's application for Presidential Expulsion. The Brazilians rejected this application. Both my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and my noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Common wealth affairs, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, who is responsible for Consular matters in Latin America, have subsequently raised Mr. Alden's case with their Brazilian counterparts on a number of occasions asking that they take account of the human rights issues involved in Mr. Alden's case. Most recently, my noble Friend Lord Triesman of Tottenham raised Mr. Alden's case with the Brazilian Foreign Minister in March 2006.

Since his arrest, Mr. Alden and his family have expressed concerns over his safety while in prison. We have taken his fears about his safety seriously and officials from our Embassy in Brasilia have made numerous successful representations to the Brazilian authorities, requesting that he remain apart from other prisoners.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office remains completely impartial in respect of the substance of any allegations against Mr. Alden. However, we share the concerns about the fairness of his trial, which we continue to raise with the Brazilian government.

Equal Pay

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps are undertaken within his Department to ensure that women are obtaining equal pay to men doing work of equal value. [65837]

Mr. Straw: As part of the 2005–08 pay settlement for delegated grades, agreed in November 2005, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) agreed with the Trade Union Side (TUS) to undertake annual Equal Pay Audits and to review the findings on completion with the TUS. The first of these will be carried out during 2006.

The FCO last carried out an Equal Pay Audit in 2003. The conclusions were that the overall picture on mean salaries within bands for full-time employees is within the 5 per cent. tolerance set out by the Equal Opportunities Commission; women do not seem to be less favourably treated than men in the way they are allocated to, or progress through, the salary scale and within each band the distribution of performance ratings is in proportion to the general split.

Exercise Exploring Themis

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what *(a)* lessons were learnt and *(b)* improvements were made to UK maritime security following Exercise Exploring Themis in November 2005. [65282]

Dr. Howells: 15 nations took part in this UK exercise in November 2005 as part of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). The exercise identified a number of lessons, with extensive and valuable feedback provided by participating nations. The need for appropriate and

timely access to information from a range of sources reinforced the importance of cross-government involvement from the outset. Sharing of information between PSI nations was also shown to be vital, highlighting the need for secure and reliable communications channels to be established. Almost all nations commented on the need to continue to improve inter-departmental operations and awareness within their own governments. A number of important issues were raised which will be examined in future PSI exercises, such as the disposition of cargo after an interdiction and how the Suppression of Unlawful Acts at Sea protocols will affect the legal basis for interdiction. The cost effectiveness and benefits of running a federated exercise in national capitals showed that this way of hosting exercises could reduce the cost without compromising the high standards associated with PSI events.

The UK has benefited a great deal from running Exercise Exploring Themis and from our involvement in other PSI exercises. The main benefits have been improved intra-Government co-ordination, better understanding of the legal environment and improved technical abilities, such as communications. These factors have all contributed to improved UK maritime security. The exercise also enabled governments from 15 nations to co-ordinate their efforts to address potential future weapons of mass destruction proliferation threats. Effective joint international action helps to address maritime security for UK shipping outside UK territorial waters.

Hindu Persecution (Moscow)

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make representations to the Russian Government about discrimination against and persecution of Hindus in Moscow. [64708]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: I raised the situation facing Hindus in Russia, as well as other religious minorities, with Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Yakovenko in Moscow on 30 March 2006.

Iraq

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he last visited Iraq; and if he will make a statement. [64747]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary last visited Iraq on 2 to 3 April together with the US Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice. He met a broad range of key political figures involved in the negotiations on the formation of a new government including President Talabani, Prime Minister Ja'afari and leaders of the main Kurdish, Sunni Arab and Shia parties. He urged them to work to conclude the process as swiftly as possible in the interests of the Iraqi people.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he has been contacted by the Italian authorities in relation to the export from the UK of Beretta small arms to Iraq. [57260]

Dr. Howells *[holding answer 9 March 2006]:* The Foreign and Commonwealth Office is unable to confirm or deny whether we have received any such contact about an investigation in another country. I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him by my right hon. Friend the Minister for Policing, Security and Community Safety, Hazel Blears, on 14 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 2114W.

Karni Crossing (Gaza)

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Israeli government on the closure of the Karni crossing into Gaza; and if he will make a statement. [65455]

Dr. Howells: Our Embassy in Tel Aviv has repeatedly expressed our concerns about the closure of the Karni crossing. The Embassy last raised it with the Head of Israel Defence Force Strategic Planning and Foreign Relations on 4 April, The Karni crossing was reopened on 12 April. It is important that access and movement is improved and we call on both parties to implement the 15 November Agreement on Movement and Access. The Israeli government has assured us that they will continue to support the transfer of humanitarian assistance by opening other crossing points to the Gaza Strip to avert a potential crisis due to lack of food and money.

Montenegro

David Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the Government's position relating to the proposed referendum on independence in Montenegro. [64830]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The referendum on Montenegrin independence from the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro is scheduled for 21 May. The UK welcomes the agreement between the Government and the opposition in Montenegro on the standards for the referendum. The referendum should be held according to the terms of the Constitutional Charter of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro and subsequent legislation.

The UK has made clear that the whole process needs to be transparent, consensual and democratic.

Norman Kember

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether discussions took place between representatives of the Government and representatives of the kidnappers of Norman Kember prior to 21 March 2006. [64386]

Dr. Howells: It is not our policy to comment publicly on the operational details of the Government's efforts to secure the release of British nationals taken hostage overseas.

Proliferation Security Initiative

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps the Government have taken to comply with the Proliferation Security Initiative. [65283]

Dr. Howells: The UK has taken a number of steps to comply with the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). We have formally committed to and publicly endorsed the PSI and its Statement of Interdiction Principles and indicated willingness to take all steps available to support PSI efforts. We have actively participated in and hosted PSI interdiction training exercises. We have undertaken a review and provided information on current national legal authorities to undertake interdictions at sea, in the air or on land. We have indicated willingness to strengthen authorities where appropriate. We have provided points of contact for PSI interdiction requests and other operational activities. We have established appropriate internal Government processes to co-ordinate PSI response efforts. We have reviewed our legal authorities and are working on adoption of the 2005 Suppression of Unlawful Acts protocols to strengthen the legal environment for interdiction. This will make it an internationally recognised offence to transport weapons of mass destruction (WMD), their delivery systems and related materials on commercial vessels.

We are currently examining a range of measures to deter proliferators and further raise the political and economic costs of trafficking in WMD and we will continue to take the necessary steps to strengthen our capacity to act effectively, as and when required, to take action consistent with the PSI Statement of Interdiction Principles.

Tom Hurndall/James Miller

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on what occasions he has met with the family of *(a)* Tom Hurndall and *(b)* James Miller; and whether he has plans for future such meetings. [65895]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary met the family of James Miller on 2 June 2003 and the family of Tom Hurndall on 17 June 2003. The then Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister of State, with responsibility for Consular Affairs, my noble Friend right hon. Baroness Symons, met the Miller family on 18 July 2003, 6 November 2003, 5 July 2004 and 4 April 2005. She met the Hurndall family on 23 July 2003, 6 January 2004, 23 March 2004 and 18 April 2005. As the Minister responsible for Consular Affairs in the Middle East I also met the Miller family on 23 May 2005 and the Hurndall family on 11 July 2005.

My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary is planning to meet both families again soon.

UN Human Rights Council

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the establishment of the UN Human Rights Council. [65134]

Ian Pearson: We welcomed and voted in favour of the General Assembly Resolution establishing the Human Rights Council. We believe this offers an important opportunity to improve the UN human rights machinery, but much will depend on member states showing commitment to making a fresh start. We will continue to play the fullest part possible towards the body's success and are standing for election to the Council on 9 May.

PRIME MINISTER

Scotland Act

Mr. Weir: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 14 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 2045W to the hon. Member for Dundee, East (Stewart Hosie) on the Scotland Act 1998 and the announcement that the Secretary of State for Scotland has been carrying out the functions of the Advocate General for Scotland since 18 January 2006 if he will place in the Library a copy of the determination under section 87(3) of the Scotland Act 1998. [66077]

The Prime Minister: Yes.

DEFENCE

Afghanistan

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has to deploy Royal Air Force Jaguar aircraft to Kandahar; and if he will make a statement. [64793]

Mr. Ingram: There are currently no plans to send Jaguar aircraft to Afghanistan.

Casualty Evacuation

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many casualty evacuations there have been from *(a)* Iraq since the start of Operation Telic and *(b)* Afghanistan since 2001. [65450]

Mr. Ingram: The latest Aeromed figures for Operation Telic are published on the MOD website.

For the period between March 2003 to 1 January 2006, up to 4,000 UK military and civilian personnel (including a small number of Iraqis) were medically evacuated from Iraq. For the period between 1 January 2006 and 28 February 2006, 133 UK military and civilian personnel were medically evacuated from Iraq.

The great majority of these cases were due to illness, accidental injury, routine outpatient treatment in the UK or for compassionate reasons and not as a result of hostile action.

Since 2001, there have been 33 aeromedical evacuations from Afghanistan. The great majority of these cases were due to illness, accidental injury, routine outpatient treatment in the UK or for compassionate reasons and not as a result of hostile action.

Colombia

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much defence *(a)* equipment, *(b)* training and *(c)* other support has been given to the Government of Colombia in each of the last three years. [64786]

Mr. Ingram: In financial years 2003–04 and 2004–05 the cost of military training assistance provided by the United Kingdom Ministry of Defence to the Colombian armed forces was around £120,000 per year. This assistance covered Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) training and the provision of military training and education to members of the Colombian armed forces both in Colombia and in the UK.

In financial year 2005–06 the cost of military training assistance provided by the UK MOD to the Colombian armed forces was approximately £130,000. This assistance consisted in EOD training and British military education and training courses in the UK. We also supported the Colombian military justice reform process by running seminars on Rules of Engagement and study tours introducing Colombian personnel to key British defence concepts such as the need to have democratic and accountable control of the armed forces.

The MOD has not given the Colombian armed forces any equipment over the last three years, nor has it given other support to the Government of Colombia, apart from some bespoke counter-narcotic assistance.

Departmental Expenditure

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his Department's expenditure was on civil air travel in 2004–05. [64248]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence spent approximately £109.6 million on civil air travel in financial year 2004–05. This figure is provisional and subject to final audit.

Depleted Uranium

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what research has been conducted since December 2004 to establish the number of UK depleted uranium shells recovered from *(a)* UK waters and *(b)* overseas waters. [64604]

Mr. Ingram: The only records of the recovery of United Kingdom depleted uranium shells from the marine environment are for two recoveries from the Solway Firth. One shell was recovered from the foreshore of the Kirkcudbright Training Area in 1994 and the second was recovered from the sea during trawling in 1997.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment the Defence Radiological Protection Services has made of uranium in urine of military personnel and civilian employees of his Department on operations where there is a potential for exposure; and if he will make a statement. [64761]

Mr. Touhig: Very small amounts of natural uranium occur in the human body from normal dietary sources. Of the several hundred United Kingdom troops and civilians who have had assessments of the level of uranium in their urine following operational deployments to areas where depleted uranium munitions have been used, 384 have been tested under the biological monitoring arrangements made by what was the Defence Radiological Protection Services and is now part of the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory. No depleted uranium has been detected in anyone other than a small number of personnel who received shrapnel injuries in an incident involving friendly fire.

Fast Jet Aircraft (Pilot Blackout)

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many incidents of pilots of fast jet aircraft blacking out have occurred in the past 10 years. [63806]

Mr. Ingram: The number of incidents of pilots of fast-jet aircraft blacking out in the past 10 years is not held centrally by the RAF. However, in 2004 the Ministry of

Defence conducted a survey of all RAF aircrew to determine the prevalence of gravity-induced loss of consciousness (G-LOC). Of the 2,259 aircrew who responded to the survey, 454 (20.1 per cent.) admitted to having lost consciousness for a number of seconds following G exposure at least once during their career. There have been no recorded RAF aircraft accidents within the last 10 years where G-LOC has been a contributing factor.

To reduce the risk of G-LOC, all RAF fast-jet pilots undergo theoretical and practical training in countering the effects of high G. Future options for high G training are under consideration.

Gulf Veterans

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many veterans have voluntarily presented themselves to the Gulf Veterans' Medical Assessment Programme in each year since 1993. [64763]

Mr. Touhig: The total number of veterans seen at the Gulf Veterans Medical Assessment Programme since 1993, is 3,445. This figure includes 3,275 veterans of the 1991 Gulf Conflict (Operation Granby), 136 Porton Down Volunteers, and 34 veterans of the current operation in Iraq (Operation Telic). The figures for each year since 1993 are further broken down as follows:

	Op Granby	*Porton Down*	*Op Telic*
1993	2	—	—
1994	56	—	—
1995	259	—	—
1996	578	—	—
1997	970	—	—
1998	686	—	—
1999	199	—	—
2000	158	—	—
2001	179	93	—
2002	74	25	—
2003	55	10	8
2004	32	1	13
2005	23	7	11
2006	4	—	2
Total	3,275	136	34

Royal Irish Regiment Home Service Battalions

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the statement of 9 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 961–3W, how many full-time members of the Royal Irish Regiment Home Service Battalions have indicated a preference to transfer to General Service under the terms of the package announced. [65929]

Mr. Ingram: Information on how many full-time members of the Royal Irish Regiment Home Service have indicated a preference to transfer to the General Service is not yet available. Those affected have been asked to register an expression of interest through their chain of command by 30 April 2006.

Submarines

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the operational criteria are for decisions on whether submarines should berth at Southampton rather than Portsmouth; and if he will make a statement. [64778]

Mr. Ingram: "Operational" criteria as such are not generally considered when deciding which Z berth to use. The strict limitations on nuclear powered submarine operational activities at Z berths mean that these locations are used for planned crew stand-off periods, materiel re-supply and personnel changeovers only.

It is possible that, for example during the briefing or debriefing phases of an exercise, proximity to other forces may dictate the choice of berth. But otherwise the selection is made on the basis of berth availability, submarine programme and local interference considerations.

The decision on whether to use Portsmouth or Southampton for visits by United Kingdom nuclear powered submarines will be based on the criteria listed above.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what infrastructure is necessary to deal with effluent from nuclear powered submarines around Z berths; and what the *(a)* capital and *(b)* running costs are. [64783]

Mr. Ingram: No infrastructure is required around Z berths to deal with radioactive effluent from operational nuclear-powered submarines as discharges of this type are prohibited at these berths.

Other effluent, such as sewage or bilge water, is managed in the same way as for conventionally powered warships and civilian vessels, and depending on the location of the Z berth it is discharged either by direct connection to an installed shore-based facility or by tanker collection. In commercial ports the Ministry of Defence pays for effluent disposal services; these vary from port to port and generally depend on volume. In the naval bases effluent disposal facilities are shared with surface warships and the associated costs cannot therefore be identified separately.

Telephone Calls

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many minutes of free overseas telephone calls UK forces personnel are entitled to each week while on overseas tours. [65959]

Mr. Touhig: As part of the Operational Welfare Package, personnel serving on operations overseas are allocated 20 minutes of free telephone cards to anywhere in the world every week they are away. In addition, personnel serving over the Christmas/new year period are given an additional 20 minutes.

Personnel who are serving in non-operational areas are granted a cost towards telephone calls as part of their local overseas allowance; this cost is to make up the difference between the overseas location and the United Kingdom towards 20 minutes worth of telephone calls.

Type 23 Frigates

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the last Type 23 Frigate is expected to leave service. [64611]

Mr. Ingram: On present plans the final Type 23 Frigate, HMS St. Albans, will be withdrawn from service in 2029.

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Type 23 frigates will be fitted with Sonar 2087; and what the total cost of the project is expected to be. [64612]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 14 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 2150W, to the hon. Member for New Forest, East (Dr. Lewis).

There is an operational requirement for eight of the 13 in-service Type 23 frigates to be modified to operate the Sonar 2087 system. The decision on which ships are to be modified is determined by the fitting opportunities within the frigate upkeep programme.

The total cost of the project is currently expected to be £355 million.

Veterans Day

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many inquiries the Veterans Agency has received about organising events for Veterans Day 2006. [65441]

Mr. Touhig: The Veterans Agency and the Veterans Policy Unit have received over 100 telephone enquiries about organising events for Veterans Day 2006. The Veterans Policy Unit has also received eight bids for funding regional events.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Assets Recovery Agency

Grant Shapps: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list completed cases handled by the Assets Recovery Agency, broken down by year and region; and if he will make a statement on the agency's performance to date. [64418]

Paul Goggins: The number of cases completed by the Assets Recovery Agency broken down by year and region is shown in the table.

The Assets Recovery Agency is making an effective contribution towards the recovery of criminal proceeds. Since its inception in 2003, the agency has adopted 177 civil recovery cases and 30 tax cases for investigation; and disrupted over 127 criminal enterprises with £68.45 million worth of assets subject to freezing orders. The agency has completed 35 cases with a recovery value of approximately £9.1 million and has realised receipts of around £8.34 million.

The agency has also assisted law enforcement agencies in obtaining 13 confiscation orders with a total value of £6.4 million.

The Centre of Excellence in the Assets Recovery Agency has delivered training in the Proceeds of Crime Act to over 2,600 financial investigators in law enforcement agencies. The agency has also successfully raised awareness of the new powers in the Act by hosting a series of conferences and presentations; and through the issue of a monthly newsletter which publicises successes in recovering the proceeds of crime.

Assets recovery agency: number of completed cases[1]

	Total	England and Wales	Northern Ireland
2003–04	0[2]	—	—
2004–05	12	10	2
2005–06[3]	23	20	3

Notes:

[1] Those cases that have reached final actions i.e. recovery order, final assessment or settlement.

[2] There were no completed cases in 2003–04 as this was the first full operational year of the agency.

[3] 2005–06 performance figures are to end March 2006. Final year-end performance figures are yet to be finalised.

Correspondence

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Parliamentary Business Unit of the Immigration and Nationality Department will reply to the hon. Member for Edinburgh, West's letter of 16 February 2006 with regard to his constituent Miss Tendai Rita Mupamhanga. [64412]

Mr. McNulty: The Immigration and Nationality Directorate responded to the letter from the hon. Member on 21 April 2006.

Crime Statistics

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the crime rates among migrant workers in England; and if he will make a statement. [45591]

Hazel Blears: From the information collected centrally on recorded crime it is not possible to make such an assessment. Specific details on victims and offenders are not collected.

Fixed Penalties

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the fixed penalty was for a contravention of section 89 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 in each year since the Act came into force. [64701]

Hazel Blears: In 1984 the fixed penalty for exceeding the speed limit in contravention of section 89 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 was £20 and three penalty points. This was raised to £24 in 1986, £32 in 1990 and £40 in 1992. From 1 November 2000 the penalty was raised to the current level of £60. The offence is endorsable and the number of penalty points has remained at three from 1984 to date.

Home Detention Curfew Scheme

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the *(a)* average and *(b)* longest time has been between a prisoner being

released on the Home Detention Curfew scheme and receiving their tagging device in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [64383]

Fiona Mactaggart: Almost all offenders released on Home Detention Curfew are tagged on the day of release.

Since 1 April 2005, the longest time taken to fit monitoring equipment to an offender released on Home Detention Curfew is eight days. This occurred in May 2005, just after the new electronic monitoring contracts started and the old ones expired.

Figures before April 2005 are not available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Human Trafficking

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what steps his Department is taking to protect the victims of human trafficking; [64051]

(2) what support is available to the victims of trafficking once discovered by the authorities. [64053]

Paul Goggins: Since March 2003 the Home Office has funded the Poppy Scheme which is run by Eaves Housing for Women. The scheme provides safe accommodation and tailored one-to-one support for adult female victims who have been trafficked to the UK and into prostitution. Support is provided on a short term basis, or for longer in return for co-operation with the relevant authorities.

On the basis of a positive evaluation the Home Office is investing £2.4 million over the next two years to expand the excellent service provided through the Poppy Scheme. This fulfils our commitment to continue funding the core service (25 crisis spaces), and will also provide 10 additional step-down places, the first ever 24-hour national outreach service, and the development of a resource pack for victims, service providers and law enforcement agency staff.

Assistance and support for child victims is secured through local statutory social services.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received on the European Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings; and if he will make a statement. [64052]

Paul Goggins: Since negotiations began on the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings we have received a number of representations from organisations and individuals.

The need to provide effective support to victims is a key aspect of our strategy for tackling human trafficking. We continue to consider the practical implications of signing the convention.

National Criminal Intelligence Service

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what disability recruitment guidelines were used in the recruitment process for National Criminal Intelligence Service posts at the new regional office in Belfast advertised in autumn 2003. [64731]

Hazel Blears *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* I refer the hon Member to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for Belfast, North (Nigel Dodds) on 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 377W.

Road Traffic Offences

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department in what circumstances a person charged with an offence under section 89 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 would not be prosecuted; and if he will make a statement. [64680]

Hazel Blears: Enforcement of the law relating to speeding offences is a matter for the police who will decide what approach is most effective in different circumstances. Prosecution may be appropriate where the offence is considered too serious for offer of a fixed penalty or may occur where a fixed penalty offer is not accepted. Decisions as to prosecution are ultimately a matter for the Crown Prosecution Service.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prosecutions under section 89 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 were dropped because the alleged offender lived overseas in each year since 1996. [64681]

Hazel Blears: This information is not collected centrally. We recognise that while those living abroad can be prosecuted for this offence there are practical problems in enforcement. Measures in the Road Safety Bill currently before Parliament will help address the situation.

Security Industry Authority

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Harrington review was taken into account in the full regulatory impact assessment on the Approved Contractor Scheme published on 16 February. [59072]

Paul Goggins: As the Harrington review was not then available, it could not be taken into account when drafting the full Regulatory Impact Assessment on the Approved Contractor Scheme.

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the review of the Security Industry Authority by Roy Harrington will be published; what the main recommendations are; and when these recommendations will be implemented. [58889]

Paul Goggins: Roy Harrington was commissioned by the Home Office to review the future strategic direction of the Security Industry Authority. Once Ministers have fully considered his report, they will make decisions on its recommendations.

The report will be published in due course, copies will be placed in the Library and it will also be made available on the Home Office website.

Road Safety

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent research has been carried out on the impact of atmospheric conditions on the accuracy of speed cameras; and if he will make a statement. [64693]

Hazel Blears: All speed cameras producing evidence for possible use in court have to be of a type approved by the Secretary of State. The type approval process includes tests both operationally and in the laboratory to ensure that devices will when properly used function accurately and reliably. No separate research has been undertaken. We are satisfied that all currently approved devices merit their type approved status and can be relied upon.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to use the photographs taken by speed cameras to *(a)* detect and *(b)* prosecute those seen committing an offence under (i) section 14 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 and (ii) the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) (No. 4) Regulations 2003; and if he will make a statement. [65048]

Hazel Blears: Enforcement of these offences is an operational matter for the police. There are no such plans of which I am aware. Speed cameras are designed and type approved only to detect vehicles exceeding the speed limit and record an image of them. Enforcement depends on the police witnessing the offences. The likelihood of this is increased by the expanded use of police intercept teams linked to the operation of Automatic Number Plate Recognition systems We expect enforcement of these and other motoring offences to reflect the joint Home Office/Department for Transport/Association of Chief Police Officers Roads Policing Strategy issued last year, the National Policing Plan and the National Community Safety Plan, which emphasise the importance of roads policing and encourage a pro-active approach.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the LTI20.20 mobile speed camera is used by *(a)* the police in (i) Southend and (ii) Essex and *(b)* the Metropolitan Police area; and if he will make a statement. [64692]

Hazel Blears: The purchase and use of speed cameras for law enforcement purposes is a matter for individual chief officers of police. I understand, however, that this particular device is used both by Essex police, including in Southend, and by the Metropolitan Police.

Speed cameras used by the police to produce evidence for possible use in court have to be of a type approved by the Secretary of State. The laboratory and field testing undertaken prior to the granting of type approval is designed to ensure that all type approved equipment is accurate and reliable when used in accordance with its type approval conditions, in line with the manufacturer's instructions and in accordance with the Code of Practice drawn up by the Association of Chief Police Officers. I am satisfied that all type approved speed cameras, including the LTI 20.20, merit their type approved status and are appropriate for police use.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make it his policy that a photograph of the alleged speeding vehicle should be sent at the same time as the summons; and if he will make a statement. [64755]

Hazel Blears: The responsibility for deciding whether to disclose the photograph, or any other evidence, of a speeding offence detected by a camera rests with the chief officer of the force concerned. Any evidence, including the calibration certificate and any photograph, would, of course, be produced should a case go to court.

UK Passport Service

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 21 March 2006, *Official Report,* column 313W, on passports, for how long the UK Passport Service's website has carried details of this policy; and if he will make a statement. [64075]

Andy Burnham: An explanatory note was added to the UK Passport Service's (UKPS) website on 14 March after the issue had been mentioned during the debate on the Identity Cards Bill the previous day. The note was omitted in error when the Identity and Passport Service website was launched on 1 April and restored on 4 April when the error was brought to our attention.

It has always been the case that passport holders could renew passports any time before the expiry date. This is often necessary to meet the minimum passport validity required for entry to some countries.

In response to customer complaints about losing validity when renewing early, the UKPS introduced the facility of transferring up to nine months unexpired validity from the old passport to the new one. The original advice on the UKPS website was based on this, but was not intended to prohibit earlier renewal.

Young Offenders

Joan Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department in what circumstances it is appropriate for a police officer to use a caution for the first offence of a young offender, rather than pressing charges; and if he will make a statement. [65322]

Hazel Blears: Young people who commit a first offence will normally be dealt with under the Final Warning scheme, unless the offence is so serious that they must be charged and dealt with by a court. They will not receive a caution as that process for young offenders was replaced by the Final Warning Scheme under Section 65, Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The Home Office and the Youth Justice Board produced guidance for the police and Youth Offending Panels on how to operate the scheme and that guidance is available on the Home Office website. The guidance provides comprehensive details on how to proceed with the most common offences but makes it clear that in deciding on the correct course the individual circumstances of the offence, offender and other relevant information must be considered as part of the decision-making process. That ensures that appropriate

levels of discretion remain in the system for dealing with young offenders and that the correct action is taken in each case.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Afghanistan

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to the answer of 30 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1127W, to the hon. Member for Carmarthen, East and Dinefwr (Adam Price), on Afghanistan, which agencies in Afghanistan are liaising with the UK authorities on the process for the eradication of the poppy crop. [65889]

Dr. Howells: I have been asked to reply.

The UK does not carry out eradication in Afghanistan; eradication policy and implementation is the responsibility of the Government of Afghanistan, in particular, the Ministry of Counter Narcotics and the Ministry of Interior. The Government of Afghanistan's policy on eradication is set out in its National Drug Control Strategy which states that "where there are legal livelihoods, a credible threat of eradication is needed in order to incentivise the shift away from poppy cultivation. We will therefore carry out targeted ground-based eradication throughout Afghanistan in order to ensure we make maximum progress towards our long-term elimination goal". The UK supports this approach and in 2005–06 provided £5.25 million to support the Government of Afghanistan's eradication effort. In particular, the UK supported the Ministry of Counter Narcotics targeting work to identify priority areas for eradication and provided equipment, including tractors and all-terrain vehicles.

Nepal

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the stability of the Government of Nepal for the purpose of channelling aid to the Nepalese people. [64629]

Hilary Benn: DFID is monitoring the current political instability in Nepal very closely. Under present conditions, the ability of the Government of Nepal to implement development activities and deliver basic services is very sharply constrained. For UK aid through Government to be effective, it is therefore essential that there is a satisfactory resolution to the present crisis.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much aid was allocated to Nepal in each of the last three years. [64630]

Hilary Benn: Expenditure under the DFID bilateral programme, including humanitarian aid and DFID-managed funds from the cross-Whitehall Global Conflict Prevention Pool (GCPP), was as follows:

	£ million
2002–03	27.16
2003–04	32.05
2004–05	35.08

The estimated figure for expenditure in 2005–06 is £33.2 million (£32.8 million excluding the GCPP).

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether he plans to reduce aid allocation to Nepal. [64631]

Hilary Benn: Following King Gyanendra's assumption of direct rule last year, DFID's allocation to Nepal for the financial year 2005–06 was reduced from £40 million to £32 million. For 2006–07, the allocation has been reduced further, to £30 million. These changes reflected the deteriorating environment for using aid funds effectively to reduce poverty in Nepal. The current political crisis in Nepal poses a further serious threat to the effective use of aid and DFID is keeping the situation under close review.

DFID also manages funds from the cross-Whitehall Global Conflict Prevention Pool (GCPP). Including the GCPP, expenditure in 2005–06 was an estimated £33.2 million and the 2006–07 allocation is £30.16 million.

Overseas Aid

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much his Department has given in overseas development aid excluding debt relief in each of the last 10 years; what percentage of UK gross domestic product these payments constituted; and if he will make a statement. [64652]

Hilary Benn: Set out are details of UK official development assistance (ODA) with and without debt relief as a percentage of gross national income. This is the measure used in international reporting.

The Government have announced a clear timetable to reach the UN target of 0.7 per cent. of gross national income (GNI) spent on development aid by 2013. Last year UK aid spending as a proportion of GNI rose sharply, reflecting implementation of the Government's plan to increase development assistance set out in its 2004 Spending Round and a significant short-term increase due to debt relief for Nigeria. Debt relief to poor countries frees resources for poverty reduction and is quite rightly classified as official development assistance (ODA).

ODA, excluding debt relief, rose in cash terms last year but decreased as a proportion of GNI. The main factors were changes in the CDC portfolio and timing of payments to the European development fund. We do not expect these issues to affect the 2006 figures.

	UK ODA (£ million)	*ODA as percentage of GNI*	*UK ODA less debt relief (£ million)*	*ODA less debt relief as percentage on GNI*
1996	2050	0.27	1998	0.27
1997	2096	0.26	1916	0.24
1998	2332	0.27	2077	0.24
1999	2118	0.24	2048	0.23
2000	2974	0.32	2871	0.31
2001	3179	0.32	2919	0.29

	UK ODA (£ million)	ODA as percentage of GNI	UK ODA less debt relief (£ million)	ODA less debt relief as percentage on GNI
2002	3281	0.31	2878	0.27
2003	3847	0.34	3767	0.34
2004	4302	0.36	3868	0.33
2005[1]	5916	0.48	3879	0.31

[1] Provisional estimates.

Source:
DAC online database.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what total aid budget has been allocated to *(a)* Tanzania, *(b)* Nepal, *(c)* Ethiopia, *(d)* Venezuela and *(e)* Peru by the UK for 2006–07; and what percentage each figure represents of each country's GDP. [64813]

Hilary Benn: Of the five countries referred to, DFID has bilateral aid programmes in Tanzania, Nepal and Ethiopia. The total aid budget allocated by DFID in 2006–07 to each country is:

	£
Tanzania	110,000,000
Nepal	30,000,000
Ethiopia	90,000,000

There is no UK bilateral programme in Venezuela or Peru. However, DFID has allocated £620,000 in 2006 for Andes regional activities which covers Peru, Bolivia and Columbia.

Projected 2006–07 GDP figures are not available so it is not possible to say what percentage the 2006–07 allocations represent in relation to the countries' GDP, but for information, the GDP for each country for the latest year available (2004) is:

	£
Tanzania	5,921,548,953
Nepal	3,659,813,448
Ethiopia	4,407,543,048
Venezuela	59,656,260,830
Peru	37,323,129,672

Parliamentary Questions (Supplementary Information)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make it his policy when placing material in the Library in response to a parliamentary question, to supply a copy of the material to the hon. Member who tabled the question; and if he will make a statement. [64204]

Hilary Benn: As well as depositing material in the Libraries of both the House of Commons and the House of Lords, the Department for International Development has always adopted the policy of supplying copies of additional material referred to in the response to a parliamentary question to the Member of the House who tabled the question.

Rights, Democracy and Inclusion Fund

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much each country in receipt of funds through the Rights, Democracy and Inclusion Fund has received in each of the last three years. [64627]

Hilary Benn: The Rights, Democracy and Inclusion Fund is a recent initiative within DFID's aid programme in Nepal, and is co-financed by the Swiss Government. The Fund was launched in January 2006 to support Nepali initiatives aimed at strengthening institutions of democracy and increasing the political inclusion of ethnic minorities, dalits and women. To date, one grant has been approved by the Fund, which received some 30 proposals in its first two months of operation. It was anticipated that the Fund would disburse up to £3 million of British and Swiss funds over its three-year life, with some £400,000 allocated for the 2006–07 financial year. However, management and implementation of all development activities, including this Fund, have been seriously affected by the current political crisis in Nepal.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what measures are in place to assess the effectiveness of funds allocated through the Rights, Democracy and Inclusion Fund. [64628]

Hilary Benn: Applications for financial support under the Rights, Democracy and Inclusion Fund are subject to careful scrutiny by a committee comprising staff from DFID's Nepal office, the British embassy in Kathmandu, and a representative of the Swiss Government. All approved projects will have clear objectives against which organisations receiving grants will be required to report. In addition, the effectiveness of the Fund overall will be periodically reviewed to ensure that it represents a good use of aid funds.

Strategic Defence Reviews

Mr. Andrew Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development on how many occasions the Department has allocated funds to assist strategic defence reviews in the last nine years. [64845]

Hilary Benn: DFID has supported defence reviews through the Global and Africa Conflict Prevention Pools, which bring together the conflict prevention work of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Ministry of Defence and the Department for International Development (DFID). The Africa Conflict Prevention Pool (ACPP) has supported a Strategic Defence Review in Uganda. The Global Conflict Prevention Pool (GCPP) has supported defence reviews in Sri Lanka and Indonesia. In each case, advice was delivered through the Security Sector Development Advisory Team (SSDAT), a team of technical advisers from the Ministry of Defence and DFID.

DFID encourages national security reviews that address the safety, security and access to justice needs of individuals and communities as well as of the state. A national security review should inform any following defence review process by clearly stating the priorities required by a country of its defence sector. The ACPP has supported such national security reviews in Sierra

Leone and has provided limited advice to the United Nations Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS). The GCPP has supported the development of a National Security Strategy in Jamaica and the Internal Security Review in Kosovo.

Uganda

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what estimate he has made of the percentage of Ugandans who lived in poverty in *(a)* 2001 and *(b)* 2004. [64589]

Hilary Benn: According to the latest available data from the Uganda National Household Survey in 2002–03, 38 per cent. of the population lived below the poverty line compared with 56 per cent. of the population in 1992. There was a significant decline in poverty through the 1990s.

The 2005–06 Uganda National Household Survey is currently being carried out and new poverty data should be available by the beginning of 2007.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what percentage of Uganda's budget in the last year for which figures are available was *(a)* donor sponsored and *(b)* sponsored by the UK. [64825]

Hilary Benn: In the Ugandan financial year of 2004–05 (which runs from July to June) 47 per cent. of the Government of Uganda's budget was sponsored by donors. In the financial year of 2004–05, British aid was 4.7 per cent. of the Government of Uganda's budget. This is the last financial year for which data are available.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what percentage of the total Ugandan budget British aid represented in *(a)* 2001 and *(b)* 2004; and how much total aid Uganda received in (i) 2001 and (ii) 2004. [64826]

Hilary Benn: In the Ugandan financial year of 2001–02 (which runs from July to June), British aid was 6.7 per cent. of the total budget of the Government of Uganda. In the financial year of 2004–05, British aid was 4.7 per cent. of the total budget.

In the financial year of 2001–02, Uganda received total aid equivalent to £492 million, the total aid received by Uganda in the financial year of 2004–05, was equivalent to £478 million.

This information is based on data from Uganda's Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning.

Mr. Andrew Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the contribution of the funds allocated to the Ugandan Ministry of Defence's strategic defence review to the reduction of poverty in that country. [64844]

Hilary Benn: Human security is essential for development. At the same time it is important for governments to strike the right balance between expenditure and security and on reducing poverty in areas such as education and health.

An independent assessment of the UK's support for Uganda's first strategic Defence Review was carried out in December 2004. It found that the Review has helped to establish the processes necessary for ensuring a professional, modern, accountable, efficient and affordable security sector. Already the Review has been the basis for the development of a Defence Corporate Plan that prioritises expenditure and includes indicators which can be used to monitor performance for example in procurement, financial management and management of human resources. The Defence Review and the Corporate Plan provide a basis for more effective dialogue between government and development partners about Uganda's defence expenditure. In this, we emphasise the importance of implementing the recommendations of the Defence Review to help provide the security required for poverty reduction.

NORTHERN IRELAND

A and E Departments

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) on how many occasions police were called to deal with unruly or violent behaviour at accident and emergency departments in each of Northern Ireland's acute hospitals in each of the last three years; [64911]

(2) how many incidents necessitating police being summoned occurred at accident and emergency departments of each Northern Ireland acute hospital in each year between 2000 and 2005. [65312]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is not recorded centrally either by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety or by the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

Therefore, this information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Avian Influenza

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what measures have been established in the event of the arrival in Northern Ireland of avian influenza to protect *(a)* the farming community and *(b)* the wider population. [65924]

Mr. Woodward: Both the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) and the Department of Rural Development (DARD) are working closely on this issue and have contingency plans in place to deal with an outbreak of avian influenza in both humans and birds.

Specific guidance on worker safety and personal protection has been issued to DARD staff, the poultry industry, and those living and working on farms in respect of the threat of avian influenza. Oseltamivir (Tamiflu) prophylaxis will be made available to those who have contact with infected poultry.

There have been no cases of human-to-human transmission recorded to date and the threat of avian influenza to the general population is currently very low indeed. Nevertheless DHSSPS has ensured that arrangements are in place for the rapid diagnosis and management of any human cases of avian influenza.

Information for professionals and the public is available on our website at http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/phealth/avianflu.htm.

Further information on the disease risk to humans travelling to and from areas affected by avian flu has been produced jointly by DARDNI and DHSSPS and is available at ports, including airports, GP surgeries and community pharmacies.

Civil Service (Travel Expenses)

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 16 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 2490W, on civil service travel expenses, what percentage of travel undertaken by *(a)* the Department for Agriculture and Rural Affairs and *(b)* the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) during the last financial year was (i) within Northern Ireland, (ii) between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, (iii) between Northern Ireland and Great Britain and (iv) between Northern Ireland and continental Europe; what percentage of travel costs incurred by the NIO was for air travel between Belfast and London; and what percentage of travel costs was for (A) standard and economy and (B) first and business class travel. [62511]

Mr. Hain: The cost of NIO travel cannot be disaggregated, except at disproportionate cost. However, it is estimated that less than 10 per cent. of the cost is for travel within NI and between NI and the RoI. It is further estimated that some 80 per cent. of all travel cost is in respect of flights between NI and GB and that less than £1,000 was spent on travel between NI and continental Europe.

Approximately 90 per cent. of air travel cost was for journeys between Belfast and London and some 94 per cent. of these trips were at business class with the remaining 6 per cent. at economy class.

NIO business class travel bookings are at competitive rates, are fully flexible and refundable and enable staff to make last minute adjustments to their travel arrangements without a cost penalty to meet the demands of the Department's business.

Travel costs within the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development cannot be separated into the geographical divisions requested except at disproportionate cost.

However, it is estimated that some 85 per cent. of expenditure was on mileage, which is likely to relate primarily to travel within Northern Ireland, 12 per cent. related to public transport within the United Kingdom (including air, train and bus fares) and 3 per cent. related to travel outside of the United Kingdom.

Deaf Teachers

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many deaf people qualified as teachers in the last five years; and how many of those people are now employed as full-time teachers. [65891]

Angela E. Smith: Students gaining an initial teacher training qualification from a Northern Ireland higher education institution and declaring a hearing impairment/deaf disability, 2000–01 to 2004–05 are as follows:

	Number of qualifications obtained
2000–01	[1]
2001–02	0
2002–03	[1]
2003–04	5
2004–05	[1]

[1] To prevent the identification of individuals, figures less than five have been suppressed.

Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency.

Information on the current employment status of the graduates identified in the table is not available.

Denis Donaldson

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what co-operation there has been between the Garda and the Police Service of Northern Ireland in connection with the murder of Denis Donaldson. [65326]

Mr. Woodward: The hon. Member will appreciate that this is an ongoing investigation. I can, however, assure him that both Gardai and the Police Service of Northern Ireland are collectively engaged in tracking down those responsible for this horrendous murder, and the Government wholeheartedly and actively supports those efforts.

Dental Services

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people in Northern Ireland wishing to be registered with an NHS dentist on 31 December 2005 were not so registered. [65345]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is not available.

Education

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* part-time and *(b)* full-time students are enrolled in each of the further and higher education institutes in Northern Ireland. [65928]

Angela E. Smith: The latest available data[1] pertaining to student participation in the Northern Ireland further education sector relate to the 2004/05 academic year and are detailed as follows.

[1] Data is a full year count of students.

College	*Mode to attendance*		
	Full-time	*Part-time*	*Total*
Armagh	1,053	3,765	4,818
BIFHE[1]	4,326	23,305	27,631
Castlereagh	938	6,024	6,962
Causeway	897	4,540	5,437
East Antrim	1,301	7,575	8,876
East Down	1,132	5,299	6,431
East Tyrone	626	8,490	9,116
Fermanagh	841	8,010	8,851

College	Mode to attendance: Full-time	Part-time	Total
Limavady	126	4,421	4,547
Lisburn	880	4,268	5,148
Newry and Kilkeel	1,436	9,375	10,811
North Down and Ards	2,514	8,119	10,633
North East	1,986	6,994	8,980
North West	2,726	12,250	14,976
Omagh	452	5,468	5,920
Upper Bann	1,128	9,589	10,717
Total	22,362	127,492	149,854

[1] Belfast Institute of Further and Higher Education.
Source:
FESR.

Independent Treatment Centres

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the development of independent sector treatment centres in the NHS in Northern Ireland. [64979]

Mr. Woodward: There are currently no plans to develop independent sector treatment centres in Northern Ireland. However, in the context of securing shorter waiting times for patients, I am committed to making appropriate use of the independent sector while at the same time developing additional hospital capacity and reforming hospital systems and processes.

Long-term Sick Leave

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how many people in the NHS in Northern Ireland have been on long-term sick leave in each of the last three years *(a)* in total and *(b)* broken down by grade, and how many were suffering from stress. [63467]

Mr. Woodward: [*pursuant to the reply of 18 April 2006, Official Report, col. 491W*]. I am now in a position to provide the information requested.

Number of episodes of long-term sick leave (28+ days) by year

Staff group	2003	2004	2005
Admin and clerical	1,596	1,604	1,617
Ambulance	103	165	175
Ancillary and general	2,135	2,137	2,079
Medical and dental	115	118	134
Nursing and midwifery	3,436	3,371	3,551
Professional and technical	668	661	667
Social services	1,120	1,134	1,201
Works and maintenance	84	81	65
Total	9,257	9,271	9,489

Number of episodes of long-term stress related sick leave by year

Staff group	2003	2004	2005
Admin and clerical	287	325	303
Ambulance	48	51	54
Ancillary and general	414	432	394
Medical and dental	9	14	17
Nursing and midwifery	505	588	544
Professional and technical	96	111	109
Social services	195	248	233
Works and maintenance	9	13	5
Total	1,563	1,782	1,659

These figures include episodes of sick leave, which commenced between 1 January 2003 and 31 December 2005. If an episode runs beyond the end of a particular year, it may be counted again in the following year. Stress-related illnesses such as nervous debility/anxiety and depression are included in the figures.

Medical Equipment

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what is the most expensive piece of medical equipment in each hospital in Northern Ireland; and how many continuous hours per day each is operation. [63463]

Mr. Woodward [*pursuant to the reply, 18 April 2006, Official Report, c. 492W*]: I am now in a position to provide the information requested.

This information is not held centrally. The following information has been supplied by health and social services trusts which provide acute hospital services. In some instances it has not been possible to provide the number of hours the equipment is used on a daily basis. My department is currently examining the diagnostic capacity available within the HPSS as part of my elective care reforms which are designed to reduce waiting times for inpatient day case and outpatient procedures.

Hospital	Equipment	Daily Usage
Altnagelvin Group HSS Trust		
Altnagelvin Hospital	MRI Scanner	8:45–7:15 (5days a week)
Belfast City Hospital HSS Trust		
Belfast City Hospital	High Energy Linear Accelerator	8:30–20.00 (5 days a week)
Causeway HSS Trust		
Causeway Hospital	CT Scanner	8 hours a day (full emergency CT service night and weekends).
Craigavon Area Hospital Group HSS Trust		
Craigavon Hospital	MRI Scanner	9:00–7:00 (5 days a week)
South Tyrone Hospital	CT Scanner	9:00–7:00 (full emergency CT service night and weekends)
Lurgan Hospital	Mammography Equipment	9:00–7:00 (5 days a week)
Down Lisburn HSS Trust		
Downe Hospital	CT Scanner	9:00–7:00 (full emergency CT service night and weekends).

Hospital	*Equipment*	*Daily Usage*
Lagan Valley Hospital	CT Scanner	9:00–7:00 (full emergency CT service night and weekends).
Green Park Healthcare HSS Trust		
Musgrave Park Hospital	Magnetom Avanta MRI Scanner	12 hours a day Mon—Fri, (Sat & Sun morning)
Mater Hospital HSS Trust		
Mater Hospital	CT Scanner	9:00–7:00 (full emergency CT service night and weekends).
Newry & Mourne HSS Trust		
Daisy Hill Hospital	CT Scanner	9:00–17:00 (full emergency CT service night and weekends).
Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust		
Royal Group of Hospitals	MRI Scanner	8:30–7.00 (plus 3–4 evenings per week to 9pm) Sat & Sun 8:30–12:30.
Sperrin Lakeland HSS Trust		
Tyrone County Hospital	CT Ultrasound system	1 3 examinations a day, 5 days a week (plus emergency *CT service night and weekends)*
Erne Hospital	CT Ultrasound system	14.5 examinations a day, 5 days a week, (plus emergency CT service night and weekends).
Ulster Community & Hospitals HSS Trust		
Ulster Hospital	MRI Scanner	7 hours a day (5 days a week)
Ards Hospital	Computerised Radiography systems	7 hours a day (5 days a week)
Bangor Hospital	Computerised Radiography systems	7 hours a day (5 days a week)
United Hospitals Group HSS Trust		
Antrim Hospital	Siemens Magnaton Symphony MRI Scanner	8:30–7: 00 (5 days a week)
Braid Valley Hospital	Siemens General X-Ray Room	9:00–17:00 (5 days a week)
Mid Ulster Hospital	Toshiba Single slice CT Scanner	4 hours per day. (plus emergency CT service night and weekends)
Moyle Hospital	Siemens General X-ray Room	9:00–12:30 (5 days a week).
Whiteabbey Hospital	Fluoroscopy Room	9:00–17:00 (Full emergency service).

Northern Ireland Civil Service

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment has been carried out to ensure that filling of vacancies in the Northern Ireland Civil Service from *(a)* departmental transfer lists and *(b)* the central transfer list complies with (i) section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and (ii) all other equality obligations. [65508]

Angela E. Smith: The process of filling vacancies from departmental transfer lists has not been assessed against equality obligations, including Section 75. The central policy on staff transfers has not been subject to equality screening; however, the policy is currently under review. The expectation is that the new policy will establish a consistent approach to filling vacancies across the NICS and the policy will be subject to the equality impact assessment process.

Nursing Home Care

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the letter of 3 August 2005 from the Permanent Secretary of the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (COR/379/2005) to the hon. Member for North Down what the exceptional circumstances are under which health care may be provided free of charge in a nursing home in Northern Ireland. [65470]

Mr. Woodward: The exceptional circumstances where continuing health care needs might be met in a nursing home, rather than in hospital, are a matter for professional clinical and social care judgement in individual cases and will be based on an assessment of whether continuing consultant intervention and/or specialist nursing care could be more effectively and efficiently provided in a nursing home.

Parking

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many fixed penalties were issued during 2005 in Northern Ireland Department for Regional Development pay and display car parks in respect of vehicles that did not have the correct payment sticker displayed on the windscreen. [65314]

Mr. Woodward: The chief executive of the roads service has been asked to write to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Dr. Malcolm McKibbin, dated 25 April 2006:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a parliamentary question regarding how many fixed penalties were issued during 2005 in Northern Ireland Department for Regional Development pay and display car parks in respect of vehicles that did not have the correct payment sticker displayed on the windscreen.

As this issue falls within my responsibility as chief executive of roads service, I have been asked to reply.

I should explain that in roads service's pay and display car parks, a fee is levied based on the length of time that the driver intends to park. If a vehicle fails to display evidence that a fee has been paid, an Alternative Charge ticket is issued. However, if a fee has been paid, but is insufficient for the length of stay, an Excess Charge ticket is issued.

I can advise that during 2005 roads service issued 16,112 Alternative Charge and 4,908 Excess Charge tickets.

Parliamentary Questions

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when he will answer question *(a)* 38593 and *(b)* 38594, tabled by the hon. Member for Upper Bann, on special advisers. [63447]

Mr. Hain: I have now responded to the hon. Member's questions *(a)* 38593 and *(b)* 38594. I must apologise to the hon. Member for the delay in responding, owing to an administrative error within the Department. Steps have been taken to prevent a recurrence.

Patient Advocates

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many cases were dealt with by patient advocates during 2005 at each of Northern Ireland's acute hospitals. [64910]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is not available. However, patient liaison and support services, including advocacy, provided by Health and Social Services Trusts, are widely available in Northern Ireland, as are advocacy services provided by the Health and Social Services Councils.

Sex Offenders (Tagging)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many convicted sex offenders in Northern Ireland have had electronic type tags fitted after their release from prison in each year between 2000 and 2005. [64906]

Mr. Hanson: Electronic tagging is not currently used in Northern Ireland. The recent consultation on the Review of the Sentencing Framework included a section inviting comment on the possible introduction of electronic monitoring and on its various applications. We will bring forward proposals to modernise the sentencing framework during the course of the year.

Special Advisers

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) how many special advisers are employed by the Government in Northern Ireland; what their *(a)* role is, *(b)* relationship with the various civil service departments and officials is, *(c)* salary is and *(d)* qualifications are; [38593]

(2) what function special advisers employed by the Government in Northern Ireland exercise in relation to departmental answers to parliamentary questions; and how many of them are members of the Labour Party. [38594]

Mr. Hain: There are two special advisers employed within my Department. Their role and relationships with Departments and officials are in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Special Advisers issued by the Cabinet Office's Propriety and Ethics Team. I refer the hon. Gentleman to the Prime Minister's written ministerial statement on special advisers of 21 July 2005. This statement referred to the revised Code of Conduct for Special Advisers which reflected commitments given by the Government to the Public Administration Committee and the Committee on Standards in Public Life. It also advised that the Civil Service Order in Council governing the appointment of special advisers had been amended to the effect that special advisers are appointed to assist Ministers. They are employed as temporary civil servants and paid according to the relevant pay band. On the issue of Labour Party membership, this is matter for the individuals concerned.

Still-births

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what *(a)* financial assistance and *(b)* support is available for expectant mothers in Northern Ireland who deliver a still-born baby. [65354]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is as follows.

(a) A stillbirth is defined in The Stillbirth Definition (Northern Ireland) Order, 1992 as

> "The complete expulsion from its mother, after the 24th week of pregnancy, of a child which did not at any time after being completely expelled or extracted breathe or show any other evidence of life."

Such an event prior to 24 weeks is treated as a miscarriage. This distinction is reflected in the financial assistance available.

If a pregnancy does not result in the issue of a living child, depending on her individual circumstances, a woman may be entitled to receive financial support as follows:

(i) If the pregnancy ends before 24 weeks; incapacity benefit, statutory sick pay and income support;

(ii) If the pregnancy ends after 24 weeks; statutory maternity pay, maternity allowance, income support, a social fund funeral payment and a sure start maternity grant.

(b) Trained staff within the Health and Personal Social Services (HPSS) in Northern Ireland offer a wide range of support to the bereaved. This is in addition to the services available from voluntary, community and church organisations. In July 2005 the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (NI) published a "Careplan for Women who Experience a Miscarriage, Stillbirth or Neonatal Death". This document is designed to promote quality and effective care and forms a basis for trusts to develop their arrangements in accordance with local needs and circumstances. It can be viewed at www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/hoi-careplan.pdf.

In March 2006, a HPSS regional bereavement network for Northern Ireland was established. It comprises five area co-ordinators based in local hospitals, and will help make a significant contribution to developing support for those who experience a stillbirth.

Television

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to ascertain the demand for access to Scottish television by viewers in Northern Ireland who do not have cable or satellite. [55157]

Mr. Hanson: Government have no plans to ascertain demand for access to Scottish television by viewers in Northern Ireland.

Two Tick Symbol

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) under what circumstances organisations in Northern Ireland may no longer use the two tick symbol; [64729]

(2) what the criteria are for use by an organisation in Northern Ireland of the two tick symbol; [64730]

(3) how many organisations in Northern Ireland have ceased to be eligible to use the two tick symbol in each of the last five years. [64751]

Angela E. Smith: The two ticks disability symbol does not operate in Northern Ireland.

TREASURY

Business Investment

Chris Huhne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the rate of business investment was as a percentage of gross domestic product in *(a)* the UK, *(b)* Germany, *(c)* France, *(d)* the US and *(e)* other OECD countries in each of the last 10 years. [64796]

John Healey: On average between 1997 and 2004, UK business investment has grown more than any other G7 economy except Canada, and more than both the euro area and OECD averages.

The data requested are available from the OECD Economic Outlook (Source OECD database), which is available through the House of Commons Library.

Census Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the operation of the Census Act 1920. [64884]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Jil Matheson, dated 25 April 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question on the operation of the Census Act 1920. I am replying in her absence. (64884)

The Census Act 1920 as amended by the Census (Confidentiality) Act 1991 and the Census Amendment Act 2000 is the legislation which empowers the taking of a census. It specifies the duty of the Registrar General to make arrangements and do all such things as are necessary to take a census and provides that expenses incurred will be provided by Parliament.

In practical terms it covers every aspect of the Census from the enumeration procedures, the topics which may be required, to the laying of reports before Parliament. The Census Act also requires secondary legislation in the form of an Order in Council and Census Regulations to be made for each Census.

The Census Order directs that a particular census shall be taken, and is a function of the Queen's Privy Council. The Draft Order is laid before both Houses of Parliament under Section 1(2) of the Census Act and prescribes:

the date of the Census;

the areas to be covered by the Census;

the persons required to complete the returns;

the persons required to be included in the returns (that is, the enumeration base); and

the particulars (that is the question items) to be recorded in respect of each person.

Section 3 of the Census Act 1920 empowers the Chancellor to make Regulations governing the detailed arrangements for the conduct of the Census, principally covering the data collection activities.

Reports on output from a Census are laid before Parliament under Section 4 (1) and Section 4(2) allows the preparation of additional abstracts requested by customers.

Other sections of the Act cover the authority to carry out a local census at the request and expense of a local authority (Sections 6 and 7); the penalties for unlawful disclosure of personal census information and for refusal to comply with the Census Act (Section 8).

The Schedule of the 1920 Census Act sets out the topics in respect of which particulars may be required in the Census.

Consultants

Philip Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much HM Revenue and Customs and its predecessor bodies spent on consultants in *(a)* each year between 1997 and 2000–01 and *(b)* 2005–06. [64812]

Dawn Primarolo: The former Inland Revenue spent the following amounts on consultancy between 1997 and 2000–01:

	Amount (£ million)
1997–98	9.2
1998–99	15.8
1999–2000	35.0

Data are not available for the former Customs and Excise for these years.

Audited figures for HMRC for 2005–06 are not available.

EU Commissioner for External Trade

Mr. Davey: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what representations he has made to the EU Commissioner for External Trade on *(a)* his decision to impose duties on imports of shoes from China and Vietnam, *(b)* the current discussions on imports of furniture from Asia and *(c)* the current talks in the Doha trade round; and if he will make a statement. [64672]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: As the Treasury set out in the April 2006 pamphlet 'The case for open markets: how increased competition can equip Europe for global change', openness to trade and investment is key to Europe's future prosperity and we need to strengthen its

relationships with its major trade and investment partners. An ambitious outcome to the Doha Round is essential to deliver benefits to developed and developing countries alike and all key players need to demonstrate commitment and political will in order to achieve a successful outcome by the end of 2006.

To this end Treasury Ministers and officials have conversations and discussions with a wide range of organisations and individuals as part of the of policy development, analysis and delivery.

Mr. Davey: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he last met the EU Commissioner for External Trade; how many times in the last 12 months he has met him; when he next expects to meet him; and if he will make a statement. [64677]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Treasury Ministers and officials have discussions with a wide range of organisations and individuals as part of the process of policy development, analysis and delivery. As was the case with previous Administrations, it is not the Government's practice to provide details of every such meeting.

HM Revenue and Customs

Philip Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what performance related pay is given to HM Revenue and Customs employees. [64820]

Dawn Primarolo: In HMRC all pay awards are performance related. Staff must achieve a satisfactory or better standard of performance to qualify for a basic performance award.

There are three performance categories—'Top', 'Good' and 'Improvement needed'. In addition to the basic performance award, 'Top' and 'Good' performers will qualify for a pay range progression award. Also, the 'Top' category (20 per cent. of staff) will qualify for a bonus of between 2.5 per cent. and 5 per cent. of salary. Those deemed 'Good' and on their pay range maxima, will qualify for a smaller bonus.

This information excludes members of the senior civil service (SCS), who have a separate pay system.

Hospitals (Tax Payments)

Mr. Swire: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much *(a)* pay as you earn tax and *(b)* national insurance is outstanding from all hospital trusts to HM Revenue and Customs. [65383]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Runnymede and Weybridge (Mr. Hammond) on 7 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1300W.

Imports (Tax Evasion)

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the estimated level of tax evasion on imported goods was in each of the last five years for which records are available. [65859]

Dawn Primarolo: HM Revenue and Customs currently does not undertake any exercise to quantify the level of tax evasion on imported goods.

Income Tax

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the difference would be to the nearest £1 million of income generated to the Exchequer if the personal allowance for all was raised to £10,000 per annum and all income above that taxed at 40 per cent., compared with the present personal tax system. [65361]

Dawn Primarolo: The estimated yield from increasing all personal allowances to £10,000 and introducing a single rate of 40 per cent. on earnings, savings and dividend income is £32.4 billion in 2005–06.

The estimate is given to the nearest £100 million because estimates to the nearest £1 million will be less accurate.

The actual yield is likely to be less because the figure excludes any estimate of behavioural response to the tax change which is likely to be significant given the scale of the change.

The income tax information is based upon the 2003–04 Survey of Personal Incomes (SPI) and projected forward to 2005–06 in line with March 2006 Budget HM Treasury assumptions.

Insurance Mediation Directive

Mr. Malik: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will seek an exemption for the freight forwarding sector from compliance with the EU directive on insurance mediation. [65978]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: HM Treasury is aware of the concerns that have been expressed in relation to the insurance mediation directive by the freight forwarding sector, and has met industry representatives to discuss their concerns.

In the implementation of EU directives, EU member states have to give effect to the obligations in the directive and cannot unilaterally alter the scope of any directive.

Non-Parochial Registers Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) if he will make a statement on the operation of section 5 of the Non-Parochial Registers Act 1840; [64882]

(2) if he will make a statement on the operation of the Places of Worship Registration Act 1855; [64883]

(3) if he will make a statement on the operation of the Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953; [64885]

(4) if he will make a statement on the operation of the Registration Service Act 1953; [65041]

(5) if he will make a statement on the operation of section 5 of the Public Expenditure and Receipts Act 1968; [65042]

(6) if he will make a statement on the operation of section 18 of the Marriage Act 1970. [65043]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the Registrar General, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Dennis Roberts, dated 25 April 2006:

The Registrar General has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Questions concerning the Registration Service. I am replying in her absence. (65041, 64885, 65042, 64882, 64883 & 65043)

The Registration Service Act 1953 (65041) sets out the responsibility for the provision and administration of the registration service in England and Wales. This includes the provision by local authorities of a local registration service for births, stillbirths, deaths and marriages which is overseen by the General Register Office on behalf of the Registrar General.

The Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953 (64885) sets out requirements for the registration of births, still-births and deaths in England and Wales. The registration service is successfully delivered, resulting in creation of the appropriate registration records and issue of certificates within the timescales that are required.

Section 5 of the Public Expenditure and Receipts Act 1968 (65042) allows the Chancellor of the Exchequer to make an Order varying fees for marriage services and certificates of births, deaths and marriages. The power to charge fees for these services is prescribed in the Marriage Act 1949 and the Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953. The fees collected contribute to meeting the costs to local authorities of the provision of the local registration service and those of the Registrar General in providing the central certificate application service.

Registers deposited under the Non-Parochial Registers Act 1840 (64882) are held at the National Archive who provide access to those records and list them in their catalogue. If a certificate under the seal of the General Register is required for evidential purposes arrangements are in place for this service to be provided by the Registrar General.

The Places of Worship Registration Act 1855 (64883) provides for places of religious worship, except those of the Established Church, to be certified to the Registrar General on payment of a fee, currently £28, to the superintendent registrar of the district.

A building has to be certified as a place of religious worship before it can be registered for marriages by the Registrar General under the Marriage Act 1949. The Registrar General maintains the record of these places of religious worship by adding those newly certified and cancelling those that are disused.

Section 18 of the Marriage (Registrar General's Licence) Act 1970 (65043) empowers the Registrar General, with the approval of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to make regulations prescribing the form of the notice of marriage and the form of the Registrar General's licence. These forms are prescribed by the Registration of Marriages Regulations 1986 (SI 19867 1442) as amended by the Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages (Amendment) Regulations 2005 (SI 2005/3177).

Planning Aid Supplement

Michael Gove: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what proportion of the proposed planning aid supplement will be retained by the local authority in which the development to be taxed takes place. [64946]

John Healey: In the Economic and Fiscal Strategy Report 2006 the Government stated that it would ensure that a significant majority of Planning-gain Supplement (PGS) revenues are retained for infrastructure priorities within the local authority area where the revenues derived.

Secular Baby-naming Ceremonies

Colin Challen: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will ensure that registrars make those registering births aware of providers of secular baby-naming ceremonies in addition to those ceremonies provided on a commercial basis by registrars themselves. [65142]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Dennis Roberts, dated 25 April 2006:

The Registrar General has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking that registrars make those registering births aware of providers of secular baby-naming ceremonies in addition to those provided on a commercial basis by registrars themselves. I am replying ill her absence. (65142)

Registrars are statutory office holders who are appointed by local authorities to carry out duties relating to the registration of births, still-births, deaths and marriages. Their statutory duties do not include performing-baby-naming ceremonies but registrars may be involved in delivering ceremonies as a local authority function. Any arrangements for information about independently operated baby-naming ceremonies being made available by registrars would be a matter for individual local authorities.

Self-invested Personal Pensions

Mr. Bone: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will bring forward proposals to regulate independent trustees of self-invested personal pensions. [65421]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: As set out in the formal Government response to the autumn 2005 consultation on pension scheme rules, the pensions industry overwhelmingly supported the option of introducing, from April 2007, a new regulated activity of establishing, operating or winding up a personal pension scheme. This new activity will cover independent trustees of self-invested personal pensions. Industry also overwhelmingly agreed with Government that it was sensible not to rush through this regulation before April 2007. The FSA published a consultation paper in April 2006 and will analyse feedback during the summer before making the necessary amendments to their rulebook by October 2006.

Tax Credits

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many tax credit claimants have been on the manual payments database in each quarter from Q1 2003 to Q1 2006; and if he will make a statement. [62030]

Dawn Primarolo: The information is not available for 2003–04 and 2004–05. For 2005–06, the information is not available in the format requested and could be obtained only at a disproportionate cost.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many disabled adults have claimed tax credits in each month since April 2003 in Coventry, South. [64749]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws) on 31 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 414W.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many referrals were received by HM Revenue and Customs' Special Compliance Office and Criminal Investigations in respect of tax credit fraud in the period from April 2005 to February 2006. [62789]

Dawn Primarolo: In the period 1 April 2005 to 28 February 2006, Criminal Investigations received around 2,100 referrals relating to tax credits.

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many cases of forged tax credits which resulted in prosecution have been reported to Jobcentre Plus in Hull in the past 12 months. [62864]

Dawn Primarolo: There have been no cases of forged (fraudulent) tax credit claims resulting in a prosecution relating to Jobcentre Plus in Hull in the last 12 months.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what additional checks and safeguards have been introduced into the tax credits system since 1 December 2005 to reduce fraud; and if he will make a statement. [63322]

Dawn Primarolo: HMRC takes fraud very seriously and as part of its everyday activity, continually examines its approaches to tackling fraud—introducing new measures and initiatives where necessary. Following the closure of the tax credit e-portal in December, HMRC is planning to implement through scheduled IT releases additional measures and will reopen the portal once this work provides the necessary assurance. It would be inappropriate to give specific details of these as it could aid those seeking to gain through fraud.

CABINET OFFICE

Departmental Advertising Costs

Mr. Donohoe: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how much *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies spent on advertising for job vacancies in each of the last five years. [65969]

Mr. Jim Murphy: Recruitment expenditure for the Cabinet Office is shown in the following table:

	Expenditure (£)
2004–05	317,828
2005–06	249,535

The Cabinet Office is also responsible for the advertising and filling of Fast Stream vacancies across the Civil Service. These figures include specific Fast Stream advertising costs of £81,000 for the period 2004–05 and £47,888 for the period 2005–06.

Cabinet Office systems are not sufficiently structured to provide accurate information on this issue prior to 1 April 2004.

Recruitment expenditure for the Central Office of Information is shown in the following table.

	Expenditure (£)
2001–02	61,622
2002–03	133,013
2003–04	80,457
2004–05	179,807
2005–06	125,884

The figure for Central Office of Information 2005–06 is still subject to audit.

Office of Public Service Reform

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what factors underlay his decision to abolish the Office of Public Service Reform. [65223]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The transfer of Office of Public Service Reform's functions to other units is one of a number of recent changes designed to produce a more strategic and better focused Cabinet Office.

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what the total expenditure was during its lifetime of the Office of Public Service Reform, broken down by *(a)* salaries, *(b)* funds spent on consultants and *(c)* other costs. [65224]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The total expenditure during the lifetime (June 2001 to January 2006) of the Office of Public Service Reform, broken down by salaries, funds spent on consultants and other costs (including non-salary payroll costs, secondees, publications and conferences) is shown in the following table.

Expenditure	*£ million*
Salaries	4.9
Consultants	3.5
Other costs	4.1
Total expenditure	12.5

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how many individuals in the Office of Public Service Reform were, when it was wound up, receiving gross salaries in excess of £100,000 per annum. [65226]

Mr. Jim Murphy: No one in the Office of Public Service Reform was receiving a gross salary in excess of £100,000 per annum.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefits

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what percentage of the population claimed *(a)* income support and *(b)* incapacity benefit in (i) the UK, (ii) the South West and (iii) Taunton constituency in each year since 1997. [64313]

Mrs. McGuire: Information is not available in the format requested. The available information for Great Britain, the South West Government Office Region and the Taunton parliamentary constituency is in the tables. No proportions can be given for the constituency figures as working-age population estimates are not available by parliamentary constituency.

Incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance claimants at August each year and as a percentage of the working age population

	Great Britain		South West		Taunton
	Claimants	Percentage	Claimants	Percentage	Claimants
1997	2,849,900	8.3	178,000	6.2	3,700
1998	2,779,900	8.0	177,900	6.2	3,800
1999	2,742,700	7.9	179,000	6.2	3,800
2000	2,758,300	7.9	182,300	6.2	3,900
2001	2,816,600	8.0	187,500	6.4	4,000
2002	2,819,100	7.9	190,600	6.4	4,200
2003	2,827,200	7.9	193,300	6.5	4,200
2004	2,824,200	7.8	195,500	6.5	4,100
2005	2,766,200	7.7	194,100	6.4	4,200

Notes:

1. The Parliamentary Constituency figures for the years 1997 to 1998 have been produced using the 5 per cent. data and have been rated up proportionally using the Great Britain WPLS 100 per cent. IB/SDA totals.
2. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred; percentages have been rounded to one decimal place.

Source:

DWP Information Directorate, 5 per cent. Samples from 1997 to 1998 and Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study 100 per cent. data thereafter and ONS population estimates.

Income support claimants at August each year and as a percentage of the relevant population

	Great Britain		South West		Taunton
	Claimants	Percentage	Claimants	Percentage	Claimants
1997	2,308,900	7.0	147,400	5.4	3,100
1998	2,242,800	6.7	144,100	5.2	2,800
1999	2,250,800	6.7	146,200	5.3	3,000
2000	2,259,300	6.7	146,500	5.2	3,000
2001	2,278,800	6.7	148,000	5.3	3,000
2002	2,264,000	6.6	146,200	5.2	3,000
2003	2,244,200	6.5	144,700	5.1	3,000
2004	2,195,100	6.3	140,700	4.9	2,800
2005	2,138,100	6.2	138,200	4.8	2,800

Notes:

1. Figures for August 1997 and August 1998 have been derived by applying 5 per cent. proportions to 100 per cent. totals. Figures for August 1999 to August 2005 have been taken from 100 per cent. Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study.
2. Figures have been rounded to the nearest hundred; percentages have been rounded to one decimal place.
3. A smaller number of former minimum income guarantee cases did not convert to pension credit on 6 October 2003. These cases have been excluded from the figures and are mainly cases where the claimant is aged under 60 and the partner over 60.
4. Figures may be affected by the introduction of new tax credits in April 2003.
5. Percentage population figures have been calculated using the relevant mid-year estimate of those aged 16–59 apart from 2005 where mid-2004 estimates were used.

Source:

DWP Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS) Information Directorate five per cent. samples and ONS Mid-term Population Estimates, 2004.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what *(a)* benefits and *(b)* other assistance are offered by his Department to those who act as carers for ill or disabled relatives in West Lancashire; what measures are in place to encourage higher levels of take-up of such benefits; and if he will make a statement. [64292]

Mrs. McGuire: The administration of carer's allowance is a matter for the chief executive of the Disability and Carers Service, Mr. Terry Moran. He will write to the hon. member with the information requested.

Letter from Vivien Hopkins:

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what *(a)* benefits and *(b)* other assistance are offered by his Department to those who act as carers for ill or disabled relatives in West Lancashire; what measures are in place to encourage higher levels of take-up of such benefits; and if he will make a statement.

The Minister for Disabled People, Anne McGuire MP, promised you a substantive reply from the Chief Executive of the Disability and Carers Service (DCS). In the Chief Executive's absence I have been asked to reply on his behalf.

In answer to parts *(a)* and *(b)* of your question, depending on their personal circumstances, carers have access to the full range of social security benefits. Those who provide regular and substantial care of at least 35 hours a week for a severely disabled person receiving Attendance Allowance or the equivalent rates of the Disability Living Allowance care component can be entitled to a Carer's Allowance and if on a low income, to the carer premium in the income-related benefits or the carer's additional amount in Pension Credit.

Information on the recipients of carer's related benefits in West Lancashire is provided in the following table:

Recipients of carer's related benefits in the Westminster parliamentary constituency of West Lancashire as at August 2005

Benefit	Claimants
Carer's allowance	900
Carer's additional amount paid with pension credit	500
Carer's premium with income-related benefits	
Income support	400
Income based jobseeker's allowance	—

Notes:

1. Definitions and conventions: "-" Nil or Negligible;"." Not applicable.
2. Caseload figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.
3. Carer's allowance: Total shows the number of people in receipt of an allowance, and excludes people with entitlement where the payment has been suspended, for example if they are in hospital.

4. Pension credit: Pension credit was introduced on 6 October 2003 and replaced minimum income guarantee (income support for people aged 60 or over).
5. Parliamentary constituencies are allocated by matching postcodes against the relevant ONS Postcode Directory.
6. A smaller number of former MIG cases did not convert to pension credit on 6 October 2003. These cases have been excluded from the figures and are mainly cases where the claimant is aged under 60 and the partner over 60.
7. IS, PC and CA figures are taken from 100 per cent. WPLS data.
8. JSA (IB) figure is derived by applying 5 per cent. proportions to 100 per cent. WPLS data.
9. August 2005 is the latest published data available.

Source:
DWP Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS).
Information directorate, 5 per cent. samples.

Information on housing benefit (HB) and council tax benefit (CTB) recipients with a carer premium in the North West Government office region (GOR) is provided in the following table:

HB/CTB recipients with a carer premium in North West GOR as at May 2004

Benefit	*Thousands Number of recipients*
Housing benefit	24
Council tax benefit	32

Notes:
1. Numbers are rounded to the nearest thousand.
2. HB/CTB data refers to households and may be a single person or a couple.
3. HB figures exclude any extended payment cases.
4. CTB figures exclude any single adult rebate cases.
5. The figures are based on a 1 per cent. sample and are therefore subject to a degree of sampling variation.
6. May 2004 are the latest data available.
7. The lowest level the figures can be broken down to is GOR, therefore figures have been provided for North West GOR.

Source: Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Management Information System, Annual 1 per cent. sample, taken in May 2004.

In answer to the second part of your question asking what measures are in place to encourage higher levels of take-up of such benefits, information and advice about entitlement to Carer's Allowance and other benefits are available from a range of outlets. These include the DCS' Benefit Enquiry Line which is a dedicated helpline, providing advice and information to disabled people and carers or representatives, social security offices, Jobcentre Plus offices, DWP and other internet sites, local authorities, Citizens Advice and welfare benefit offices, public libraries, health clinics, doctors' surgeries and health visitors. Officials from the DCS also discuss Carer's Allowance at outreach events throughout Great Britain, including West Lancashire.

I hope this is helpful.

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what forms of financial assistance are available for full-time carers. [64376]

Mrs. McGuire: Depending on their personal circumstances, carers have access to the full range of social security benefits. Those who provide regular and substantial care of at least 35 hours a week for a severely disabled person receiving attendance allowance or the equivalent rates of the disability living allowance care component can be entitled to a carer's allowance and, if on a low income, to the carer premium in the income-related benefits or the carer's additional amount in pension credit. Most carers entitled to carer's allowance are credited with national insurance contributions to protect their entitlement to state pension, and around two million carers will benefit from the special arrangements we have made for them in the state second pension.

The Government's National Carer's Strategy, which we developed with carers and the organisations that represent them, and published in 1999, has achieved much in improving the financial support for carers, including older carers, through carer's allowance and other benefits, and through introduction of the carers grant to support local authorities in providing breaks and services for carers. In the last local government finance settlement, we confirmed our commitment to continue the carers grant beyond 2006. Until at least the end of the 2007–08 financial year, provision for the grant will be £185 million a year. In this way, the Government will have invested an extra £1 billion in support for carers by 2008.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what percentage of incapacity benefit claimants in West Lancashire have been receiving the benefit for five years; and what the percentage was in May *(a)* 1983 and *(b)* 1997. [64113]

Mrs. McGuire: Incapacity benefit was introduced in April 1995, so no information is available about durations of five years or over prior to May 2000. A breakdown below national level is not available for the predecessor benefits. As at August 2005, the most recent available information, 51 per cent. of incapacity benefit claimants in Lancashire West had been claiming the benefit for over five years.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many incapacity benefit claimants of working age in West Lancashire are in receipt of *(a)* income support with a disability premium, *(b)* incapacity benefit and *(c)* severe disablement allowance. [64119]

Mrs. McGuire: As at August 2005, there were 1,800 income support claimants of working age with a disability premium, 4,500 incapacity benefit claimants of working age and 500 severe disablement allowance claimants of working age in West Lancashire.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average time taken between *(a)* the submitting of a claim for incapacity benefit and the formal acknowledgement of that claim by his Department, *(b)* the formal receipt of a claim for incapacity benefit and the carrying out of a personal capability assessment interview, *(c)* a personal capability assessment for incapacity benefit and the decision on eligibility being made, *(d)* the decision on eligibility for incapacity benefit and the first payment

being made and *(e)* the claim for incapacity benefit being submitted and the first payment being made using the most recent period for which figures are available.[64839]

Mrs. McGuire: The information requested is not collected centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions to what point can a recipient of incapacity benefit backdate a claim once eligibility for the benefit has been confirmed; and when in the claims process is the official start point for the payment once eligibility for incapacity benefit has been confirmed. [64840]

Mrs. McGuire: Claims for incapacity benefit can be backdated for up to three months prior to the date of claim.

Incapacity benefit is not paid for the first three days in a period of incapacity but payment will be made for any other day within the three-month period providing the conditions of entitlement are satisfied.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 7 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1349W, on incapacity benefit, how many recipients of incapacity benefit are receiving an adult dependant addition; and what the average payment is for such recipients. [64841]

Mrs. McGuire: As at August 2005, the most recent available figures, there were 61,400 incapacity benefit claimants in receipt of an adult dependency increase. Of these, 37,700 claimants were in receipt of only an adult dependency increase; the average weekly benefit paid to these claimants was £134.21. Additionally, there were 23,800 incapacity benefit claimants in receipt of both an adult dependency increase and a child dependency increase; the average weekly benefit paid to this group was £151.41.

Note:

Numbers are rounded to the nearest 100; totals do not sum due to rounding.

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether the benefit replacing incapacity benefit will be taxable. [64277]

Mrs. McGuire: I refer the hon. Member to the written answer given to him by my right hon. Friend, Margaret Hodge on 27 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 720W.

Child Support

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many parents have been found to have been avoiding paying the correct amount of child support in *(a)* Tamworth constituency, *(b)* Staffordshire, *(c)* the West Midlands and *(d)* the UK in each year since 1997. [22153]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive, Mr. Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Hilary Reynolds:

In reply to your parliamentary question about the Child Support Agency, the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the chief executive. As he is currently unavailable, I am responding on his behalf. Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding to your question.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many parents have been found to have been avoiding paying the rightful amount of child support in *(a)* Tamworth constituency *(b)* Staffordshire *(c)* the West Midlands and *(d)* the UK in each year since 1997.We cannot provide the information at the requested constituency or county level. We have some information at West Midlands level, but only in relation to cases under the old scheme until 2003. All other data is given at GB level, as the CSA does not cover Northern Ireland cases.There are a variety of ways in which a non-resident parent could potentially avoid paying the right amount of child support. For example, an NRP could:

Refuse to provide information about their income or circumstances.

By refusing to provide this information they are preventing the Agency from performing a maintenance calculation/assessment and could thus be said to be avoiding paying the rightful amount of child support. Where a parent consistently refuses to provide this information, the Agency may impose an Interim Maintenance Assessment (old scheme) or a Default Maintenance Decision (new scheme). Information on the number of DMDs and IMAs imposed by the Agency is attached as Table 1.

Under-declare their income and assets. Doing this may result in the establishment of a lower liability for child maintenance than should otherwise have applied, had the NRP's true income and assets been declared. In this case the parent with care may then apply for a departure or variation (old and new rules respectively) from the standard formula, on the basis that the non-resident parent's lifestyle is inconsistent with the income they are declaring to the Agency. Limitations with management information means that the number of variations applied for is not available. However, the number of departures applied for is attached as Table 2.

Failure to pay the full assessed amount of child maintenance. An NRP who does not pay the full maintenance liability due to them is clearly avoiding paying the rightful amount of child support. The number of NRPs who do not pay the full liability for which they have been assessed is attached as Table 3 and 3.1, relating to GB and west Midlands respectively.

I hope you find this helpful.

Table : Interim maintenance assessments and default maintenance decisions applied for since 1997

	Interim maintenance assessments (old scheme)		*Default maintenance decision (new scheme)*	
	Number of cases	*Percentage of all cases with an assessment*	*Number of cases*	*Percentage of all cases with an assessment*
November 1997	78,000	11	n/a	n/a
November 1998	77,000	9	n/a	n/a
November 1999	76,000	8	n/a	n/a
November 2000	54,000	5	n/a	n/a
November 2001	47,000	4	n/a	n/a
November 2002	40,000	4	n/a	n/a

Table : Interim maintenance assessments and default maintenance decisions applied for since 1997

	Interim maintenance assessments (old scheme)		*Default maintenance decision (new scheme)*	
	Number of cases	*Percentage of all cases with an assessment*	*Number of cases*	*Percentage of all cases with an assessment*
November 2003	u/a	u/a	3,000	6
November 2004	32,000	3	6,000	4
November 2005	27,000	4	7,000	3

Notes:
1. Numbers are rounded to the nearest thousand and percentages to the nearest whole percent.
2. 'n/a1 indicates the period is not applicable.
3. 'u/a1 indicates that data is unavailable due to limitations in management information.

Table 2: Number of departures applied for in each year since 1999–2000

	Number
1999–2000	20,000
2000–01	23,000
2001–02	21,000
2002–03	21,000
2003–04	13,000
2004–05	8,000
2005–06 (to Feb 2006)	9,000

Notes:
1. A departure can be applied for where it is felt that a maintenance assessment does not adequately reflect the circumstances of the NRP or PWC. Departures apply to old scheme cases only.
2. This table shows the number of departures applied for in each year since 1999–2000. Robust figures are not available for periods of time before 1999.
3. Numbers have been rounded to the nearest thousand.

Table 3: Non resident parents in Great Britain who paid the full amount of maintenance, as a proportion of those charged via the agency's collection service.

Quarter ending	*Percentage of non-resident parents who paid the full amount of maintenance (overall agency)*	*New and old scheme*
November 1997	44	
November 1998	45	
November 1999	47	
November 2000	49	
November 2001	51	
November 2002	54	
November 2003	54	
November 2004		46
November 2005		45
December 2005		42

Notes:
1. To place these figures into context, it should be noted that, whilst only 42 per cent. of non-resident parents paid their maintenance liability in full over the quarter ending December 2005, the agency obtained some form of payment from 70 per cent. of cases in which maintenance was due via the collection service. Where any such payment was obtained, on average, 90 per cent. of the amount due was collected.
2. Numbers have been rounded to the nearest whole percent.

Table 3.1: Non-resident parents on the old scheme in the west Midlands who paid the full amount of maintenance, as a proportion of those charged via the Agency's collection service.

	Percentage of non-resident parents who paid the full amount of maintenance (old scheme)
November 1997	45
November 1998	44
November 1999	49
November 2000	47

Table 3.1: Non-resident parents on the old scheme in the west Midlands who paid the full amount of maintenance, as a proportion of those charged via the Agency's collection service.

	Percentage of non-resident parents who paid the full amount of maintenance (old scheme)
November 2001	53
November 2002	55
November 2003	56

Notes:
1. Numbers have been rounded to the nearest whole percent.

Jessica Morden: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what measures will be introduced to improve the level of child support payments from non-resident non-paying parents. [61896]

Mr. Plaskitt: On 9 February my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, announced that Sir David Henshaw will undertake a fundamental redesign of child support policy and delivery mechanisms and he will deliver his finding before summer recess.

My right hon. Friend also announced that we are making available an additional £120 million to the Child Support Agency to implement the Operational Improvement plan which introduces a number of measures to improve the compliance rate of non-resident parents. This plan is available in the House Library.

For your benefit the relevant section of this plan is as follows:

Child Support Agency Operational Improvement Plan 2006–2009

Putting It Right: Enforcing Responsibilities

The Issues

Nearly one in three non-resident parents who have been assessed and are due to make a payment fail to pay

Debt accrued since 1993 as a result of non-resident parents' failure to pay exceeds £3.3 billion, some of which is considered uncollectable

The Agency does not respond quickly or firmly enough when non-resident parents start to default

Non-resident parents and the general public need greater awareness of the impact on children of the failure to pay child support

The Action

Managing non-resident parents with child support debt more effectively.

Child support debt is created by parents failing to fulfil their responsibility for their children. We will take quicker and firmer action against those who default on payment. We will employ external debt collection agencies to recover outstanding debt.

We will also improve our own debt collection and enforcement activity to ensure greater returns by using best practice from the private sector. Over 600 more staff trained and effective within the next year and staffing dedicated to enforcement activity quadrupled over the period of the plan through redeployment and restructuring.

There are many non-resident parents who seek to avoid payment of debt by evading the attempts of the Agency to contact them. We will make more use of information held by HMRC and credit reference agencies to track down those who owe money for their children.

Court action for those who won't pay

We will significantly increase the number of non-resident parents brought before the courts through our increased focus on compliance and enforcement, utilising the existing range of sanctions available such as driving licence removal and imprisonment.

We have been increasing the number of cases where debt is secured through Liability Orders in the courts. We will continue to increase our efforts here, enabling us to seek the seizure of assets where appropriate.

Understanding the impact for children

Failure to pay child support causes real hardship for children. We will increase the awareness of this hardship among non-resident parents and the general public. We will work with the media and stakeholders to develop a campaign to make clear that failing to pay has real and lasting consequences for children.

The Improvement

More responsibility from non-resident parents

Increased enforcement action and action in the courts

More money for more children

Using debt collection agencies to recover more debt more quickly. Over £100 million more historic debt collected over the three years, although it should be noted that new debt will continue to accrue over this period.

Delivery that is more efficient and effective

Four times as many designated enforcement staff generating increased levels of case compliance from 65 per cent. currently, to 75 per cent. by March 2008 and 80 per cent. in March 2009.

Departmental Advertising Costs

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the public information advertising campaigns run by his Department in each of the last seven years; and how much his Department spent on *(a)* newspapers and *(b)* television advertising in each of those campaigns. [64502]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department for Work and Pensions was formed in June 2001 from parts of the former Department for Social Security, the former Department for Education and Employment, and the Employment Service. Information prior to 2001 is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. The information for other years is as follows:

2005 to 2006

Campaign/subject	*TV*	*£000 Press*
Age Positive	—	42
State pension deferral	—	199
State Second Pension	—	695
Pensions Education Fund	—	5
National Pensions Debate	—	188
Pension Credit	—	1,250
Disability Discrimination Act	—	526

2005 to 2006

Campaign/subject	*TV*	*£000 Press*
Targeting benefit fraud	1,987	1,114
Council tax benefit	—	550
Winter fuel payments	—	899
National Sector campaign	—	23
Images of disability	—	—
Age Partnership Group	—	—
Total	1,987	5,491

2004 to 2005

Campaign/subject	*TV*	*£000 Press*
Age Positive	—	29
State pension deferral	—	115
Disability Discrimination Act	—	885
Targeting benefit fraud	1,481	618
Direct payment	2,668	4,046
Council tax benefit	—	661
Pension credit	1,688	2,634
Winter fuel payments	—	515
IB reforms pilots	—	71
Lone parent leaflet promotion marketing	—	216
National vacancy campaign	—	324
Total	5,837	10,114

2003 to 2004

Campaign	*TV*	*£000 Press*
Age Positive	—	70
Second state pension	—	216
Pension service awareness	—	906
New deal	3,526	1,043
Disability Discrimination Act	—	—
Targeting benefit fraud	1,835	1,423
Direct payment	3,594	5,389
Council tax benefit	—	556
Pension credit	3,571	6,305
Winter fuel payments	—	625
Jobseekers direct	1,566	66
IB reforms pilot	—	68
Jobcentre Plus customer marketing	—	12
National employer campaign	—	1,158
Total	14,092	17,.837

2002 to 2003

Campaign	*TV*	*£000 Press*
Age Positive	—	644
Future pensioners/informed choice	1,577	1,301
State Second Pension	—	489
New deal for musicians	—	33
Disability Discrimination Act	—	—
Targeting benefit fraud	—	—
Direct payment	—	475
Winter fuel payments	—	627
Inherited Serps	—	646
Total	1,577	4,215

Notes:

1. The tables do not include the following as the information is not held centrally and to obtain it would incur disproportionate cost:

spend by non-departmental bodies for which the Department is responsible;

details of highly localised publicity activity by the Department's customer-facing businesses;

recruitment or procurement advertising;

Jobcentre Plus p licity during 2002 to 2003 as at that time allocations sat w individual policy teams and within regional budgets.
2. The figures in these tables refer to media spend only, excluding production, direct mail, public relations and other costs.
3. All figures have been rounded to the nearest thousand.
4. All figures are quoted net of VAT.
5. Press includes national press, regional press, specialist press, advertorials and featurelink; to provide costs for newspaper only advertising would incur disproportionate cost.

Mr. Donohoe: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies spent on advertising for job vacancies in each of the last five years. [65968]

Mrs. McGuire: This information is not collected centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Disability Employment Advisers

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what information is made available to disability employment advisers by his Department about organisations that provide *(a)* support and *(b)* supervision for supported permitted work; and what funding is available to such organisations to provide these services. [64276]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie, dated 20 April 2006:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question asking what information is made available to disability employment advisers by his Department about organisations that provide *(a)* support and *(b)* supervision for supported permitted work; and what funding is available to such organisations to provide these services. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

As part of their training, all Disability Employment Advisers are made aware of the provisions for Supported Permitted Work, the relevant benefit legislation and the local organisations that provide this service. Advisers are encouraged to build relationships with organisations who provide such support, typically these would be local authorities and organisations involved with employment for disabled people. This ensures that Advisers are aware of all possibilities of support for customers. Detailed guidance on Supported Permitted Work, setting out the type of support available, is also available.

The Department does not provide funding to organisations for the work they do supporting those participating in Supported Permitted Work.

I hope this is helpful.

Disabled People (Heating Bills)

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assistance with heating bills is provided to disabled people in receipt of benefits *(a)* throughout the year and *(b)* during the winter months. [64377]

Mrs. McGuire: Disability living allowance and attendance allowance provide severely disabled people with a contribution towards the extra costs they face because of the effects of their disability. Recipients are free to spend these benefits in any way they choose, During the winter months, disabled people in receipt of certain benefits may be eligible to receive a cold weather payment. Cold weather payments are intended to provide extra help to the most vulnerable people towards additional heating costs during a period of cold weather. People receiving pension credit are eligible. Income support or income-based jobseeker's allowance customers with a pensioner or disability premium, or who have a child under five or a child who is disabled in their family, are eligible because they are considered to be the most vulnerable.

Winter fuel payments of up to £200 are available to disabled people aged 60 or over, and up to £300 for those aged 80 or over, regardless of whether they are in receipt of any benefit.

Pension Credit

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what criteria are used by *(a)* the Pension Service and *(b)* other agencies for which his Department has responsibility in (i) identifying and (ii) approaching people who have not applied for pension credit but might be eligible for it. [64506]

Mr. Timms: The Pension Service uses savings and tax information obtained from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs—together with administrative data from the Department—to help identify those customers whose income and savings levels would exclude them from entitlement to pension credit. The Pension Service then assesses the most appropriate way of approaching those customers with potential eligibility.

Pensions

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps he is taking to ensure that Royal Mail pensioners will be paid their accrued pension benefits in full in the event of Royal Mail being unable to meet its obligations. [64160]

Mr. Timms: The Government do not guarantee company pension schemes. However, the Pensions Act 2004 puts in place specific measures to provide support, advice and protection to schemes and to scheme members. These include:

The Pensions Regulator which has a broad range of powers to help it fulfil its statutory objectives which include protecting the benefits of occupational pension scheme members. The Regulator will act quickly to anticipate and tackle any risks to those members;

A new scheme funding regime which requires trustees and employers to agree an appropriate funding target for the scheme and a plan for eradicating any shortfall; and

The Pension Protection Fund which will provide protection to members of eligible defined benefit occ tional pension schemes where the employer becomes insolvent (after 6 April 2005) and leaves the scheme under funded.

As a defined benefit occupational pension scheme, the Royal Mail scheme is eligible to benefit from these arrangements.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the countries where British pensioners living abroad *(a)* do and *(b)* do not have their pensions uprated; and if he will make a statement. [65922]

Mr. Timms: We uprate the UK state pension to people who are living outside the UK where there is a legal requirement to do so under either the terms of a reciprocal agreement or EC law. The following lists show those countries where the state pensions are uprated; it is not uprated in any other country The UK has reciprocal agreements covering the uprating of state pensions with the following countries:

Austria[1]
Barbados
Belgium[1]
Bermuda
Channel Islands
Cyprus[1]
Finland[1]
France[1]
Germany[1]
Gibraltar
Iceland[1]
Ireland[1]
Isle of Man
Israel
Italy[1]
Jamaica
Luxembourg[1]
Malta[1]
Mauritius
Netherlands[1]
Norway[1]
Philippines
Portugal[1]
Spain[1]
Sweden[1]
Switzerland[1]
Turkey
USA
Yugoslavia (including the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, Bosnia-Hercegovina, Croatia, Slovenia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia).

UK nationals living in the following countries are entitled to upratings of state pension under EC law on co-ordination of social security:

Austria
Belgium
Cyprus
Czech Republic
Denmark
Estonia
Finland
France
Germany
Gibraltar
Greece
Hungary
Iceland
Ireland
Italy
Latvia
Liechtenstein
Lithuania
Luxembourg
Malta
Netherlands
Norway
Poland
Portugal
Slovak Republic
Slovenia
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland

[1] The UK's reciprocal agreements with these countries have generally been superseded by EC law on co-ordination of social security.

Winter Fuel Payment

Mr. Dunne: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people his Department estimates were entitled to receive their winter fuel payment but did not do so in *(a)* 2001–02, *(b)* 2002–03, *(c)* 2003–04, *(d)* 2004–05 and *(e)* 2005–06. [64921]

Mr. Timms: Most people who qualify for a winter fuel payment do not need to make a claim because they are paid automatically from DWP records. Some people aged 60 or over who are not in receipt of a benefit administered by DWP do need to claim. Many men aged 60–64, for example, fall into this category and need to claim. However, we do not have any estimate for how many eligible people have not claimed.

Mr. Dunne: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people his Department estimates did not receive their backdated winter fuel allowance for 2005–06 consequent on his Department's ruling that claims had to be made by 30 March 2006 for this winter. [64922]

Mr. Timms: Using departmental records we issue claim forms automatically to people we can identify who may be newly eligible. We cannot identify everyone who may be newly eligible as some people have had no recent contact with the Department and we do not hold up-to-date address details. It is therefore not possible to provide an estimate of how many eligible people have not received a winter fuel payment because they did not make a claim by 30 March 2006. In order to maximise take-up we run an extensive publicity campaign advising people how to claim their payment and giving details of the cut-off date for claims.

Mr. Dunne: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many and what percentage of appeals for back payment of winter fuel payments were successful in each year from 2002 to 2005. [65054]

Mr. Timms: Details of appeals on late claims for 2002 to 2004 are provided as follows:

Winter	*Appeals received*	*Appeals allowed by tribunal (Number)*	*Appeals allowed by tribunal (Percentage)*
2002	1,407	5	Less than 0.5
2003	1,157	2	Less than 0.5
2004	733	4	Less than 1

No appeals have been received for 2005 as decisions on late claims for winter 2005 have not yet been issued.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Case Management

Vera Baird: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what steps she plans to take to increase the number of cases presented to magistrates courts by designated caseworkers. [64859]

The Solicitor-General: I have been asked to reply.

The CPS has embarked on a recruitment, training and development programme to prepare sufficient numbers of designated caseworkers to handle a minimum of 16 per cent. of routine magistrates court sessions nationally in 2006–07. In some areas this figure will be much higher. Recently revised guidelines issued by the Director of Public Prosecutions expanded the range of cases capable of being handled by designated caseworkers; and CPS staff will work closely with their HMCS partners to seek better scheduling of cases suitable for presentation by designated caseworkers.

Vera Baird: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether she plans to establish small prosecution case management teams, made up of designated caseworkers, administrative staff and lawyers responsible for reviewing and presenting cases from a single police division as recommended by the National Audit Office. [64852]

The Solicitor-General: I have been asked to reply.

As identified by the NAO in their visits to a number of operational units, particularly in Northumbria and South Wales, alignment of dedicated teams of CPS prosecutors, designated caseworkers and administrative staff, to police divisions/basic command units, and ideally servicing discrete magistrates courts, offered the best model for the effective local delivery of justice, both in terms of value for money, victim and witness care, and in promoting the confidence of the local community.

The CPS has initiated a programme of activity to restructure all operational units handling volume crime into a similar model, working in close partnership with police colleagues and the courts, and in line with current proposals for police reform, currently the subject of consultation.

Criminal Justice Act 2003

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment the Department has made of the impact of the bad character provisions in the Criminal Justice Act 2003 on criminal proceedings. [64467]

Fiona Mactaggart: I have been asked to reply.

We have commissioned a research project to assess the impact on the courts of the bad character provisions of the Criminal Justice Act 2003. The researchers are due to complete their work by the end of 2006.

Electoral Reform

James Duddridge: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment she has made of the impact on voter participation of the narrowness of the majority of the sitting hon. Member. [53887]

Bridget Prentice: My Department has not made an assessment. Research into the relationship between voter participation and the contestability of seats has not led to a consensus on its impact. It is one of many factors which people may take into account in deciding whether to vote.

Human Rights Act

Vera Baird: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs (1) what progress has been made towards making the Human Rights Act 1998 applicable to private providers of public functions; [66030]

(2) when she expects to publish proposals for making the Human Rights Act 1998 applicable to private providers of public functions; [66031]

(3) what discussions she has had with the Department for Trade and Industry on measures needed to make the Human Rights Act 1998 applicable to private providers of public functions. [66032]

Bridget Prentice: My noble Friend the Minister for Human Rights (Baroness Ashton of Upholland) undertook that the Government would seek a case in which to argue for the its original intention as to the scope of the Human Rights Act 1998. A suitable case has been identified, and the Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs has applied to intervene. We believe that a successful intervention would be the best resolution of this problem.

The Government nevertheless still intends to issue a consultation on the scope of the Human Rights Act in the context of the Discrimination Law Review. As part of this, my noble Friend is of course in contact with her ministerial colleagues, including the Minister for Women and Equality at the Department of Trade and Industry (Meg Munn).

Voter Registration

Chris Ruane: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what measures her Department has taken to encourage illiterate and semi-literate electors to register to vote. [65824]

Bridget Prentice: Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) send an electoral registration form to every household each year at the annual canvass of electors, and a member of each household is required to complete and return the registration form to the ERO on behalf of all persons living there. The Electoral Administration Bill currently before Parliament places a duty on EROs to ensure electoral registers are complete. As part of this duty, EROs will be required where necessary to make house-to-house inquiries to ensure completed registration forms are returned for all eligible persons. Therefore illiterate, or semi-literate, electors may not have to complete the registration form by themselves.

My Department is also working with key stakeholders on improving the annual canvass form by making it clearer, simpler and easy to understand.

HEALTH

Advertising and Marketing

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 20 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 139W, on advertising and marketing campaigns, what financial limits will be placed on advertising of services by hospitals. [61557]

Mr. Byrne: The initial principles set out in "The NHS in England: The Operating Framework for 2006–07" state that providers will not want to spend excessively on marketing and are likely to welcome clear guidance on what is acceptable. As indicated in my earlier response, the Department is currently working with key stakeholders, such as the NHS Confederation, the Foundation Trust Network, the Healthcare Commission, and NHS Partners, in order to develop this guidance, which will be published later in the year.

Agenda for Change

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the payments due under Agenda for Change will be made; and if she will make a statement. [59894]

Mr. Byrne: The new pay system has been designed to support modernisation within the health service and is a pay reform package designed to match pay to the weight of the job. The pay rates under the new system came into effect from the 1 October 2004, and when staff are assimilated any pay increase will normally be back-dated to this date. As at the end of February 2006, 97.1 per cent. of national health service staff had been assimilated, and this is expected to have risen to 99 per cent. at the end of March.

Alzheimer's Disease

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance her Department has issued to primary care and other health trusts on the use of medications and remedies to assist patients with the symptoms of Alzheimer's disease before the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence reports in July. [63875]

Mr. Byrne: The Department has not issued any guidance to primary care and other health trusts on the use of medications and remedies to assist patients with the symptoms of Alzheimer's disease. Until the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence issues revised guidance to the national health service, its original guidance issued in 2001 continues to apply.

BCG Vaccinations

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether her Department has reviewed the Wandsworth primary care trust local BCG vaccination policy; if she will place a copy of it in the Library; and if she will make a statement. [64402]

Jane Kennedy: The Department does not review local primary care trust (PCT) bacillus calmette-guerin (BCG) vaccination policy.

PCTs are responsible for the performance of immunisation services and for specifying the level and quality of services provided. PCTs will in turn be held to account for their performance, through their commissioning arrangements with service providers, by the strategic health authority.

Bowel Cancer Screening

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many testing kits have been *(a)* ordered, *(b)* manufactured and *(c)* distributed as part of the rollout of the National Bowel Cancer Screening Programme from 1 April 2006; and who is responsible for providing the testing kits; [65263]

(2) when each of the programme hubs for the National Bowel Cancer Screening Programme will be *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* operational; [65264]

(3) how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women aged 60 to 69 years have been invited to be screened for bowel cancer as part of the rollout of the National Bowel Cancer Screening Programme from 1 April 2006; [65265]

(4) what funding her Department has agreed for the National Bowel Cancer Screening Programme in *(a)* 2006–07 and *(b)* 2007–08; [65266]

(5) what estimate she has made of the increase in bowel cancer screening capacity in England since 1 April 2006. [65267]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answers 24 April 2006]:* The national bowel cancer screening programme will be rolled out nationally over the next three years. Funding for the first year of the screening programme is being transferred to the national cancer screening team in Sheffield, and Wolverhampton will be the first local screening centre.

We estimate that around £10 million will be spent on the first stages of the national bowel cancer screening programme. Funding decisions have not yet been made for future years are but we are committed to ensuring that the necessary funding is available to ensure the full implementation of the programme.

NHS Cancer Screening Programmes are taking all the necessary action to ensure the successful roll-out of the programme, including the procurement of testing kits. The kit supplier has been notified that the first order is for 100,000 kits. No kits have been distributed as they have not yet been received from the manufacturer.

Five programme hubs across England will invite men and women to participate in the screening programme, send out the faecal occult blood (FOB) testing kits, interpret kits and send results out. 90 to 100 local screening centres will provide endoscopy services for the 2 per cent. of men and women who have a positive FOB test result.

The first of the five programme hubs will be established in Rugby. The NHS Cancer Screening Programmes team is currently considering where the other programme hubs will be located. We intend that

the other four programme hubs will be established by March 2007, with announcements to be made in due course.

We estimate that we could invite about 120,000–150,000 men and women for screening in 2006–07 as part of the national bowel cancer screening programme. No invitations have been sent out as yet. In addition, the pilot in Rugby plan to invite a further 28,360 people over the next 12 months.

Capita Group

James Brokenshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many tenders *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries has submitted to her Department in each of the last three years; and how many tenders were successful. [61466]

Mr. Byrne: We do not hold centrally information that would allow for an analysis of how many tenders Capita Group plc or its subsidiaries have been invited to bid for, and could not obtain this information without incurring disproportionate costs.

Cheshire Mersey Strategic Health Authority

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will publish the McKinsey report on which Cheshire Mersey Strategic Health Authority based its report on preparing NHS trusts for foundation status. [63639]

Mr. Byrne: This is a matter for Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic Health Authority.

Choose and Book

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many out-patient appointments have been booked since April 2005. [54875]

Mr. Byrne: 6,823,970 outpatient appointments have been booked.

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 20 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 143W, on choose and book, if she will break down the number of new bookings made via the choose and book service by *(a)* inpatient and *(b)* outpatient appointment in each primary care trust involved in the project. [61299]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 27 March 2006]:* Choose and book is not used for booking inpatient appointments. The data given in my earlier response included bookings for outpatient and other appointments, such as appointments within primary care. At present though it is not possible to differentiate types of appointments more precisely.

Christmas Parties

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much the NHS spent on staff Christmas parties in 2004–05. [63914]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not held centrally.

Clinical Trials

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females have had an adverse reaction to drugs whilst taking part in clinical trials in each of the last five years; what the drug involved was in each case; at which hospital each trial took place; and what the outcome was in each case. [60936]

Jane Kennedy: Clinical trials are designed to evaluate the safety and efficacy of new drugs and new indications for approved drugs. The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) receive applications for over 1,000 new trials each year involving a planned number of new trial participants of approximately 90,000 to 95,000.

Adverse reactions occurring during clinical trials are reported to the MHRA in summary form in end of trial reports, submitted by the trial sponsor within one year of a trial being completed. These data are not consolidated in any database form and cannot be analysed across trials. Only serious unexpected suspected adverse reactions (SUSARs) occurring during clinical trials are reported during the trial and are recorded on the MHRA's safety database.

The numbers of reported serious unexpected suspected adverse reactions is shown in the table.

	Males	*Females*	*Not classified*	*Total*
2001	314	275	17	606
2002	235	207	10	452
2003	154	163	19	336
2004	170	154	11	335
2005	167	171	21	359

In 2005, it would appear that the total number of SUSARs reported amounted to an estimate of less than 0.4 per cent. of the total planned number of patients participating in clinical trials for that year. These occurred with a wide range of drugs being investigated in a wide range of medical conditions, many of which were serious, such as cancers, etc.

At this stage of development, information about a drug would be regarded as commercially confidential. In addition, information about location, or any other data which could identify individuals will not be disclosed in order to protect the identity of those individuals.

ComMedica

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what protocols are in place for the suspension and termination of contracts between providers and Connecting for Health. [61732]

Mr. Byrne: NHS Connecting for Health manages its relationships with its contractors through a range of standard contractual provisions and remedies designed to address poor performance at an early stage and to support the contractor towards full compliance. These include requirements for the contractor to supply more information about the manner in which services are being provided, and the causes of any failures on the contractor's part. Others enable NHS Connecting for Health to exert greater control over how a contractor provides the services, or to require that a contractor

provide the services in a different way. Specific financial remedies cover compensation for the national health service for loss suffered due to non-delivery, and the withholding of payment to incentivise compliance with contractual obligations. The contract does contain provision for the termination of the whole contract, or a part of the services provided by a contractor. However, termination is a step that NHS Connecting for Health would contemplate only after every opportunity, and all possible assistance had been given to enable a contractor to recover its position and become successful.

Consultants

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much her Department has spent on consultants in each year since 2003–04. [62565]

Mr. Byrne: The total cost of consultants engaged directly by the Department, where in-house resources were not available, is shown in the table.

Financial year	*Cost (£000)*
2003–04	10,031
2004–05	12,800
2005–06[1]	[2]4,658

[1] To end of January.
[2] The 2005–06 spend is lower because the Department has rectified some miscoding against expenditure category codes to provide a more accurate figure of external consultancy spend to 31 January 2006.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many consultants were hired to work in her Department in *(a)* 2003, *(b)* 2004, *(c)* 2005 and *(d)* 2006. [60626]

Mr. Byrne: The Department does not collect information that would identify the numbers of consultants engaged for the years requested. Contracts do not usually specify the precise numbers of consultants and the numbers can vary during a contract.

Departmental Officials (Hospital Visits)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which hospitals officials in the Department have visited since 1997; for what purpose in each case; if she will list the *(a)* date, *(b)* time and *(c)* duration of each visit; and if she will make a statement. [64590]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested can be provided only at disproportionate costs.

Diabetes

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many *(a)* type 1 and *(b)* type 2 diabetics there are in England; [65920]

(2) what estimate she has made of the number of people who will develop *(a)* type 1 and *(b)* type 2 diabetes in the next 10 years. [65923]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The PBS[1] model estimates that, in 2005, the number of people with type 1 (T1) diabetes in England was 169,913 and the number of people with type 2 (T2) diabetes in England was 2,265,649. The PBS model does not estimate new incidence of diabetes. However, it does estimate that there will be a total of 2.75 million persons with diabetes in 2015 (T1 = 173,733 and T2 = 2,573,560) compared to 2.44 million persons with diabetes in 2005 (T1 = 169,913 and T2 = 2,265,649).

[1] Yorkshire and Humberside Public Health Observatory PBS (Public Health Observatory, Brent Primary Care Trust, School of Health and Related Research Sheffield University) diabetes population prevalence model.

Domestic Violence

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the access to general practitioner services by families who have been involved in domestic violence in Hull North. [64089]

Mr. Byrne: All residents in Kingston-upon-Hull have equal access to general practitioner (GP) and other primary care services. In December 2005, 100 per cent. of patients in both Eastern Hull and West Hull primary care trust areas were able to be offered an appointment to see a GP within two working days.

Electricity Cables

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research her Department has undertaken into potential health risks associated with living in close proximity to high voltage electricity grid overhead cables. [64854]

Caroline Flint: The Department's radiation protection research programme supports a number of studies investigating the possible health effects of electromagnetic fields (EMF). These range from laboratory work investigating possible cellular effects to large population studies. In addition, the Department, along with the Health and Safety Executive, has supported the World Health Organization's international EMF project since it started in 1997.

The Health Protection Agency's radiation protection division (HPA-RPD) keeps the worldwide research findings on electromagnetic fields (EMF) and health continually under review. In 2004, on the basis of a comprehensive review of the existing body of research to date, the HPA-RPD, previously the national radiological protection board, recommended the adoption of new EMF exposure guidelines in this country. In addition, in view of the scientific uncertainties in relation to power frequency EMF, the HPA recommended the Government "consider the need for further precautionary measures". They have also noted that the majority of elevated magnetic fields are due to variations in the electricity supply and distribution system, the presence of substations and equipment in the home rather than proximity to high voltage overhead cables.

Practical precautionary measures are now being considered in detail by a stakeholder advisory group, SAGE, that includes Government Departments, agencies, electricity industry, specialists and public concern groups. Details of the process can be found on its website at www.rkpartnership.co.uk/sage

Emergency Admissions

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what initiatives accompanied her Department's press release of 20 March, reference 2006/114, entitled Improve

Healthcare by Reducing Unnecessary Emergency Admissions; and for what reasons the information was issued in the form of a press release. [61148]

Mr. Byrne: One of the priorities for the NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement, when it was launched in July 2005, was to look at how the national health service could improve productivity. One of the first productivity savings established by the NHS Institute was that of reducing the number of unnecessary emergency admissions; namely that a 30 per cent. reduction in unnecessary emergency admissions could save the NHS around £400 million annually.

The information on the productivity savings was issued in the form of a press release to make the NHS and public aware of the patient benefits and cost savings that were taking place in a number of NHS organisations, and to help demonstrate to other NHS organisations methods of how to increase efficiency and productivity.

Health Care (Elderly People)

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what legislation governs the hiring of *(a)* paid and *(b)* volunteer staff within health care facilities caring for the elderly. [53865]

Mr. Byrne: When employing staff, including those working with older people, the national health service is required to follow the guidance, "Safer Recruitment", issued in May 2005. "Safer Recruitment" covers all the pre and post-appointment checks, including checks against the protection of children act list that NHS employers are required to make before appointing anyone, including employees, volunteers, students and trainees, to a position in the NHS. A copy is available in the Library.

In regulated social care, providers must comply with regulations on pre-employment checks made under the Care Standards Act 2000, which came into force in April 2002. The responsibility for carrying out pre-employment checks, including Criminal Records Bureau and protection of vulnerable adults checks where applicable, rests with the relevant employer.

In response to Sir Michael Bichard's inquiry in June 2004, the Department, in conjunction with the Department for Education and Skills has been developing a new vetting and barring scheme. Legislation to provide for the scheme, which will apply to all NHS and social care settings, was introduced in the other place in February 2006.

Health Trainers

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Sutton and Cheam (Mr. Burstow), 13 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 1767W, on health trainers, for what reasons this information is not collected centrally; whether health trainers form part of a staff group for the purposes of compiling the NHS workforce census; and what assessment she has made of the average pay of a health trainer in the 2005–06 financial year. [61317]

Mr. Byrne: Health trainers will be collected in the September 2006 workforce census but not as a separately identifiable staff group.

Health trainer posts have been created very recently at a local level and their pay will have been evaluated or matched locally using the national health service job evaluation scheme. As such it is not possible to estimate the national average pay for health trainers in the current financial year.

Health Treatment Centres

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS staff are employed at each independent sector treatment centre; and what roles they perform. [61714]

Mr. Byrne: As of March 2006, 21.1 whole-time equivalent (WTE) staff are on secondment to independent sector treatment centre (ISTC) projects. This includes 13.1 WTE doctors and 8.0 WTE nurses. Staff working in ISTCs are shown in the following table:

Location	*National health service: doctors seconded (WTE)*	*nurses seconded (WTE)*
York	6.0	0
North Bradford	5.2	0
Portsmouth	0.3	8.0
Kidderminster	1.6	0
Total	13.1	8.0

Home Treatment

Mr. Havard: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the Health and Social Care White Paper, whether she plans to give further support to new technologies that treat patients at home and prevent hospitalisation. [50519]

Mr. Byrne: As a part of its prime role to deliver the national programme for information technology and to link this with the necessary improvements in clinical processes and services, the Department's NHS Connecting for Health agency is working with suppliers to encourage the development of relevant innovative information technology. It is also supporting the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's digital challenge for English local authorities by helping the national health service to work locally with the public and other agencies to develop joined-up approaches to supporting citizens to lead healthier lives in their local communities.

In addition, the Department is providing £80 million over the next 2 years for a preventative technology grant to support 160,000 older people stay in their own homes. The purpose of the grant is to initiate a change in the design and delivery of health, social care and housing services and prevention strategies to enhance and maintain the well-being and independence of individuals.

The white paper "our health our care our say" commits us to undertake a large-scale pilot exploring the potentials of technology, over a number of sites covering a total of at least 1 million people. We anticipate the pilot sites will commence by the end of 2006.

Hospitals (Brokerage)

Dr. Pugh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which hospitals in England are in receipt of brokerage. [64329]

Jane Kennedy: Cash brokerage is managed by strategic health authorities across the national health service organisations for which they have responsibility. This information is not held centrally by the Department.

Identity Fraud

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what training the Department has provided for *(a)* front desk and *(b)* administrative staff in relation to identity fraud. [41412]

Mr. Byrne: Staff in the Department do not routinely deal with members of the public on a face-to-face basis and written and other communications from the public are only answered if they relate to health and social care policy or services.

Where specific inquiries are received relating to an individual's personal circumstances they are referred to the appropriate part of the national health service for answer.

Since personal information is not released to members of the public it has not been necessary to provide specific training in relation to identity fraud in this area.

Influenza Pandemic

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps her Department has taken to ensure that *(a)* primary care trusts, *(b)* local authorities and *(c)* NHS trusts in West Lancashire are prepared for an influenza pandemic. [64296]

Mr. Byrne: We expect all national health service organisations to have appropriate plans in place for a possible human influenza pandemic. Those plans should be developed in conjunction with partner agencies and regularly tested and updated. Operational guidance on planning for a pandemic was originally published in May 2005 and provides planning checklists for NHS organisations to inform and develop their plans. The Department continues to work with strategic health authorities to ensure that robust and resilient human influenza pandemic plans are in place across England and is currently reviewing operational approaches to the delivery of health care to ascertain whether further operational guidance may be helpful in support of local planning.

Information Sharing

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of information sharing on numbers of medical professionals being trained in European Union member states. [29502]

Mr. Byrne: The Department is a member of the European Union Commission high level group on the health services and medical care, which is discussing the available data and mobility of health professionals being trained in EU member states.

Lancashire Ambulance NHS Trust

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients died in ambulances operated by the Lancashire Ambulance NHS Trust on its way to a hospital accident and emergency department in each year since 2000. [62818]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Local Improvement Finance Trusts

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what requirement there is on the part of a local improvement finance trust company to sign all leases before building commences. [61699]

Mr. Byrne: The duties of a local improvement finance trust (LIFT) are laid down in the contractual framework that is signed on the establishment of the company. This requires that all head leases between LIFT company and tenants are confirmed before financial close. Sub leases, are a matter for the head lease to determine.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many Local Improvement Finance Trust projects have been built; and how many of them are being leased at capacity. [61728]

Mr. Byrne: There are 68 new Local Improvement Finance Trust (LIFT) facilities open to patients, with one a week opening to the end of 2006. Information is not held centrally on the capacity of buildings leased as that is a commercial issue for each LIFT company.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which strategic health authorities make it a policy that GPs are required to sign up to the terms of the lease to occupy local improvement finance trust premises before the full business case is approved. [61729]

Mr. Byrne: The business case approval process of the Department requires, prior to financial close, that primary care trusts demonstrate:

potential tenants for the building have been identified;

these tenants have provided written support to confirm that they will sign up to the lease conditions and the indicative lease costs; and

the financial implications of the nature of the various expected tenancies have been factored into processes to demonstrate affordability and value for money

Strategic health authorities usually have a role as approvers of local improvement finance trust business cases. In undertaking this approval they will implement the approval policy listed.

Mini Motor Cycles (Protective Headgear)

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many injuries treated in emergency departments were recorded as resulting from not wearing protective headgear while driving mini motorcycles in *(a)* Dudley, *(b)* the West Midlands and *(c)* England in the last two years. [63166]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Mobile Telephones

Mr. Andrew Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to update the leaflets on the health risks of mobile telephones and mobile telephone base stations published by her Department six years ago. [64843]

Caroline Flint: The leaflets on "Mobile Phones and Health" and on "Mobile Phone Base Stations and Health" were produced following the comprehensive review of the science published by the independent expert group on mobile phones (the Stewart report) in 2000. The Stewart report remains the basis of science underpinning the health policy relating to exposure mobile phone radio waves. However, in view of the time elapsed and the need to provide up-to-date information, consideration is currently being given to a revised version of the leaflets.

N3 National Network

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment she has made of the N3 national network connectivity capability of *(a)* general practitioners and *(b)* pharmacists; and if she will make a statement; [62520]

(2) how many *(a)* general practitioners and *(b)* pharmacists are linked to the Electronic Transfer of Prescriptions system; and by what date she expects all contractors to be linked. [62519]

Mr. Byrne: Currently around 9,700 general practitioner (GP) sites, including branch surgeries, have been connected to the N3 network in England, representing some 94 per cent. of those for which orders have so far been placed. The network provides centrally-funded, secure and reliable connections, between 0.5 megabite and two megabites, along with an integrated services digital network (ISDN) back-up line for resilience, and is the biggest civilian network in Europe.

The capability of community pharmacy contractors to connect to N3 has been greatly enhanced by commercial network providers who are now making connections to N3 available as part of the introduction of the electronic prescription service (EPS). Community pharmacy contractors now have a range of options for getting connected, including all in one packages of EPS software upgrades and network connections offered by pharmacy system suppliers.

As at 24 March 2006, 880 GP practices and 148 pharmacies had been upgraded and linked to the EPS. The rapid implementation of the EPS means that these numbers are constantly changing. Numbers for individual GPs and community pharmacists are not available.

In line with the target in the Department's national strategic programme, Delivering 21st Century IT, all GP practices and community pharmacies in England are expected to be linked to the service by the end of 2007.

NHS Beds

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS beds there were in each year since 2004. [62413]

Mr. Byrne: The average daily number of available beds for all ward types in 2004–05 was 181,784.

NHS Direct

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she initiated the review of commissioning arrangements for NHS Direct from April 2007; who is conducting the review; when she expects the review to be completed; if she will publish the results of the review; and if she will make a statement. [51891]

Mr. Byrne: The review of NHS Directs commissioning arrangements began with the Department's arm's length body review in 2004. NHS Direct was established as a special health authority in April of that year, with primary care trusts (PCTs) becoming responsible for commissioning their services.

To support PCTs in this role, the Department publishes annual commissioning frameworks, which are available on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk. Once NHS Direct's future organisational form has been decided, the Department, in partnership with NHS Direct; PCTs; and other stakeholders will agree commissioning arrangements for 2007–08 and beyond. We anticipate publishing these arrangements annually in line with current practice.

NHS Litigation Authority

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 4 April 2006 to question 62399, what the basis was of her statement that the NHS litigation authority (NHSLA) does not record the legal funding arrangements of claimants; and what records were provided by the NHSLA to the authors of the report on the funding of personal litigation commissioned by the Department for Constitutional Affairs as part of the 'large scale data set provided by the NHSLA'. [64988]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* The NHS litigation authority (NHSLA) will record the legal funding arrangements of claimants when legal proceedings are issued. As a defendant organisation, they will not necessarily know about the funding status of claims that are pre-litigation, unless the information is offered by the claimant. Information on the funding arrangements of claimants is therefore collected but necessarily incomplete.

The NHSLA provided a dataset containing information on a total of 58,120 cases involving litigation against the national health service related to clinical care for the report 'The Funding of Personal Injury Litigation: comparisons over time and jurisdictions,' February 2006. The following caveat to the data was quoted in the report:

> "It is important to note that the proportion of CFA [conditional fee arrangement] funded cases implied by these figures is an underestimate of the proportion of cases run by claimants on a CFA basis. This is because the NHSLA, as a defendant organisation, is unlikely to know about the funding status of claims which were closed without payment of costs."

NHS Pension Scheme

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects the resource accounts for the NHS pension scheme for 2004–05 to be published. [61344]

Mr. Byrne: The NHS Pension Scheme Resource Account for 2004–05 was laid before the House on 30 January 2006 and copies of the account are available in the Library.

The NHS Pensions Agency is in the process of producing printed and bound copies of the accounts, and these will be available from The Stationery Office within the next few weeks.

NHS Surgeries (Private Companies)

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many contracts for NHS surgeries have been awarded to private companies; to which companies each contract has been awarded; and where each surgery is located. [61712]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not collected centrally. Local primary health care provision is a matter for primary care trusts.

NHS Trust Deficits

Dr. Pugh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what sums she expects to accrue to the central NHS from interest charged on NHS trusts with deficits; and how much has been accrued to date. [64333]

Jane Kennedy: The aim of the 2005–06 strategic health authority (SHA) surplus incentive scheme was to encourage financial management in the national health service. The scheme is run at SHA level. We will be paying interest to SHAs that underspend, in addition to charging interest to overspending SHAs, so we will not know the net gains or losses from the scheme until the 2005–06 out-turn figures are known.

Organ Harvesting (China)

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of *(a)* the extent to which the practice of harvesting the organs of executed prisoners in China takes place *(b)* the role of the Chinese Government in the practice and *(c)* the extent to which such prisoners have given their consent. [65759]

Ian Pearson: I have been asked to reply.

The Chinese Government has acknowledged the practice of organ harvesting from executed prisoners, but has given little indication as to how widespread it is other than to say it is relatively uncommon. We have received no evidence to substantiate recent media reports of large-scale organ harvesting in China. Despite Chinese Government assurances that prisoners agree to the donations voluntarily and that their families sign donation agreements, we are concerned about this practice. I raised these concerns with the Chinese Government on 7 April. We believe that the right approach is to seek to overcome the social taboo of organ transplants in China and encourage donation from the general population. The Government welcome the announcement by the Chinese Ministry of Health of a new regulation to come into effect on 1 July, to ban the sale of organs and introduce medical standards for organ transplants.

Patient Care and Support

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Health under the health reform in England proposals, what the division of responsibility will be between *(a)* GP-contracted and *(b)* local government personal social services for patient care and support. [49624]

Mr. Byrne: Primary care trusts (PCTs), working closely with practices will continue to be accountable for the local use of national health service resources. Local government will remain responsible for the provision of social care.

We are exploring new ways of giving people more control over the support they need through individual budget pilots in local government. In addition, through practice based commissioning we are putting the necessary reforms in place to ensure the maximum benefit for the health and wellbeing of local populations.

Our reforms, combined with the increased use of flexibilities allowed under section 31 of the Health Act 1999 will support the further integration of services through stronger commissioning arrangements and partnerships between practices; PCTs; local government; and local people.

Population Increases

Mr. Denham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will adjust the funding formula for NHS trusts to take account of increases in population arising from migrants from EU accession states. [59404]

Mr. Byrne: The weighted capitation formula is used to determine primary care trusts' (PCTs') target shares of available resources to enable them to commission similar levels of health services for populations in similar need.

The advisory committee on resource allocations (ACRA) continuously oversees the development of the weighted capitation formula. This includes determining the populations base to be used in advance of each allocations round.

ACRA made recommendations on the population base to be used for the 2006–08 revenue allocations to PCTs. As a consequence, 2003 based population projections for 2006 and 2007 published by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) were used for the 2006–07 and 2007–08 revenue allocations respectively. ONS population projections take account of migration.

ACRA will make recommendations on the populations base to be used in revenue allocations post 2007–08.

Postgraduate Medical Education and Training Board

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* longest and *(b)* average processing time to issue a certificate was by (i) the Postgraduate Medical Education Practitioner Training Board since its creation

and (ii) the Joint Committee on Postgraduate Training for General Practice in each year from 1997 to its abolition. [62568]

Mr. Byrne: The longest time taken by the postgraduate medical education training board to issue a certificate is 35 days and the average is eight days.

The joint committee on postgraduate training in general practice did not keep statistics on the processing times of full and complete individual applications, however there were strict published timeframes which were adhered to at all times. These were as follows:

Certificate of prescribed experience—10 working days

Certificate of equivalent experience—six to eight weeks.

Practice-based Commissioning

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what her latest estimate is of the number of GP practices engaged in practice-based commissioning *(a)* in total and *(b)* broken down by strategic health authority; and if she will make a statement. [63111]

Mr. Byrne: The Department does not currently collect data on take-up of practice based commissioning, although a new data collection will be established for 2006–07.

Preventive Technology Grant

Mr. Illsley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) whether she plans to ring fence payments of preventive technology grant to local authorities; [64146]

(2) how many people aged 65 and over had one or more items of telecare equipment in *(a)* their homes and *(b)* other residential settings at 31 March; [64187]

(3) what estimate she has made of the number of new users of telecare equipment aged 65 and over provided with one or more items of telecare equipment in *(a)* their own homes and *(b)* other residential settings in (i) 2006–07 and (ii) 2007–08. [64188]

Mr. Byrne: The preventative technologies grant will not be ring fenced. It is for local providers to determine how best to deliver services to their local population, including telecare. However, the Department expects councils, working with local partners, to achieve key public service agreement targets around supporting people with long term conditions and improving the patient and user experience, in particular supporting older people to live at home.

The number of people aged 65 and over with one or more items of telecare equipment in their homes or residential setting is not held centrally. The Department expects councils to help an additional 160,000 older people to live at home with safety and security and reduce the number of avoidable admissions to residential/nursing care and hospital.

Primary Care Trusts

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what restrictions apply to the use primary care trusts can make of funds from the sale of assets. [50156]

Jane Kennedy: Fixed assets held by primary care trusts (PCTs) are public capital financed.

As a consequence, under the PCTs' finance regime, cash released from their sale can only be reinvested in other capital assets, or repaid to the Department.

In other words, the proceeds of asset-sales cannot be used to fund ordinary operating costs.

Where the PCT chooses to reinvest the cash in its facilities, rather than repaying it, the PCTs management is free to determine what assets will be bought up to its delegated limit for capital investment.

Delegated limits vary between £1 million and £10 million, depending on the organisation's turnover from provider activities and performance. Strategic health authorities have discretion over how amounts in excess of delegated limits are reinvested.

Mr. Gummer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether her Department *(a)* has approached and *(b)* plans to approach the Treasury for a release of additional funds from the sums available in the National Insurance Fund above the minimum working balance to alleviate financial deficits in primary care trusts. [60640]

Mr. Byrne: The Department has no plans to seek additional funding from the HM Treasury.

Public Information

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was spent on her Department's public relations and information services in each of the last 5 years for which figures are available. [48958]

Mr. Byrne: The following table shows the Department's expenditure on publicity and advertising for the last five years.

£ million

Financial year	*Advertising expenditure*	*Publicity*
2000–01	20.80	24.32
2001–02	20.41	16.82
2002–03	23.13	11.72
2003–04	38.98	13.37
2004–05	37.80	15.16

Radiotherapy

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the reasons for the difference between the waiting times for radiotherapy patients in Leeds and the rest of Yorkshire. [65173]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* There has been a historical under-funding of staffing and equipment for radiotherapy in Leeds. Waiting times for radiotherapy at Leeds Teaching Hospitals National Health Service Trust are currently six weeks for urgent patients and 11 weeks for routine patients. The trust is taking action to further reduce these waiting times.

Two new linear accelerators were commissioned in 2005, and the trust recruited 12 additional radiographers last summer and two experienced radiographers recently. The trust has commenced the process of recruiting radiologists who are due to graduate this summer. The trust is working to maximise its current

capacity, although waiting times will be fully addressed only when the new oncology wing opens at St. James's University Hospital in early 2008.

The Yorkshire cancer network was subject to a peer review exercise in October and November 2005. The report described cancer services in Leeds as excellent and the radiological services as internationally renowned.

Sexual Assault

Willie Rennie: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what provisions exist for the *(a)* suspension and *(b)* banning of health care workers (i) accused and (ii) convicted of sexual assault. [65405]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* NHS employers have disciplinary procedures which relate to any serious crime or misconduct, and an accusation or conviction of sexual assault would be dealt with accordingly.

Particular provisions apply if the health worker is named on the list maintained under the Protection of Children Act 1999, of individuals barred from working with children, or the list maintained under Part 7 of the Care Standards Act 2000, of individuals barred from working with vulnerable adults in regulated social care settings. The lists are managed by the Department for Education and Skills on behalf of the Department. It is an offence for any person on these lists to knowingly apply for work with children or vulnerable adults, and for an employer to knowingly offer such a person this type of work.

Registered health professionals accused or convicted of a sexual assault would also be subject to the fitness to practice proceedings of the relevant regulatory body, which would consider whether or not they should be suspended or erased from the professional register.

Staff Abuse

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many inquiries concerning abuse by health or social care staff there have been in each *(a)* strategic health authority and *(b)* local authority area in the last five years; what the status of each inquiry was; whether the data from each inquiry has been brought together; and what plans for action were made as a result of the inquiries. [58711]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not available centrally. National health service employers are responsible for ensuring that their staff do not pose a threat to the safety of patients and for acting on information about the registration status of staff subject to statutory regulation.

All care homes, domiciliary care agencies, adult placements schemes and nurses agencies in England are regulated by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI), which is the independent regulator for social care. The CSCI is responsible for registering and inspecting the regulated social care sector in accordance with statutory regulations and national minimum standards to ensure consistency and improve the quality of life and level of protection for the most vulnerable people in society.

Regulated social care providers, including private companies, are required to conduct rigorous pre-employment checks on prospective staff, including obtaining a Criminal Records Bureau disclosure. Since 26 July 2004, there has also been a requirement for prospective employees in these areas to be checked against the protection of vulnerable adults (POVA) list before starting work.

Tariffs

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what methods she uses to assess the adequacy of data collection before the introduction of mandatory tariffs. [65107]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* The national tariff is calculated from data on the average cost of activity as reported by national health service providers through the annual reference cost collection and is subject to scrutiny by audit. The robustness of this data is tested using statistical analysis with regard to key indicators of data quality, including sample size, distribution and year-on-year volatility.

Vaccinations (Schools)

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which vaccines are routinely administered by nurses in a school setting. [65696]

Caroline Flint: The tetanus/diphtheria/inactivated polio vaccine (Td/IPV), which protects against tetanus, diphtheria and polio, is the vaccine that is routinely administered by school nurses, in a school setting. This vaccine is given routinely to teenagers aged between 13 and 18 years of age.

School nurses may also check when giving the routine Td/IPV if the teenager is up to date with other routine vaccinations such as measles, mumps and rubella (MMR), meningitis c (MenC) and for some hepatitis B, and arrange catch up vaccinations where needed.

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which NHS bodies provide funding for vaccines delivered in schools. [65699]

Caroline Flint: Funding for immunisation services in schools forms part of the annual allocation to primary care trusts (PCTs). PCTs are responsible for the management of those monies and running of immunisation programmes.

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance school nurses receive on vaccines that they deliver in schools; and what understanding they are expected to have of the disease they are vaccinating against. [65700]

Caroline Flint: The Department produces a number of resources to support health professionals in the implementation of the routine childhood immunisation

programme. These resources are sent directly to primary care trusts (PCTs) to cascade to the appropriate health professionals.

Detailed information on the tetanus/diphtheria/inactivated polio vaccine (Td/IPV) routinely given by school nurses, and the diseases it protects against, is available at the publication "Immunisation against infectious disease—The 'Green Book' chapters on Diphtheria, Hib, Pertussis, Polio and Tetanus", and the "DTaP/IPV/Hib for babies, DTaP/IPV for pre-school and Td/IPV for teenagers".

Both these publications were sent directly to PCTs at the time of publication. The Department also produces a leaflet aimed at teenagers and parents, to support school nurses and the routine immunisation programme for 13 to 18 years olds entitled, "Teenage immunisations (school years 8 to 13, ages 13 to 18) your questions answered".

All of these publications are available either from the Department's publications line free of charge or via the website at www.immunisation.nhs.uk

Waiting Lists/Times

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting time was in hospitals in *(a)* West Lancashire and *(b)* England in each year since 1997. [64125]

Mr. Byrne: The median waiting times for in-patient admission for March each year since 1997 at national health service trusts in West Lancashire and for England are shown in the table.

Estimated average waiting time for elective admission, all specialties, England

	Median time waiting (weeks) Provider based
March	
1997	13.2
1998	14.8
1999	12.8
2000	12.9
2001	12.6
2002	12.7

Estimated average waiting time for elective admission, all specialties, England

	Median time waiting (weeks) Provider based
2003	11.9
2004	10.2
2005	8.4
February 2006	7.6

Source:
Department of Health forms KH07, QF01 and Monthly Monitoring

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting time was for *(a)* in-patient and *(b)* out-patient hospital treatment in (i) England, (ii) Somerset and (iii) Taunton constituency in the latest period for which figures are available. [64309]

Jane Kennedy: The median waiting times for in-patient and out-patient admission for the latest available period for England, Somerset and Dorset Strategic Health Authority (SHA), Somerset Coast Primary Care Trust (PCT), South Somerset PCT and Taunton Deane PCT are shown in the tables.

Estimated average time waited for first out-patient appointment following general practitioner written referral, all specialties, quarter ended December 2005 Commissioner based

	Median wait (weeks)
Somerset Coast PCT	6.3
South Somerset PCT	5.8
Taunton Deane PCT	5.6
Somerset and Dorset SHA	5.8
England	6.6

Estimated average time patients have been waiting for elective admission, all specialties, February 2006—Commissioner based

	Median time waited so far (weeks)
Somerset Coast PCT	6.8
South Somerset PCT	6.4
Taunton Deane PCT	6.8
Somerset and Dorset SHA	7.4
England	7.6

Source:
Department of Health form QM08R and monthly monitoring

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 26 April 2006

TRANSPORT

Airport Security (Northern Ireland)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many incidents regarded as sufficiently serious to be investigated by the Civil Aviation Authority occurred during 2005 involving aircraft at *(a)* Belfast International, *(b)* Belfast City and *(c)* Londonderry airports. [64907]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* During 2005 the Civil Aviation Authority investigated 23 incidents at Belfast International airport, 18 incidents at Belfast City airport and two incidents at Londonderry airport.

Bicycle Transportation

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has had with the rail companies to seek agreed policies on the transportation of bikes on trains. [65789]

Derek Twigg: As part of our ongoing commitment to bike and rail journeys I am discussing with our advisory body on cycling, Cycling England, how we might further encourage such journeys and will be reviewing this issue with the TOCs later this year.

In addition, the franchise replacement process provides an opportunity to improve cycle facilities at stations, and to address the requirements of cyclists who wish to use trains. Bidders for new franchises will be asked to consider cycle-rail integration matters in their bid submissions.

Blue Badges

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will introduce temporary parking exemption Blue Badges for those suffering short-term impairment; and if he will make a statement. [65910]

Derek Twigg: The Department for Transport has accepted a recommendation made by the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC), the Department's statutory advisers on the transport needs of disabled people, that the Blue Badge scheme should be extended to people with temporary mobility impairments which severely affect their walking ability and are likely to do so for at least 12 months. We intend to consult on draft regulations later this year.

Cycle Route Signs

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what guidance his Department has issued on the requirement for local highway authorities to erect cycle route signs on highways; and on what date the guidance was published. [66271]

Dr. Ladyman: There is no specific requirement for authorities to erect cycle route signs. However, the Department issued a Local Transport Note LTN 2/87 "Signs for Cycle Facilities" in November 1987.

General guidance on the complete range of traffic signs is contained in the Traffic Signs Manual.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many and what proportion of *(a)* staff and *(b)* new staff employed in (i) his Department and (ii) each of the agencies for which he has responsibility, were registered as disabled in each of the last three years for which data are available. [61385]

Derek Twigg: The information requested is shown in the following tables as far as it is available.

2005–06

	New recruits		*Overall number of staff*	
	Disabled	*Total*	*Disabled*	*Total*
DFT (C)	2	327	81	2,153
DSA	1	265	92	2,762
DVLA	8	632	617	7,001
GCDA[1]	—	27	8	307
HA	17	1,264	117	3,229
MCA	4	161	97	1,236
VGA	0	10	3	111
VOSA	0	152	62	2,805
Total	32	2,838	1,077	19,604

2004–05

	New recruits		*Overall number of staff*	
	Disabled	*Total*	*Disabled*	*Total*
DFT (C)	4	195	54	1,992
DSA	2	586	98	2,706
DVLA	21	688	523	7,123
GCDA[1]	—	24	8	300
HA	2	384	103	2,196
MCA	7	138	99	1,253
VGA	0	10	4	107
VOSA	1	276	60	2,826
Total	37	2,301	949	18,503

2003–04

	New recruits		*Overall number of staff*	
	Disabled	*Total*	*Disabled*	*Total*
DFT (C)	1	93	54	1,956
DSA	29	265	70	2,403
DVLA	53	1,442	565	7,091
GCDA[1]	—	32	7	304
HA	7	381	109	2,008
MCA	3	182	99	1,231
VGA	0	6	4	109
VOSA	8	604	26	2,804
Total	101	3,005	934	17,906

[1] The Government Car and Despatch Agency became part of the Department for Transport as of 8 November 2005.

Metrolink

Mr. Leech: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 9 March 2006 *Official Report*, column 1650W, on Metrolink phase 3, whether the matters discussed included *(a)* reducing the number of lines, *(b)* shortening the route on any of the three lines and *(c)* a timetable for work to commence on building phase 3; and if he will make a statement. [59060]

Derek Twigg: Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive have recently submitted a draft business case seeking Government funding, from the Regional Funding Allocation. Discussions are ongoing.

Olympic Games

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the *(a)* demand and *(b)* required capacity on the (i) London transport network, (ii) national rail network and (iii) road network for the 2012 Olympics; what timetable he envisages for delivering increased capacity to meet demand; what budget will be made available; and if he will make a statement. [65701]

Derek Twigg: The Olympic Delivery Authority and the London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (LOCOG) are responsible for developing and delivering the plans for transport for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

These plans, which included estimates of spectator demand and transport network capacity, were initially set out in the candidature file submitted to the International Olympic Committee in November 2004. This document is available in the House of Commons Library.

Table 14.14 set out the predicted spectator demand for each venue and table 14.8 set out the predicted 2012 capacity of the public transport fleet which would serve the Games.

On average the total demand for spectator transport for the Games is predicted to be some 500,000 per day, peaking at 770,000 on the busiest day. This includes regional events such as sailing at Weymouth and Olympic football matches.

Peak demand for the Olympic Park in Stratford is around 300,000 spectators per day. The 10 railway lines which will serve the Olympic Park will be capable of transporting some 240,000 passengers per hour during the peak, ensuring that there will be adequate capacity for both spectators and normal transport users.

Both transport capacity and spectator demand will be kept under review by LOCOG and the Olympic Delivery Authority as the work preparing for the 2012 Games progresses.

Transport specifically for the 2012 Games will be paid for from the Olympic Public Sector Funding Package agreed between the Government and Mayor of London, which is funded from the National Lottery, the London Development Agency and London council tax.

Prestwick/Stansted Airports

Mr. Donohoe: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport on what date *(a)* Prestwick and *(b)* Stansted Airports were designated as bases from which to deal with security alerts over UK airspace involving terrorist threats. [64893]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* All UK airports are required to maintain contingency plans for dealing with security alerts. Beyond that it would not be appropriate to comment on specific security matters at individual airports.

Railways

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport by what means he assesses the work of the Rail Accident Investigation Branch; what assessment he has made of its performance to date; whether he plans changes to the methods of assessment; and if he will make a statement. [65702]

Derek Twigg: The RAIB produces reports on all its investigations and copies are provided to the Secretary of State. These reports are also put into the public domain.

The reports enable the Secretary of State to assess, on an ongoing basis, the work of the RAIB. This is in addition to meetings that the Secretary of State holds with the Chief Inspector of the RAIB.

There are no plans to change the methods of assessment.

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what legislation governs the use of *(a)* private hire vehicles and *(b)* unlicensed drivers and vehicles as transport for rail replacement; and if he will make a statement. [65494]

Derek Twigg: s40 of the Railways Act 2005 provides for where a railway passenger service is temporarily interrupted or has been discontinued, the Secretary of State (or Scottish Ministers in the case of Scotland) may secure the provision of a substitute service for the carriage of passengers by road by means of public service vehicles (i.e. buses) or private hire vehicles.

A private hire vehicle means a vehicle licensed under s37 of the Town Police Clauses Act 1847, s6 of the Metropolitan Public Carriage Act 1869, s48 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 or s7 of the Private Hire Vehicles (London) Act 1998 (or additionally in the case of Scotland taxis or private hire cars licensed under s10 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether it is his policy to replace rail services with bus services on the *(a)* Par to Newquay, *(b)* Liskeard to Looe, *(c)* Totnes and Ivybridge to Plymouth, *(d)* Chippenham to Frome and *(e)* Severn Beach routes. [64774]

Derek Twigg: Other than the continuation of existing arrangements whereby buses provide some services between Avonmouth and Severn Beach, there is no policy to replace rail services with buses on any of these routes.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many miles of previously closed branch lines have been re-opened since May 1997. [62373]

Derek Twigg: In England and Wales, approximately 17 miles of former freight line have been re-opened for passenger use since 1997.

David Mundell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether funding has been allocated to the Scottish Executive in respect of Railways for All. [59328]

Derek Twigg: Following the enactment of the Railways Act 2005, responsibility for the funding and specifying the outputs of the rail network in Scotland transferred to Scottish Ministers on 1 April 2006. Over £360 million per annum has been transferred from the Department for Transport to Transport Scotland to enable Scottish Ministers to discharge these new responsibilities. The operation and funding of the Access for All programme in Scotland is under discussion between the Department and Transport Scotland.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many times nuclear flasks have been transported by rail in each of the last five years. [65521]

Derek Twigg: This information is available in a report commissioned last year by this Department entitled "Survey into the Radiological Impact of the Normal Transport of Radioactive Material in the UK by Road and Rail", reference NRPB-W66. Copies of this report have been placed in the House Library and are available on the internet at the following address:

http://www.hpa.org.uk/radiation/publications/w_series_reports/2005/nrpb_w66.htm

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimates the Department has made of the amount of nuclear waste that has been transported by rail in each of the last 10 years; and how much he expects to be transported by rail in the next five years. [65522]

Derek Twigg: This Department does not hold detailed information on quantities of radioactive waste transported.

Information on shipments of radioactive waste by rail is available in a report commissioned last year by this Department entitled "Survey into the Radiological Impact of the Normal Transport of Radioactive Material in the UK by Road and Rail", reference NRPB-W66. Copies of this report have been placed in the House Library and are available on the internet at the following address:

http://www.hpa.org.uk/radiation/publications/w_series_reports/2005/nrpb_w66.htm

Road-Legality Regulations

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to *(a)* review and *(b)* vary the regulations which (i) modified and (ii) performance vehicles are required to meet to be classified as road-legal. [65776]

Dr. Ladyman: There are no specific plans to review the regulations relating to modified or performance vehicles. All road vehicles are required to comply with the appropriate construction requirements, irrespective of whether they have been modified or are performance vehicles. These types of vehicles may, however, be affected by changes that could arise from revisions currently being negotiated for the European type approval regime, but at present it is too early to say one way or the other.

Roads (Romford/Havering)

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much money was spent on building new roads in *(a)* Romford and *(b)* Havering in each of the last 10 years; and if he will make a statement. [63003]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is generally not held centrally and would only be obtainable from the relevant local highway authorities, Transport for London (TfL) and the London borough of Havering respectively.

The Highways Agency is not responsible for any roads in the Romford area.

None of the roads for which the Highways Agency is responsible within the London borough of Havering have been built in the last 10 years.

Route Utilisation Strategy

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what timetable he envisages for the redevelopment of London Waterloo station to facilitate the implementation of the Route Utilisation Strategy; and if he will make a statement. [65514]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 25 April 2006]:* The major redevelopment of Waterloo is being considered by Network Rail and a master plan proposal is currently under evaluation by them. Elements of the Route Utilisation Strategy are being taken forward through the franchising process.

Seat Belts

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received about newly-produced cars being fitted with a seat belt reminder system. [65105]

Dr. Ladyman: Further to my answer to the hon. Member of 19 April 2006, *Official Report,* columns 708–9W, I have received no further representations about newly-produced cars being fitted with a seat belt reminder system.

Speed Cameras

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether it is mandatory for the speed camera partnerships to corroborate their cameras radar measurements of speed with the cameras photographic evidence before sending out a notice of intended prosecution to those accused of speeding offences; and if he will make a statement. [65857]

Paul Goggins: I have been asked to reply.

This is a matter for the individual police forces within safety camera partnerships. The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) has issued a Code of Practice for the Operational use of Road Policing Enforcement Technology

(available on the ACPO website www.acpo.police.uk). This deals in part with the use of approved secondary check procedures to verify the continuing accuracy of the device.

Speed Limits

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the effect on traffic volumes of the strict enforcement of *(a)* existing 60 mph and 70 mph speed limits and *(b)* a 55 mph speed limit on all extra-urban roads, broken down by (i) class of road and (ii) type of vehicle. [65665]

Dr. Ladyman: Speed limits are in place for road safety reasons, and enforcement of them is a matter for the police.

Train Timetable (West Country)

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what criteria the Department used in deciding to specify in the Greater Western Franchise *(a)* a reduction in the frequency and *(b)* an increase in the journey time of trains between (i) London and Exeter and (ii) London and Plymouth; how many trains under the new schedule will reach (A) Exeter in two hours or under and (B) Plymouth in three hours or under from London; and how many did so under the (1) current schedule and (2) 1994 schedule. [60179]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 21 March 2006]:* The Great Western Franchise specification was designed to improve the overall operational and financial performance of the train service and to ensure resources were used to best meet market needs.

Under the proposed timetable for December 2006, which has been consulted on by First Group, the fastest journey time between London and Exeter will be two hours eight minutes, with the average journey time for daytime trains being two hours 31 minutes. No trains made the journey in two hours or under in 1994. The position for Plymouth is that in the proposed December 2006 timetable the fastest journey will be three hours; in the present timetable two trains arrive in three hours or less, while in 1994 no trains made the journey in three hours or under.

First announced a series of changes to their proposed December 2006 timetable on 3 April, including the reinstatement of two London and Exeter trains in each direction, which will allow improved journey times to Plymouth.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Avian Influenza

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the efficacy of the methodology used in collecting samples for testing for avian influenza. [64711]

Mr. Bradshaw: Regular assessments are made of the methodologies used for sample collection and any changes in methodology are robustly validated to international standards prior to adoption. The procedures used for UK programmes of avian influenza surveillance in wild bird populations conform to international protocols. These are specifically endorsed as part of a mandatory European Union wild bird surveillance programme and ratified by all member states.

As the service provider for AI surveillance testing, the Veterinary Laboratories Agency (VLA) has a commitment to ensure that any modifications to procedures are fully validated before new methodology is adopted. This ensures a high degree of quality assurance, critical for detection and diagnosis, especially with respect to a listed pathogen of zoonotic potential such as avian influenza.

In January 2006, the VLA launched a project studying virus survival. The results from this study will be formally linked, where required, to any review process.

Climate Change Targets

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what plans she has to ensure that her Department's progress in meeting domestic climate change targets is effectively monitored; [64972]

(2) what additional measures she is planning to enable the Government to meet their domestic climate change targets; and if she will make a statement. [64973]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* The new Climate Change Programme, published in March 2006, sets out a range of policies to support our national climate change goals. These include measures to support increased electricity generation from renewable sources, to encourage energy efficiency measures in households, and to provide more reliable consumer product information. The Programme will also support more sustainable transport choices, introduce higher standards for energy efficiency in buildings, and finance energy efficiency measures for public sector organisations.

Defra is also consulting on the draft of the UK's National Allocation Plan for the second phase of the EU emissions trading scheme. The Scheme is a central element of the energy supply and business sectors' contribution to our policies to tackle climate change.

Existing and new policies set out in the Programme are expected to reduce the UK's carbon dioxide emissions to 15 to 18 per cent. below 1990 levels by 2010. This would take the Government close to their domestic target to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 20 per cent. below 1990 levels by 2010.

The Government issue annual updates on the UK's greenhouse gas emissions. The final emissions estimates for 2004 were published on 23rd January 2006, and can be viewed at:

http://www.defra.gov.uk/news/2006/06Q123b.htm

The Government will also be reporting annually to Parliament on emissions levels.

Cuckmere Valley

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 1 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 651W, on the Cuckmere Valley, if she will break down the

figure of £394,000 into *(a)* consultants costs, *(b)* internal staff costs and *(c)* other costs; and whether the allowance for internal staff costs reflects the total estimated costs applicable to the project internal staff. [65544]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 25 April 2006]:* The Environment Agency confirms that the figure of £394,000 reported as spent to date on the Cuckmere Esturary Project in the parliamentary answer given on 1 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 651W, was split as follows:

Cost	*£*
External consultants	337,000
Internal staff	57,000

All costs for the project are included in the totals shown.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 1 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 651W, on the Cuckmere Valley, how much has been spent to date; and how much it is anticipated will be spent on the next stage following the completion of the preparatory stage of the project. [65545]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 25 April 2006]:* I understand from the Environment Agency that the total expenditure to date on the Cuckmere Estuary Project is £440,000. This figure is split as follows:

	£
External consultants costs	375,000
Internal staff costs	65,000

The principal outputs from this project, namely the flood risk management business case and the environmental report, are complete in draft and are undergoing internal review within the Agency. These reports have determined the preferred flood risk management and environmental policy options for the future management of the Cuckmere Estuary. When these options have been approved, it is intended that a scheme will be developed by a Partnership of English Nature, the National Trust, the South Downs Joint Committee and the Environment Agency. It is not possible to give an estimate of the costs of developing the scheme at this time.

The current 100-year construction cost estimates for the three main policy options considered are:

	£ million
No active intervention with exit strategy	1.2
Hold the line	17.13
Managed realignment	2.4

Development costs are included within the figures. The costs of a public inquiry are not included in the figures.

Departmental Leave (Stress)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many people have been on sick leave suffering from stress in her Department in each of the last three years; and what percentage of the total staff number this represents. [63544]

Jim Knight: During 2005 there were 180 members of staff in DEFRA (including State Veterinary Service, Government Decontamination Service and Marine Fisheries Agency) who were absent sick, giving "stress" as the reason. This represents 2.4 per cent. of the 7,573 staff.

Figures for preceding years are not readily available and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

The Department takes the management of stress seriously and has recently changed the way in which employees and managers are supported, by introducing an employee assistance programme (EAR) to ensure employees have 24-hour access to professional support services as required.

In terms of education and prevention, the Department's Occupational Support and Advisory Team has been undertaking mini-audits of business units against the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) Management Standards for Stress.

The team also maintain a website dedicated to stress related issues, and present a series of road-shows (including regional offices) to provide practical advice on the subject directly to staff.

Electric Shock Collars

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will carry out an investigation into the use of electric shock collars as a training aid for dogs. [65250]

Mr. Bradshaw: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column. 23W.

Energy Efficiency

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what research her Department has undertaken to compare energy efficiency rates in the UK with other European Union countries. [64970]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* Only recently has work begun to develop "proper" indicators of energy efficiency changes, rather than using energy intensity as a proxy. Existing information on whole economy energy intensity is published on a consistent basis across the 25 member states and is available at:

http://epp.eurostat.cec.eu.int/portal/page?_pageid=1996,39140985&_dad=portal&_schma=PORTAL&screen=detailref&language=en&product=EU_strind&root=EU_strind/strind/enviro/en020

However, energy intensity does not paint an accurate picture of efficiency gains as it includes structural changes as well as efficiency improvements.

Defra has already developed an efficiency indicator for UK housing, as a contribution to the work of the interdepartmental Joint Working Group on Energy and the Environment. Information is available at:

http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/environment/jwgee/0422.pdf

Work is also under way on similar types of indicators for the UK industry and service sectors, although a lack of suitable data are delaying progress.

In parallel, EU-wide work on energy efficiency across the EU-15 member states is being taken forward through the 'ODYSSEE' project. Defra and DTI jointly fund a consultancy to represent UK interests. Information on energy efficiency performance to 2003 for each member state is available at:

http://www.odyssee-indicators.org/Publication/country_profiles.html

Note:

ODYSSEE data are not official statistics compiled and checked by the national statistical offices of member states.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps her Department is taking to ensure European governments promote energy efficiency in domestic appliances. [64971]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* The Government are fully committed to raising product standards and encouraging consumers to use the most energy efficient domestic appliances. Progress is being made by a combination of policy measures including product information (energy labels), minimum standards, and the promotion of best practice. These are taken forward by the Market Transformation Programme (MTP).

The UK continues to work closely with the European Commission to influence and speed up the delivery of both mandatory and voluntary measures under the recently agreed Eco-Design for Energy Using Products (EUP) Framework Directive. We are encouraging the Commission to bring forward formal proposals for revising the EU Energy labelling Scheme, and we are supporting the work of the Energy Saving Trust in promoting efficient domestic appliances.

As President of both the EU and the G8 in 2005, the UK together with the European Commission hosted an International Energy Efficiency Conference (2 to 3 November 2005) to deliver a roadmap for global energy efficiency improvements. Details of the conference aims and outcomes can be viewed at:

http://host5.oliveserver.co.uk/df/ee/conferenceobjectives.aspx

We will also host the 2006 Energy Efficiency in Domestic Appliances and Lighting Conference (EEDAL 06) to advance international co-operation and new initiatives on energy efficient domestic appliances. Further details can be found at:

http://www.livegroup.co.uk/EEDAL

Government Offices (Energy Consumption)

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the Government's policy on the reduction of energy consumption in its offices; and if she will make a statement. [63608]

Mr. Morley: The Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government estate is the main vehicle for systematically assessing, reporting and improving Government performance in managing its own land and buildings in a sustainable way. It sets cross-Government targets in all key operational areas, including energy consumption.

The Sustainable Development Commission's report, 'Leading by Example? Not Exactly . . . ' was published in December 2005. This reported on departmental performance against a range of sustainable operational targets within the framework.

The Government accept that more needs to be done to improve its overall operational performance including its own energy consumption. The UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy (Securing the Future, March 2005) included a commitment to review the framework and make proposals for achieving a significant change in operational performance. We are currently taking forward work in this area, and challenging new departmental energy targets will be published this summer.

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps her Department has taken to reduce energy consumption in its offices; and if she will make a statement. [63609]

Mr. Morley: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 24W.

House Building (West Chelmsford)

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures are being taken taken to ensure there are sufficient levels of water supply to cope with the levels of house building in West Chelmsford constituency. [64722]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* All water companies have water resource management plans which look ahead 25 years and include projections of current and future demands for water. These are regularly updated to take account of factors including projections of household numbers, occupancy rates, and the implications of climate change. The management plan for Essex and Suffolk Water includes proposals for an extension to the Abberton reservoir by 2014.

Mobile Telephones

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the Answer of 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, columns 31–2W, on mobile telephones, what the timescale is for the implementation of the EU Waste Electrical and Electronic Directive. [65947]

Malcolm Wicks: I have been asked to reply.

The Department is currently engaged in conversations with key stakeholders on the best way to implement the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive. I will be announcing a new timetable before the parliamentary recess in July.

Single Farm Payments

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many new applicants have sought to register land for single farm payments; and how much land not previously registered under the integrated admission and control system has been registered. [63500]

Jim Knight: Since December 2004 some 50,000 customers have registered land for the purposes of the Single Payment Scheme and the Environmental Stewardships schemes. The increase in land is 0.95 million hectares.

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many applications for registering land for single farm payment have been made in total from North Essex. [63501]

Jim Knight: 78 applications have been made to register land in North Essex from customers who were not registered under the old IACS (integrated administration and control system).

Sporting Facilities (Drought Orders)

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment her Department has made of the requirements of *(a)* professional and *(b)* amateur sporting facilities in the event of the introduction of drought orders; [64721]

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will take steps to exempt *(a)* county cricket clubs and *(b)* community sports facilities from drought orders; and if she will make a statement. [65112]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* I recognise that any drought order made to restrict use of water may impact on how sporting facilities and clubs maintain their grounds. However, serious drought is an exceptional event and provisions must be in place to allow water companies to fulfil their duty to supply water to domestic customers.

Drought orders can be made only after careful consideration of all the issues raised by objectors to an application. A hearing will normally be held by an independent Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State. Objectors have the opportunity to be heard by the Inspector. In determining the application the Secretary of State will take into account the objections raised and the Inspector's recommendations.

Vital Villages Funding

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which villages have received vital villages funding; when each received such funding; and which villages have applied for funding but have been unsuccessful. [65952]

Jim Knight: Between 2001 and March 2005 the Countryside Agency's Vital Villages programme met its target to help over 1000 rural communities to help themselves by assisting them in identifying service needs, piloting the adoption of alternative approaches to addressing these needs and having a greater say In their own affairs.

We do not keep central records on all the information you have requested but I have placed in the Library of the House the following information provided by the Countryside Agency which I hope will be of interest:

Annex 1—A list of all agreed and between 2001 and 2005, including which each is located. Unfortunately the projects received their funding is not completed Vital Villages projects details of the Parish/District in year when each of these recorded on this list.

Annex 2—A list of unsuccessful applications for Vital Villages grants. Unfortunately the Parish/District location been recorded of each of these has not been recorded.

Water Storage (South-east)

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to build new water storage capacity in the South East of England. [64974]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* Water companies rather than Government are responsible for considering new reservoirs as part of their duty to maintain adequate supplies of water. Water companies serving customers in the South East have identified a number of schemes to build new reservoirs or expand existing ones in their 25-year water resources plans prepared in 2004.

Company	*Scheme*	*Year*
New Reservoirs		
Southern	Broad Oak	2019
South East Water	Clay Hill	2015
Portsmouth	Havant Thicket	2020
Thames	Abingdon	2020
Extended Reservoirs		
Southern, Mid Kent	Raise Bewl	2015
South East Water	Bray Enlargement	2008
Essex and Suffolk Water	Abberton	2014

DEFENCE

Aircraft

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the role of the Jaguar aircraft in Royal Air Force service will be after April 2006; and if he will make a statement. [64794]

Mr. Ingram: The role of the Jaguar Force from April 2006 is to continue to contribute to any UK or NATO commitments which require its capability, especially in the role of ground attack or reconnaissance.

Army

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his Answer of 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 12W, on the army, when he expects the full Territorial Army strength of 45,590 to be attained based on current levels of recruitment. [65524]

Mr. Ingram: The current strength of the Territorial Army (TA), excluding the Officer Training Corps (OTC), stands at some 31,950 against an establishment of approximately 38,500, excluding OTC. This represents approximately 83 per cent. of the manning

requirement. Achieving full manning of the TA is dependent not only upon recruitment levels but also retention. Major efforts are under way to address both issues and recent increases in TA recruitment are encouraging. It is not possible at this time to predict when full manning of the TA might be achieved.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many and what proportion of *(a)* staff and *(b)* new staff employed in (i) his Department and (ii) each of the agencies for which he has responsibility were registered as disabled in each of the last three years for which data are available. [61373]

Mr. Touhig: Departmental records of disabled staff are solely based on voluntary declarations of disability under the Disability Discrimination Act and not connected to a formal register of disability.

The following table gives the civilian staff headcount strength and details of disabled staff, employed by the Ministry of Defence, as recorded at 1 April 2004 and 1 April 2005. Comparisons between agencies should be treated with caution due to the different response rates for self declaration. Data prior to 1 April 2004 has not been published and are not available due to insufficient quality.

Headcount

Ministry of Defence: by Agency	*April 2004 total*	*Declared disabled*	*Declared not disabled*	*Unknown*	*Disabled personnel as a percentage (exec. unknown)*
Ministry of Defence (Less Agencies)	41,640	1,620	22,780	17,240	6.6
Armed Forces Personnel Administration Agency	170	10	110	50	5.9
Army Training and Recruitment Agency	4,100	220	2,190	1,690	9.0
British Forces Post Office	370	20	140	210	10.1
Defence Analytical Services Agency	180	10	110	70	5.2
Defence Bills Agency	640	40	340	250	10.2
Defence Communications Service Agency	3,230	130	1,790	1,310	6.9
Defence Dental Agency[1]	180	—	100	80	1.0
Defence Estates[2]	2,500	100	1,570	830	5.8
Defence Geographic Imagery Intelligence Agency[3]	850	30	470	340	6.5
Defence Intelligence and Security Centre[4]	160	10	100	50	7.7
Defence Medical and Education Training Agency	610	40	300	280	10.8
Defence Procurement Agency	3,940	130	2,590	1,220	4.7
Defence Storage and Distribution Agency	4,580	290	2,310	1,980	11.1
Defence Transport and Movements Agency	320	10	160	150	6.0
Defence Vetting Agency	340	10	220	110	5.3
Disposal Services Agency	60	—	30	30	9.7
Duke of Yorks Royal Military School	120	—	80	40	2.6
Medical Supply Agency[5]	280	10	130	140	5.1
Ministry of Defence Police and Guarding Agency	6,050	140	3,160	2,750	4.2
Naval Recruiting and Training Agency	1,190	60	640	480	8.4
Pay and Personnel Agency	790	20	460	300	5.1
Queen Victoria School	80	—	30	40	8.6
RAF Training Group Defence Agency	2,390	120	1,360	910	7.8
Service Childrens Education	1,020	10	450	560	1.7
Veterans Agency	910	80	570	250	12.9
Warship Support Agency[6]	5,070	190	2,940	1940	6.2
Royal Fleet Auxiliaries[7]	2,350	**	**	**	**
Level 1[8]	84,070	3,290	45,130	33,340	6.8
Army Base Repair Organisation	1,850	120	770	960	13.7
Defence Aviation Repair Agency	3,690	150	2,990	550	4.9
Defence Science and Technology Laboratories	3,210	60	3,160	—	1.7
Meteorological Office	1,880	70	1,730	80	3.8
UK Hydrographic Office[7]	940	**	**	**	**
Locally Engaged Civilians[7]	15,430	**	**	**	**
Level 0[8]	111,080	3,690	53,770	34,930	6.4

Headcount

Ministry of Defence: by Agency	*April 2005 total*	*Declared disabled*	*Declared not disabled*	*Unknown*	*Disabled personnel as a percentage (exec. unknown)*
Ministry of Defence (Less Agencies)	46,340	1,750	28,210	16,380	5.8
Armed Forces Personnel Administration Agency	210	10	160	50	3.7
Army Training and Recruitment Agency	4,110	200	2,540	1,370	7.5
British Forces Post Office	340	20	170	160	8.8
Defence Analytical Services Agency	200	10	130	60	4.3
Defence Bills Agency	620	40	380	210	8.9
Defence Communications Service Agency	3,490	140	2,180	1,170	6.0
Defence Estates	2,860	110	1,940	820	5.2
Defence Medical and Education Training Agency	610	40	370	200	8.8
Defence Procurement Agency	3,910	130	2,740	1,040	4.6
Defence Storage and Distribution Agency	4,490	310	2,900	1,280	9.7

Headcount

Ministry of Defence: by Agency	April 2005 total	Declared disabled	Declared not disabled	Unknown	Disabled personnel as a percentage (exec. unknown)
Defence Transport and Movements Agency	350	10	220	120	3.1
Defence Vetting Agency	330	10	230	80	5.7
Disposal Services Agency	60	—	40	30	2.7
Duke of Yorks Royal Military School	120	—	80	40	2.5
Ministry of Defence Police and Guarding Agency	7,380	160	4,320	2,900	3.7
Naval Recruiting and Training Agency	1,000	40	630	330	6.7
Pay and Personnel Agency	830	20	560	250	4.0
RAF Training Group Defence Agency	2,300	110	1,520	670	6.5
Service Childrens Education	1,100	—	600	490	0.8
Veterans Agency	850	90	580	190	13.0
Royal Fleet Auxiliaries[2]	2,350	**	**	**	**
Level 1[8]	83,880	3,200	50,480	27,840	6.0
Army Base Repair Organisation	1,670	110	690	870	13.3
Defence Aviation Repair Agency	3,180	130	3,050	—	4.1
Defence Science and Technology Laboratories	3,320	50	3,270	—	1.6
Meteorological Office	1,810	60	1,650	90	3.7
UK Hydrographic Office[3]	960	**	**	**	**
Locally Engaged Civilians[7]	15,660	**	**	**	**
Level 0[8]	110,480	3,560	59,160	28,800	5.7

[1] Army Training and Recruitment Agency was formed in July 1997 by absorbing AITO plus recruiting.
[2] Known as the Defence Postal and Courier Services Agency until 1 July 1999.
[3] Defence Analytical Services Agency formed July 1992.
[4] Defence Bills Agency was formed in December 1996.
[5] Defence Communications Service Agency formed April 1998 and absorbed lots of bits from DGIC, CHOTS, RAF Comms, RAFSEE and LISA.
[6] Defence Dental Agency was formed February 1996. Ceased Agency status on 1 April 2005.
[7] Known as the Defence Estates Organisation until 1 March 1999 and subsequently merged with Defence Housing Executive on 1 April 2005.
[8] Level 1 is defined as civilian permanent and casual personnel employed by the department and the Royal Fleet Auxiliaries. Level 0 all those at Level 1 plus staff in the Trading Funds and Locally Engaged Civilians. The revised definitions of civilian personnel are used throughout, full details of which are available on the DASA website at www.dasa.mod.uk

Notes:
1. Figures quoted are headcount.
2. All figures are rounded to the nearest 10, as a result totals may not always equal the sum of the parts. For visibility rounding has only been applied to figures of 10 and above.
3. Armed Forces Personnel Administration Agency was formed in April 1997.
4. Defence Geographic Imagery Intelligence Agency formed April 2000 and included JARIC and Mil Survey. In April 2005 was absorbed into the Chief of Defence Intelligence (CDI).
5. Defence Intelligence and Security Centre was formed October 1996. In April 2005 was absorbed into the Chief of Defence Intelligence (CDI).
6. Defence Medical Education and Training Agency was launched on 1 April 2003, and subsumed the Defence Medical Training Organisation and the Defence Secondary Care Agency.
7. Launched on 1 April 1999 assuming responsibilities of the Specialist Procurement Services Agency.

Disability data for new staff employed in the department are given as follows. Only the full financial year 2004–05 is currently available.

Number and proportion of new staff employed within Ministry of Defence

Financial year	Declared disabled	Declared not disabled	Unknown	Disabled personnel as a percentage (exec. unknown)
2004–05	90	8,720	610	1.0

Notes
1. Data relate only to staff who have declared a disability and whose disability was recorded centrally at the time of commencing employment with the department.
2. New staff to the department have been classified to include recruited, reinstated/re-hired, loaned and transferred from other Government Departments.
3. The proportion of staff with disabilities is calculated only from the numbers where a disability status declaration has been made by the individual.

Gulf Veterans

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what funding has been received by the Gulf Veterans' Medical Assessment Programme in each year since 1993. [64762]

Mr. Touhig: Information on the funding of the Gulf Veterans' Medical Assessment Programme (GVMAP) from 1993 is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. However, for the financial year 2005–06 the cost of running the GVMAP was in the region of £150,000. This figure included accommodation, staffing and patient travel costs.

Land Assessment (Cotswolds)

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his planned land quality assessment programme is for sites within the Cotswold District. [64649]

Mr. Touhig: The Ministry of Defence is committed to a programme that will achieve a minimum of a phase one desk-top land quality assessment for all of the defence estate in the United Kingdom by the end of 2007.

There are no sites of particular concern in the Cotswold area.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence on how many of his Department's sites within the Cotswold District land contamination assessments have been undertaken; and what the findings were in each case. [64650]

Mr. Touhig: This information is not held centrally and will take time to collate. I will therefore write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his communication strategy is for providing information to the public on sites of concern in the Cotswold District, with particular reference to Aston Down; and what steps his Department has taken to prevent public access to such sites. [64651]

Mr. Touhig: As the Ministry of Defence does not have any sites for concern in the Cotswold District there is no need for a communication strategy for any site in the area.

With regards to Aston Down a communication strategy was developed by MOD together with the current site owners. This reflected specific public interest in the site.

There is a presumption in favour of public access to the defence estate, wherever this is compatible with operational and military training uses, public safety, security, conservation and the interests of our tenants. Aston Down was sold in February 2002 and public access is a matter for the new owners.

Ministry of Defence Stores

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 20 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1650–1W, on Ministry of Defence stores, why no financial recoveries were received in the first half of the financial year 2000–01. [65219]

Mr. Ingram: *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* From October 1999, the process for pursuing such financial recoveries was de-centralised within the Ministry of Defence. During a period of transition to the new process, no recoveries were notified centrally as being attributable to the first half of 2000–01. To gather the information on recoveries made during this period could only be done at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Nick Pope

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 18 April 2006 to Question 63392, on Mr Nick Pope, if he will list the persons employed since 1994 to investigate unidentified aerial phenomena. [65363]

Mr. Touhig: Mr Pope was succeeded in post in July 1994 by Miss Kerry Philpott who filled the post until October 1998. This post was vacant for a period and the task of examining reports of unidentified aerial phenomena to establish whether they contained anything of defence significance was covered by a member of support staff, Miss Gaynor South, until the post was filled by Mr Adrian Nash in January 1999. Mr Nash left the post in October 1999 and these duties were again covered by Miss South until the present incumbent of the post, Mrs Linda Unwin, took up office in February 2000.

Submarines (Pollution)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 505W, on Southampton Docks, what assessment he has made of the environmental impact of the Z berth in Southampton hosting a visit from a Royal Navy nuclear-powered submarine, with particular reference to reactor cooling water discharges; and if he will make a statement. [64785]

Mr. Ingram: The discharge of reactor coolant water from RN nuclear-powered submarines at Z berths is not permitted. These submarines are operated in accordance with the relevant environmental protection legislation, national and international treaties and protocols. The environmental impact of their presence at a Z berth is therefore no greater than that for a commercial ship.

The Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (DSTL) Environmental Sciences Department monitors the level of radioactive pollution on foreshores close to the locations of Z berths as part of its wider marine environmental survey programme, and the findings are published annually.

Trial Bishop Report

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make the Trial Bishop report available to members of the Defence Select Committee; if he will place a copy of the report in the Library; and if he will make a statement. [65099]

Mr. Ingram: The Trial Bishop report contains information that if released could prejudice the safety and security of UK armed forces. Therefore it would not be in the public interest for a copy of the report to be placed in the Library of the House at this time. I will consider a separate request from the Defence Committee in the usual way.

Ulster Defence Regiment

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will consider establishing a fund to support the widows and children of Ulster Defence Regiment soldiers who lost their lives as a result of terrorist violence in Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [65930]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 25 April 2006]:* The possibility of establishing an Ulster Defence Regiment (UDR) widows' fund on the basis that they were disadvantaged compared with similar RUC widows was examined by the Ministry of Defence, culminating in a comprehensive analysis in July 2005.

This study indicated that post-1974 UDR widows were no worse off than their RUC counterparts and most are somewhat better off. The pre-1974 widows of part-time soldiers were slightly worse off when their main pension and compensation benefits are compared to that of their counterparts. However, the comparison did not take into account a number of other factors. For example, armed forces occupational widows pensions are paid for life and war widows pensions and special payments are paid tax-free and disregarded when calculating income-related and housing benefits. If these factors were taken into account case by case, the UDR widows would generally not be worse off than their RUC counterparts.

Should there be any individual hardship cases, those concerned would be eligible for assistance either from the UDR Benevolent Fund or through the Royal Irish Regiment Welfare Staff, but there are no plans to establish a separate fund on the lines suggested.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Construction Industry Training Board

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) funding for on-site assessment and training in construction will be subject to the full oversight of the committees and board of the CITB; and if she will make a statement. [65753]

Phil Hope: CITB-ConstructionSkills funding for the On-Site Assessment and Training Programme (OSAT) is provided through its annual grants scheme which I can confirm is subject to the scrutiny of CITB Board and its relevant sub-committees.

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what discussions her officials have had with officials of the Construction Industry Training Board on future initiatives on on-site assessment and training. [65754]

Phil Hope: The On-Site Assessment and Training Programme (OSAT) underpins the construction industry's drive to qualify the whole of its site work force and is a key component of the Sector Skills Agreement published in 2005 by CITB-ConstructionSkills, the Sector Skills Council covering the construction industry.

The aim of the programme is to qualify 250,000 adults to Level 2 through this route, with almost 62,000 achievements to date and over 29,000 registrations in 2005. Future projections are stretching, and to achieve the aim of a fully skilled construction work force it is important that OSAT remains a key focus for the industry and for the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), who plan and fund all post-16 provision of publicly funded training.

OSAT is one of only a small number of LSC funding priorities, and my officials have recently been in discussion with colleagues from both the LSC and CITB-CS to ensure that OSAT remains central to LSC planning and that the programme is effectively supported and funded.

Correspondence

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when her Department will reply to the letter of 16 February 2006 from the right hon. Member for Warley regarding Mr. McKenzie-Ward of Oldbury. [66062]

Ruth Kelly: I expect to respond to my right hon. Friend's letter on 26 April.

Enterprise Advisor Service

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the Enterprise Adviser Service. [55666]

Phil Hope: The delivery of the Enterprise Adviser Service has been implemented by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The LSC is also responsible for the assessment of the Service. Mark Haysom, chief executive of the LSC, has written to my hon. Friend and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 25 April 2006:

I write in response to your recent Parliamentary Question about the effectiveness of the Enterprise Adviser Service. Initial evaluations from the Lead LSCs responsible for the delivery of the service have been very positive. The first two years of the service involved Enterprise Advisers working with nearly 1000 secondary schools in the most disadvantaged areas. This work was subsequently built on with the 2005–06 re-focus of the service which brought more schools within its remit. Initial evaluations suggest that over 2000 schools are now within the scope of the service.

Evaluations from the Lead LSCs and the Regional Enterprise Advisers all suggest that this service has had significant impact and is valued by the Head teachers and staff with whom they are working. The Enterprise Advisers were recruited from a largely private sector back-ground and as such have brought a significantly different perspective and skills set to schools. The knowledge, skills, experience and enthusiasm of the Enterprise Advisers has been a positive addition to the field of enterprise in education. Specific DfES resources for the service are due to end at the end of this academic year and the LSC is looking at how best to embed the good practice that has been fostered through this service into local and regional enterprise activity.

Prison Education

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she has taken to broaden the prison education curriculum key and basic skills as recommended by the Education and Skills Select Committee report, HC114–1 on Prison Education. [65570]

Phil Hope: Improving the literacy, numeracy and English language skills of offenders continues to be a high priority, and underpins success in vocational and employment training. We have introduced a much broader curriculum through the Offender's Learning Journey which is being tested in three development regions in England. This new offer includes a focus on work-related learning as well as the arts curriculum and personal and social development.

Speech and Language Teaching (Hillingdon)

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the cost is per child of a placement in a speech and language unit run by Hillingdon local education authority. [65293]

Maria Eagle: This information is not collected centrally.

Statemented Children

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many statemented children there are in each *(a)* ward in West Lancashire constituency and *(b)* Lancashire; and what percentage of all children in each area these figures represent. [64118]

Maria Eagle: The requested information is given in the following table.

All schools[1]: number and percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs (SEN)[2] as at January 2005

	Number of pupils with statements of SEN[2]	*Number of pupils[2] (headcount)*	*All schools[1] Percentage of pupils with statements of SEN[3]*
West Lancashire constituency	786	15,458	5.1
Wards in West Lancashire constituency:			
Ashurst	15	556	2.7
Aughton and Downholland	10	562	1.8
Aughton Park	11	288	3.8
Bickerstaffe	[4]—	55	[4]—
Birch Green	21	593	3.5
Burscough East	12	461	2.6
Burscough West	62	1,019	6.1
Derby	51	1,994	2.6
Digmoor	21	639	3.3
Halsall	[4]—	109	[4]—
Knowsley	105	1,385	7.6
Moorside	30	631	4.8
Newburgh	5	159	3.1
Parbold	13	433	3.0
Scarisbrick	8	628	1.3
Scott	6	162	3.7
Skelmersdale North	147	2,855	5.1
Skelmersdale South	135	637	21.2
Tanhouse	94	570	16.5
Up Holland	20	968	2.1
Wrightington	17	754	2.3
Lancashire local authority area	7,391	182,583	4.0

[1] Includes maintained nursery, primary, secondary and all special schools, city technology colleges, academies, pupil referral units and independent schools.
[2] Excludes dually registered pupils.
[3] The number of pupils with statements expressed as a percentage of the school population.
[4] 1 or 2 pupils, or a rate based on 1 or 2 pupils.
Source:
Annual Schools Census

Provisional figures, taken as at January 2006, relating to the number of pupils with statements of SEN will be available at the end of April.

Sure Start

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what is the average expenditure per child was in Sure Start schemes in each year since 2001–02; what the average expenditure planned for each year to 2009–10; and if she will make a statement. [63985]

Beverley Hughes: 524 Sure Start local programmes were opened on a rolling programme between 1999 and 2003, reaching around 400,000 children aged under four years. In their first two to three years programmes were building up their services and, generally, did not operate at peak levels until the third or fourth year. The average expenditure per child for every year for which grant has been paid or allocated is in the following table. With effect from the current financial year, the earliest programmes' grants are beginning to taper to a level consistent with delivering the children's centre offer. We expect that local authorities will be in a position to make savings through economies of scale, for example on administration, finance and evaluation arrangements, now that the grant for programmes is paid directly to them.

The Government have announced its intention to conduct a Comprehensive Spending Review in 2007 and we will await the outcome of that review before decisions are taken on the level of funding from April 2008. The Government have indicated on many occasions in the past the high priority it attaches to improving outcomes for children, including in the early years.

Financial year	*Average actual expenditure per child (£)*	*Average planned expenditure per child*
2001–02	522	—
2002–03	500	—
2003–04	786	—
2004–05	845	—
2005–06	—	937
2006–07	—	909
2007–08	—	758

Source:
1. Departmental expenditure figures for Sure Start Local Programmes.
2. 2005 Population figures provided by Sure Start Local Programmes for under 4s in the programme area.

Television Sets

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many television sets are in operation in the Department *(a)* in total, *(b)* in Ministers' private offices and *(c)* in each office building in the Department; and how many television licences are held by the Department. [62796]

Bill Rammell: The information requested could be provided only at disproportionate cost. However, there are 24 TV sets in Ministers' offices.

MINISTER FOR WOMEN

Equal Pay

John Bercow: To ask the Minister for Women and Equality what representations she has received regarding the gender pay gap *(a)* in the private sector and *(b)* in the public sector. [65625]

Meg Munn: I have ongoing dialogue with trade unions, employers from both the public and private sector, and others including the Equal Opportunities Commission concerning the gender pay gap. I recently supported the launch of Opportunity Now's Benchmarking Report, which was a culmination of 159 in-depth assessments of UK organisations in the private, public and education sectors. The report contains case studies, advice, action plans and recommendations on how employers can address gender equality and diversity in the workplace, including tackling the gender pay gap.

The Government also warmly welcomes the report Shaping a Fairer Future from the Women and Work Commission and is in discussion with key stakeholders with a view to issuing an action plan to take forward recommendations on tackling the gender pay gap later this year.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Capita

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what services to the House are provided by Capita; at what cost; and for what periods. [65771]

Nick Harvey: Services provided to the House over the last two years by companies within the Capita group have included staff recruitment, training, pensions administration and other specialist advice. The total cash costs were:

	£
2004–05	815,171
2005–06	619,442

The only specific long-term contract with Capita is for pensions administration at a cost of some £45,000 per year over five years. Recruitment, advertising and response handling contracts are in the process of being tendered.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Abortion and Poverty

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to the Answer of 21 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 182W, on abortion and poverty, (1) how *(a)* hon. Members, *(b)* Members of the House of Lords and *(c)* members of the public are able to obtain copies of the booklet Death and Denial: Unsafe Abortion and Poverty; and if he will make a statement; [64623]

(2) what terms and conditions were set in requesting the International Planned Parenthood Federation to produce the booklet Death and Denial: Unsafe Abortion and Poverty; how many copies his Department obtained; to whom they were sent; how much was spent on *(a)* postage and packing and *(b)* officials' time in dealing with the publication; and if he will make a statement; [64622]

(3) whom he consulted before requesting the International Planned Parenthood Federation to produce the booklet Death and Denial: Unsafe Abortion and Poverty; what views were expressed; and if he will make a statement; [64758]

(4) when the statement by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State in the foreword to the booklet Death and Denial: Unsafe Abortion and Poverty was drafted; by whom; and if he will make a statement. [64759]

Mr. Thomas: I asked the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) to survey the global scene on unsafe abortion, which resulted in the report "Death and Denial: Unsafe Abortion and Poverty". No specific terms and conditions were set in making this request. The report provides an overview of the current situation regarding unsafe abortion around the world. Without stopping unsafe abortion, which causes over 13 per cent. of all maternal deaths, the Millennium Development Goal to lower maternal mortality by 2015 is unlikely to be met.

DFID was not involved in the production or printing of the booklet which was undertaken by the IPPF. I agreed to write the foreword given the pressing need for an open and informed discussion on this issue. The foreword was written by officials and agreed by Ministers. No outside consultation was undertaken or required as the DFID policy position with regard to abortion is already established.

DFID obtained 150 copies of the booklet for internal distribution only. DFID is not involved in the distribution which is the responsibility of the IPPF from whom copies of the booklet can be obtained. I have arranged for copies of the document entitled 'Death and Denial; Unsafe Abortion and Poverty' which has been produced by the IPPF, to be placed in the Libraries of the House. I am sure that the IPPF would provide copies of the report to interested members of the public requesting it.

It is not possible to provide an estimate of the cost of officials' time in dealing with all aspects of the production of the booklet, from advice to Ministers, responding to correspondence and parliamentary questions, without incurring a disproportionate cost.

China

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the United Nations Population Fund's *(a)* country programme document and *(b)* sixth country programme in its application to China. [65356]

Hilary Benn: The United Nations Populations Fund (UNFPA)'s country programme document (also known as the sixth country programme) guides the UNFPA's work in China.

UNFPA have successfully demonstrated that non-coercive family planning methods can be effective in China. The UNFPA's policy of constructive engagement with the Chinese Government should help further improve this. We look to the UNFPA to take forward its work with the Chinese Government within the framework of the new programme.

The UNFPA's activities in China, as in the rest of the world, are in strict conformity with the unanimously adopted programme of action at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD).

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will discuss with the United Nations Population Fund the statements made by its spokesman in China that the government of China has solved its population problem; and if he will make a statement. [65357]

Hilary Benn: We have been advised by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) representative in China that they have not made any statements to the effect that the UNFPA consider that the Government of China had solved its population problem.

The UNFPA's rationale for their presence in China is to help the Government of China to live up to its international commitments, such as the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD).

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether the United Nations Population Fund's *(a)* standard service delivery protocols and *(b)* quality of care principles include the right of individuals to refuse the use of contraception (i) in China and (ii) elsewhere without penalty; and if he will make a statement. [65359]

Hilary Benn: The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) assistance in China and other developing countries abides by the principles of the 1994 Cairo International Conference on Population and Development, which says that family planning should enable individuals and couples to exercise their human right to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children and to have the information and means to enjoy that right. The principle of informed choice is essential to the long-term success of family planning programmes. Any form of coercion has no part to play.

The service delivery protocol used by the UNFPA office in China specifically provides free contraceptive choice and for clients to receive such service based on their informed consent. The UNFPA assistance in approximately 140 other developing countries is based on the same principle of free and informed decisions and consent.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make representations to the United Nations Population Fund that it refuse to operate in China if the Chinese government does not guarantee that all couples are free to determine the timing of child-bearing; and if he will make a statement. [65360]

Hilary Benn: The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) works in a number of provinces in China, that have agreed to comply with the principles from the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), where it promotes the principle of voluntary family planning. Any developments which are contrary to ICPD in counties that receive UNFPA assistance would be reported to the UNFPA Executive Board, which makes decisions on whether to continue UNFPA assistance in China and any other developing country.

The UK supported the approval of the new country programme for China at the January 2006 Executive Board, which is based on the above principles. We believe that the UNFPA's work in China improves policy and practice through advocacy and assistance.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what discussions he has had with the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo on addressing violence and abuse against children, with particular reference to those accused of sorcery. [65657]

Ian Pearson: I have been asked to reply.

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to him today (UIN 65706).

Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the financial situation of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria. [64718]

Mr. Thomas *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* The UK recognises that the funding gap which exists for the 2006 and 2007 replenishment period poses a challenge. At present US$46 million is available for Round 6 of the Global Fund, but approximately US$1 billion is needed to enable new grants to be approved and fully funded in 2006. This is a substantial funding gap for the 2006–07 replenishment period.

There will be a mid-term review of the Global Fund's replenishment process in June. This will be an opportunity for the international community to review further, the Global Fund's performance and urge new and existing donors to put in more money. The UK has pledged £359 million to the Global Fund for 2002 to 2008. This exceeds our "fair share" based on gross national income, and demonstrates our ongoing commitment to the Global Fund. The UK will continue to encourage other donors to provide additional support to fill the funding gap. In particular, we will be encouraging support from the oil producing countries and calling for a greater effort by the private sector.

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what position the UK will take regarding the launch of a Round 6 of grants at the Global Fund's next board meeting at the end of April; and if he will make a statement. [64719]

Mr. Thomas *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* The UK will support the launch of Round 6 at the April board. At present US$46 million is available for Round 6, but approximately US$1 billion is needed to enable new grants to be approved and fully funded in 2006.

The UK has pledged £359 million to the Global Fund for 2002 to 2008. Last September, we doubled our commitment to the Global Fund for 2006 and 2007 to £100 million per year. This exceeds our "fair share" based on gross national income, and demonstrates our ongoing commitment to the Global Fund. Other donors need to do more to meet their share of Global Fund resources and the UK will continue to encourage them to provide additional support to fill the funding gap. In particular, we will be encouraging support from the oil producing countries and calling for a greater effort by the private sector.

Nigeria

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps are being taken by his Department to support the implementation and enforcement of Nigeria's transparency code. [65720]

Hilary Benn: Nigeria does not have a single transparency code, but is in the process of implementing and attempting to enforce a range of transparency initiatives. DFID is involved at various stages in assisting the Nigerian Government in this as a key element of its support to improved governance, which is one of the three parts of Nigeria's poverty reduction strategy, the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS).

DFID has also provided support for Nigeria's leading role in implementing the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) to promote transparency in the use of oil revenue. DFID in Nigeria has also provided technical and financial support to a unit in the Nigerian Finance Ministry responsible for co-ordinating the audits of oil and gas revenue that have been recently published.

In the area of enforcement of transparency and other elements of anti-corruption codes, DFID and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) are jointly providing technical support to the work of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), which is responsible for the investigation and prosecution of a number of high profile corruption cases in recent months which include the provision of evidence that led to the impeachment of the former Governor of Bayelsa State and his subsequent prosecution, as well as the conviction and imprisonment of the former Inspector General of Police. The UK's support to EFCC is designed to complement a much larger programme of support from the EC.

At the Federal level, DFID continues to support Nigeria's Federal Economic Reform Team, in implementing other reforms to promote transparency and improve accountability, including improving Public Financial Management, publishing Federal Government allocations of budget to state and local government level and supporting civil society involvement in the Federal Government's Medium-Term Sector Strategies.

DFID also provides support to increased transparency at a state level by making clear its assistance will go to those states that have shown the most commitment to transparency and other elements of improved governance.

DFID has been a leading partner in driving forward the G8 Transparency Compact with Nigeria. In response the Federal Government has recently created the Technical Unit on Governance and Anti-Corruption Reforms (TUGAR), an inter-departmental Government initiative to measure and communicate the impact of various anti-corruption initiatives in Nigeria.

DFID is also implementing other programmes of assistance which include elements of support for increased transparency in the justice sector, policing, the electoral process and the National Assembly.

Palestine

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the humanitarian situation in Gaza, with particular reference to the availability of essential items of food. [65453]

Hilary Benn: Earlier this month, the closure of the Kami crossing caused food shortages in Gaza. Israel is now allowing sufficient food to be imported into Gaza. We are aware that humanitarian needs could increase. Gaza's economy is affected by the closure of the Kami crossing to exports. In the future, if the Palestinian Authority cannot pay salaries, livelihoods in Gaza may be further affected. DFID is working closely with the UN Office for the co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs to monitor the situation.

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the effects of the closure of the Karni crossing in Gaza on the humanitarian situation in that area; and if he will make a statement. [65454]

Hilary Benn: The closure of the Kami crossing in Gaza to imports of basic food commodities created considerable food shortages in early March. Israel is now allowing food to be imported into Gaza regularly. The ongoing restrictions on exports through the Kami crossing continue to have a damaging effect on the Gaza economy. This is contributing to an increase in humanitarian need in Gaza. DFID is working with the UN Office for the co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs to monitor the humanitarian situation, to ensure that the needs of the most vulnerable are met.

Sao Tomé

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the impact of the discovery of oil in Sao Tomé on poverty reduction. [65729]

Hilary Benn: DFID has no bilateral programme with Sao Tomé, and has not made a direct assessment of the impact of the discovery of oil on poverty reduction. Over the past two years, Sao Tomé and Principe has moved to open the country to oil exploration and

development. The Joint Development Zone (JDZ) with Nigeria is the first area to be explored. In June 2004, the Presidents signed the Abuja Declaration requesting that all oil operations in this zone follow strict transparency principles, including the publication of all state payments in accordance with the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI). We encourage the adoption of these principles which will help promote poverty reduction along with good governance and transparency.

In December 2004, President Fradique de Menezes of Sao Tomé and Principe signed a Revenue Management Law. In anticipation of significant oil revenues, this Law promotes transparency and establishes detailed measures to ensure responsible management of petroleum wealth. In January 2005, Sao Tomé signed the first Production Sharing Contract, setting a new standard through a clause on transparency that makes specific mention of the EITI principles. This clause is expected to become a precedent for future contracts in the JDZ and in the Exclusive Economic Zone of Sao Tomé and Principe.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank estimate that Sao Tomé is likely to reach heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) completion point in 2006, which indicates that the country is broadly on track in terms of improving economic and fiscal governance, with an adequate strategy for reducing poverty.

South Africa

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the prevalence of alcohol abuse in South Africa; and what steps he is taking to support the government of South Africa in tackling alcohol and drug abuse. [65705]

Hilary Benn: The South African Medical Research Council is the primary agency measuring the nature and extent of alcohol use and its associated consequences. It has detailed information concerning its impact on mortality, trauma and violence and risky sexual activity that increases the risk of HIV. For example, recent studies in Cape Town, Durban, and Port Elizabeth (PE) have found that:

45 per cent. of all non-natural deaths had high blood alcohol concentrations. Levels of alcohol were particularly high for transport-related deaths and homicides.

39 per cent. of trauma patients had high breath alcohol concentrations. 73 per cent. of patients with violence-related injuries in Port Elizabeth had levels above the legal limit for driving.

Between 33 per cent. and 50 per cent. of crimes categorised as "family violence" were committed by people who were reported to be under the influence of alcohol at the time of the alleged offence.

DFID does not provide support to the Government of South Africa to address alcohol abuse. Our support for the health sector concentrates on HIV prevention and care as the priority area of intervention.

For more information on alcohol and drug abuse in South Africa, the South African Medical Research Council provides useful additional information at www.mrc.ac.za

Strategic Defence Reviews

Mr. Andrew Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how the aid allocated to the Ugandan strategic defence review was spent, broken down by budget heading. [64846]

Hilary Benn: DFID provided approximately £500,000 between December 2001 and December 2005 to help the Ugandan Ministry of Defence carry out Uganda's first strategic Defence Review. This was provided as technical assistance to support the review process which came largely from the UK Government's Security Sector and Defence Advisory Team and the Centre for Defence Studies King's College. The support provided included consultancy services, training in areas such as change management, management of local consultation, dissemination of the review's findings and an assessment of lessons learned.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Bank Holidays

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether he plans to bring forward proposals to allow agency workers to have paid bank holidays without having to take them as part of their annual leave allowance. [65715]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Government intend to make paid leave for bank holidays additional to the annual leave entitlement, on a pro-rata basis for those working part-time. To ensure that the impact of this change does not affect the employment security of those involved, we will consult with stakeholders before detailed proposals are made.

Bankruptcies

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many individuals have declared themselves bankrupt in each year since 1997, broken down by age. [66035]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Figures quoted in the following table relate to England and Wales. Bankruptcy figures make up only part of the headline individual insolvency series, which also includes individual voluntary arrangements (IVA's) and deeds of arrangement. These figures are not analysed by age, however, the Insolvency Service has recently published the report "Characteristics of a Bankrupt", which includes information by age group for financial years 2001–02 to 2004–05 and is available here:

http://www.insolvency.gov.uk/insolvencyprofessionandlegislation/policychange/cob.pdf

	Total	*Bankruptcy orders*	*IVA's and deeds of arrangement*
1997	24,441	19,892	4,549
1998	24,549	19,647	4,902
1999	28,806	21,611	7,195
2000	29,528	21,550	7,978
2001	29,775	23,477	6,298
2002	30,587	24,292	6,295

	Total	Bankruptcy orders	IVA's and deeds of arrangement
2003	35,604	28,021	7,583
2004	46,650	35,898	10,752
2005	67,580	47,287	20,293

British Energy

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what stake the Government hold in British Energy; what its value is; and what plans he has to sell off that stake. [63590]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 25 April 2006]:* The Nuclear Liabilities Fund holds £265 million of British Energy bonds as well as a right to approximately 65 per cent. of British Energy's annual adjusted free cash flow (the 'cash sweep'), a right that is convertible into British Energy shares. The Department applies a proxy valuation to the cash sweep based on the prevailing British Energy share price.

Based on a market valuation, at the close of play on 24 March 2005, the British Energy bonds were valued at about £284 million and the 'cash sweep' was estimated to be around £6.6 billion based on converting the 65 per cent. stake at current share prices.

As the Chancellor stated in his Budget statement, the Government are prepared to consider selling part of the stake in British Energy but only after the Energy Review has concluded.

British Nuclear Group

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when the Health and Safety Executive will decide whether to prosecute British Nuclear Group over the leak at the Thorp reprocessing plant in April 2005. [64356]

Malcolm Wicks: As Minister with accountability to Parliament for matters relating to civil nuclear safety, this question has been passed to me for reply. Decisions regarding enforcement action against British Nuclear Group are quite rightly a matter for the independent safety regulator, the Health and Safety Executive. I understand that HSE is still considering what, if any, action to take, but that a decision is anticipated by the end of April.

Coal

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much coal was produced by each company licensed by the Coal Authority in each year since 1994. [65898]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department collects data from the Coal Authority on the basis that information relating to individual coal companies is not disclosed in published statistics unless they are already publicly available. The available information on coal production is contained in Table 2.1.1 of the Digest of United Kingdom Energy Statistics 2005 and Table 2.1 of Energy Trends. Both are available on the DTI website at:

www.dti.gsi.gov.uk/energy/inform/energy_stats/coal/index.shtml

An extract showing total production by licensed mines since 1994 is as follows:

Thousand tonnes

	Total[1]	Deep-mined	Opencast
1994	49,785	31,854	16,804
1995	53,037	35,150	16,369
1996	50,197	32,223	16,315
1997	48,495	30,281	16,700
1998	41,177	25,731	14,315
1999	37,077	20,888	15,275
2000	31,197	17,187	13,412
2001	31,930	17,347	14,166
2002	29,989	16,391	13,148
2003	28,279	15,633	12,126
2004	25,096	12,542	11,993
2005[2]	20,624	9,563	10,445

[1] Includes slurry.
[2] Provisional.

Compensation Claims

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the 20 firms of solicitors who *(a)* have received the most in costs, *(b)* have the most claims outstanding, *(c)* have received the highest average settlement, *(d)* have had most claims (i) refused and (ii) withdrawn and *(e)* have pursued the most claims through common law court action in relation to (A) vibration white finger, (B) chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and (C) noise-induced hearing loss. [64455]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 19 April 2006]:* The figures requested are set out in the tables, which I have placed in the Libraries of the House.

Debt Advice Helpline

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) how much was spent on advertising the Debt Advice Helpline before the launch of the helpline; and how much has been spent since the launch of the helpline; [65839]

(2) in what ways the Debt Advice Helpline has been advertised; [65840]

(3) how many people per month were expected to use the Debt Advice Helpline pilot before its launch; [65841]

(4) how many people used the Debt Advice Helpline pilot in the first month since its launch. [65842]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Government welcome the establishment of the Debt Advice Helpline, which is an important initiative to look at ways of ensuring that those who need it get help with their debt problems. However, it is an initiative of the debt advice sector, and DTI has no direct involvement in it. The Helpline is operated on behalf of all the participants by the Consumer Credit Counselling Service (contact Jan Smith on 0113 2355 333) and is governed by an independent charity, The Debt Advice Gateway Trust (contact Geron Walker on 020 7653 9725).

Energy Suppliers

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what information and assistance his Department provides to vulnerable groups to assist them in selecting electricity, water and gas suppliers. [64620]

Malcolm Wicks: Energywatch, the statutory gas and electricity consumer body, is responsible for providing customers, including vulnerable customers, with comparative information about energy suppliers and the range of tariffs they offer. The Security of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs is responsible for water industry issues.

Financial Assistance (Heating)

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on how many days financial assistance with heating costs was provided to disabled people in receipt of benefits in *(a)* the North West and *(b)* England in each of the last five years. [64378]

Mr. Plaskitt: I have been asked to reply.

During the winter months disabled people in receipt of benefits may be eligible to receive a cold weather payment. Cold weather payments are intended to provide extra help to the most vulnerable people towards additional heating costs during a period of cold weather. People receiving pension credit are eligible as are income support or income-based jobseeker's allowance customers with a pensioner or disability premium, or who have a child under five or a child who is disabled.

The cold weather payment scheme is in place each winter from 1 November to 31 March. Every residential postcode in the country is linked to one of the 74 weather stations used in the scheme. A payment is made when the average temperature at a given weather station is recorded as, or is forecast to be, zero degrees or below over seven consecutive days. Thus, when a payment is 'triggered', it in effect covers seven days.

In the last five years, it has never been the case that all weather stations covering the north west or all weather stations covering England have triggered payment at the same time.

For each of the last five years, the number of weather stations triggering payment for a particular number of times is given in the following table.

Number of weather stations with stated number of triggers

Number of triggers	*North West*	*England*
2001–02		
0	2	20
1	3	25
2	1	3
2002–03		
0	2	23
1	2	16
2	1	7
3	0	0
4	1	2
2003–04		
0	4	40
1	1	3
2	1	3
3	0	0
4	0	1
2004–05		
0	6	42
1	0	4
2	0	0
3	0	1
2005–06		
0	4	38
1	0	4
2	1	4
3	0	0
4	1	1
5	0	1

Notes:
1. The north west has been interpreted as the area covered by the north west Government office region.
2. Some weather stations cover areas which straddle regional or country boundaries. Any weather station which covered part of the north west or part of England has been included, even if it covered part of another region or country as well.
3. The number of weather stations and the areas they cover have changed slightly over the years.
4. The number of people who qualify for a cold weather payment varies greatly by weather station. For example, for weather stations covering England which triggered payment in 2005–06, the number of people who qualified per weather station varied from an estimated 8,000 (for a weather station covering an area straddling England and Scotland) to an estimated 141,000.

Source:
Unpublished DWP Cold Weather Payments statistics.

Geothermal Energy

John Pugh: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what Government support is available for geothermal energy; and if he will make a statement. [65251]

Malcolm Wicks: Between 1976 and the early 1990's the UK carried out a major Geothermal Research Programme at a cost in excess of £50 million. The key conclusions from the programme were that the UK is unlikely to see major developments based upon geothermal aquifers or the hot dry rock (HDR) method due to a limited resource, poor economics and limited scope for their application.

Unless the technical, practical and economic constraints identified under the previous Geothermal Programme can be addressed, the prospects for geothermal power in the UK would appear to be limited.

More recently interest has been growing in the use of Ground Source Heat Pumps. This technology can be applied to buildings of virtually any scale including domestic dwellings. It relies on heat exchange with the ground immediately beneath or close to buildings. There are at least 15 installations connected to commercial or public buildings in the UK, including the recently opened Welsh Assembly building.

Both DEFRA and the DTI, in collaboration with the Heat Pump Association, have helped establish a UK Heat Pump Network to develop a partnership between manufactures, specialist advisers, and user groups. This network will ensure that independent and authoritative advice is available on the application and use of heat pumps.

The recently launched Low Carbon Building Programme with a £80 million budget over three years, will provide support for a range of micro-generation

technologies including ground source heat pumps. More information on the grant levels and how to apply is available at www.lowcarbonbuildings.org.uk

Low Carbon Buildings Programme

Mr. Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he expects to confirm the starting date of the Low Carbon Buildings Programme; what the planned date for the first funding round is; if he will list the grant eligible technologies; and if he will make a statement. [63251]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* The Low Carbon Buildings programme was launched on 28 March 2006 as part of the Government's strategy for the promotion of micro generation. Applicants under the household stream 1 of the programme can start registering for application forms from 24 April 2006 and applications will be processed from the beginning of May 2006. You can find more information on the programme's website at: www.lowcarbonbuildings.org.uk, including a list of eligible technologies, grant levels and how to apply.

NIG Ltd

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many complaints have been made to his Department about NIG Ltd in the last five years. [64444]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department is not aware of any complaints having been made about NIG Ltd in the last five years.

Noise-induced Hearing Loss (Mining)

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which solicitors and claims handlers have had a fixed cost agreement with the Department for miners' claims for noise-induced hearing loss since 1999; for how much in each case; and when each *(a)* began and *(b)* ended. [64440]

Malcolm Wicks: The solicitors and claims handlers with whom we have fixed cost agreements for handling miners' hearing loss claims are listed:

Barber Cartain, Ben Hoare Bell, Beresfords, Brian Mcardle, BRM, Browells, Campbell Smith , Comes, DMH Stallard, Drummond Miller, Gorman Hamilton, Gorvin Smith Fort, Graysons, Hickmotts, Houseman & Hailes, Hugh James, Ingrams, Irwin Mitchell, Kidd & Spoor Harper, Lathams, Lopian Wagner, Marrons, Mcardles, McConville O'Neill, Meloy Whittle Robinson, Morisons, Moss, Mortons, O H Parsons, Oxley & Coward, Pannone And Partners, Raleys, Randell Saunders, Saffmans, Simpson Miller, Thompsons, Union of Democratic Mineworkers, Watson Burton.

Many of these agreements were in place at the time British Coal's liability was transferred to the Department in 1998. The agreements continue in force as long as the listed firms continue to submit claims. The Department is unable to divulge specific details of any particular agreement as these are commercial agreements and the terms are confidential between the parties.

Nuclear Decommissioning

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether the full costs of *(a)* decommissioning nuclear power plants and *(b)* disposing of spent nuclear fuel will be taken into account in cost-benefit analysis of each nuclear power plant in (i) future energy White Papers and (ii) the current energy review; and if he will make a statement. [64414]

Malcolm Wicks: The Energy Review is examining potential costs of decommissioning any new nuclear plants and managing spent fuel.

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how the full costs of *(a)* decommissioning nuclear power plants and *(b)* disposing of spent nuclear fuel are calculated; and if he will make a statement. [64415]

Malcolm Wicks: The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) assumed responsibility for the decommissioning and clean up of the UK's civil nuclear legacy on 1 April 2005. The cost of the decommissioning and clean up of the NDA's sites is calculated by means of Life Cycle Baselines—which are long-term plans providing a detailed assessment of the scope, methodology, and timescale of proposed site clean up activities. Life Cycle Baselines are published by the NDA and are available on their website at:
www.nda.gov.uk

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 21 March 2006, *Official Report,* column 197W, on the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority, how many shipments of reprocessed uranium have been returned to customers in each year since such dispatch from Sellafield began; to which countries uranium has been returned; what quantities of uranium were involved in each shipment; over what time period interim storage or reprocessed uranium has been offered to each customer; how much revenue has been raised from such storage contracts in each year since the storage contracts were activated; what the country of origin was in each case where the title of the reprocessed uranium did not reside with the originator of the reprocessed spent nuclear fuel; and what plans there are for the management of the reprocessed uranium not covered by return-to-sender clauses. [63589]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* The terms and conditions of British Nuclear Group's contracts with its reprocessing customers are confidential. This applies to historical information about shipments in previous years, including to which countries uranium has been returned, the quantities involved and the revenue raised from storage contracts.

It is the decision of the customer to which country their reprocessed uranium is exported and who transports it. Once chosen, the destination country is incorporated into British Nuclear Group's contract with its reprocessing customer and is confidential.

British Nuclear Group has agreed relatively long storage periods with UK customers. Overseas reprocessing customers are entitled to a much more limited period of storage under their reprocessing and associated contracts. In respect of reprocessed uranium stored in the UK, it is currently stored in steel drums

within designated stores located on nuclear licensed sites. Options for reprocessed uranium are currently being considered by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority as announced in its strategy published on 30 March 2006.

Nuclear Waste

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the total amount of nuclear waste produced by research establishments that use nuclear material has been in the last 30 years. [63779]

Mr. Morley: I have been asked to reply.

The total amount of nuclear waste produced by research establishments that use nuclear material in the last 30 years is estimated to be about 80,000 cubic metres, excluding future decommissioning wastes of about 170,000 cubic metres.

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the total amount of waste from nuclear power stations which is purely from the civil programme has been over the last 30 years. [63783]

Mr. Morley: I have been asked to reply.

The total amount of nuclear waste produced by nuclear power stations which is purely from the civil programme in the last 30 years is estimated to be about 60,000 cubic metres, excluding future decommissioning wastes of about 410,000 cubic metres.

Oil Companies (Engagements)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he last called a meeting with the executive directors of each of the main oil companies in the UK; who attended; what was discussed; how long the meeting lasted; if he will place in the Library a note made by his officials of the meeting; and if he will make a statement. [65478]

Malcolm Wicks: The Energy Minister convened a meeting with executive directors of the main oil companies and their trade association UKPIA, the United Kingdom Petroleum Industry Association, on 10 January 2006. UKPIA represents all of the UK's major oil refining companies. The meeting lasted for about an hour. The main purpose of the meeting was to discuss supply issues following the Buncefield Oil Terminal fire plus emergency stocking obligations. Under Competition Policy rules, at no stage was pricing of petrol and diesel discussed. A record of the meeting will not be placed in the Library, as doing so would prejudice commercial interests.

Photovoltaic Industry

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the annual budgets for *(a)* the Clear Skies and *(b)* the Solar Photovoltaics Major Demonstration programmes was in each of the last three years. [63593]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department did not allocate annual budgets for the Clear Skies and Major Demonstration PV programmes. The Clear Skies programme had a £13,250,000 budget over the last three years and the Major PV Demonstration programme had a £31,750,000 budget over the last four years. The amount of grant committed in each year over the last three years is as follows:

£

	Clear Skies	*MDP PV*
2003–04	4,406,040	7,950,643
2004–05	4,337,485	8,253,471
2005–06	3,472,715	9,425,805

Road Fuel

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what advice his Department *(a)* publishes and *(b)* gives to members of the public about how to conserve (i) petrol and (ii) diesel; and if he will make a statement. [65479]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department of Trade and Industry does not publish this information, as it is matter for the Department for Transport (DfT). However, the New Car Fuel Consumption and Emission Figures booklet published annually by the Vehicle Certification Agency (VGA) includes advice on more efficient driving. The DfT's Logistics Policy Unit also publish advice on Safe And Fuel Efficient Driving (SAFED) for commercial drivers.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the average price was of a litre of *(a)* unleaded petrol and *(b)* diesel in (i) England, (ii) Essex, (iii) inner London and (iv) outer London in each week of 2006. [65358]

Malcolm Wicks: The DTI does not collect data in the above format. It is commercially available from Catalist. The following data has been provided by Catalist and consists of the average price of petrol and diesel on a Monday.

	Unleaded pence per litre			*Diesel pence per litre*		
Monday price w/c	*East Anglia*	*London*	*UK average*	*East Anglia*	*London*	*UK average*
3 January 2006	89.0	89.0	88.4	93.1	92.6	92.8
9 January 2006	89.5	89.5	88.9	93.4	93.0	93.2
16 January 2006	90.0	89.7	89.3	93.9	93.3	93.5
23 January 2006	90.6	90.1	89.8	94.2	93.7	93.9
30 January 2006	91.0	90.7	90.3	94.8	94.3	94.3
6 February 2006	90.8	90.4	90.1	94.6	94.0	94.2
13 February 2006	90.6	90.2	90.0	94.5	93.8	94.1
20 February 2006	90.5	90.0	89.9	94.3	93.7	94.0
27 February 2006	90.2	89.9	89.8	94.2	93.6	94.0
6 March 2006	90.1	89.8	89.7	94.3	93.7	94.0

	Unleaded pence per litre			Diesel pence per litre		
Monday price w/c	East Anglia	London	UK average	East Anglia	London	UK average
13 March 2006	90.3	90.0	89.8	94.5	93.8	94.2
20 March 2006	90.8	90.7	90.4	94.9	94.4	94.6
27 March 2006	91.7	91.3	91.1	95.6	95.0	95.2
3 April 2006	92.5	92.1	92.1	96.1	95.5	95.9
10 April 2006	93.7	93.1	93.2	97.1	96.4	96.8
18 April 2006	95.1	94.4	94.6	97.9	97.4	97.8

Stress Laminated Timber

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps his Department is taking to ensure there are test facilities in the UK large enough to fire test a new form of stress laminated timber (SLT). [61799]

Jim Fitzpatrick: I have been asked to reply.

The testing of construction materials falls within ODPM policy responsibilities. The DTI does not directly support the establishment or maintenance of fire test facilities. There are several testing halls within the UK capable of undertaking large scale testing of stress laminated timber.

Sunday Trading

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what research his Department has *(a)* assessed and *(b)* commissioned on the social implications of relaxing Sunday trading restrictions; [65376]

(2) how potential social effects will be taken into account in his Department's review of Sunday trading restrictions. [65377]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The DTI issued a press and website notice in January asking for views and evidence on all aspects of Sunday trading.

Supermarkets

Mr. Malik: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will assess the merits of introducing measures to regulate the sale by national supermarket chains of goods at below wholesale prices. [65977]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Office of Fair Trading (OFT) has responsibilities for enforcing the UK competition and consumer protection regimes.

The OFT has consulted on a proposed referral of the grocery market to the Competition Commission for a market investigation. The statutory consultation closed on 6 April and we expect the OFT's decision in early May.

The Competition Commission (CC) has noted that prohibitions on below-cost selling in other countries have not been effective. The Irish Government has recently announced its intention to repeal the Restrictive Practices (Groceries) Order 1987 in its entirety. One of the key aims of the Order was to prevent below cost selling by larger retailers in a manner that that would damage their smaller competitors. Micheal Martin the Minister for Enterprise, Trade & Employment said that the Order has kept the prices of the vast majority of grocery products in Ireland at an artificially high level.

In their reference the OFT have included consideration of the buying power of the supermarkets and its effect on the differential between prices to supermarkets and those to wholesalers and buying groups. Whether there are problems in the sector, and whether there are any remedies that should be put in place to address them will be a matter for the CC to consider should the OFT make a reference.

Torture Equipment

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he is taking to prevent British companies from brokering the sale of items for torture overseas. [65270]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government have had a national prohibition on the export of equipment used for torture since 1997, and deplore the use of such equipment. The UK has been at the forefront of global efforts to control the trade in torture equipment and has recently played an important role in the introduction of a related EU Regulation, which will also bring many other EU states up to our own level of control.

In addition to the UK national ban on the export of torture equipment, trafficking and brokering has also been controlled under UK national controls since 2003. This will continue after implementation of the EU Regulation. Brokering of the controlled items is prohibited without a trade licence.

UK Trade and Investment

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the contracts won in 2004–05 by British companies from *(a)* China, *(b)* Japan, *(c)* Turkey, *(d)* the Far East and *(e)* the Middle East following the Duke of York's travels for UK Trade and Investment. [63156]

Ian Pearson: HRH The Duke of York is the UK's special representative for international trade and investment. In this role HRH makes a significant contribution in promoting the interests of UK industry and the UK as a whole, through an extensive programme of targeted engagements both in the UK and overseas. It is not possible to try to directly attribute contracts won to any individual contribution, as contracts are achieved through the efforts of many individuals and agencies, often over some years.

There is a high demand from British business for The Duke's assistance in lobbying for both inward and outward investment.

Women in Work

Ed Balls: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what proportion of women in *(a)* Wakefield district and *(b)* Normanton constituency are working (i) part-time and (ii) full-time. [66026]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The following table shows the proportion of all women (aged 16 and over) in either full-time or part-time employment[1], for Wakefield and Normanton. Estimates refer to place of residence and are from the Annual Population Survey from the Office for National Statistics and cover the period from April 2004 to March 2005.

Proportion of all women (aged 16 and over) in either full-time or part-time employment: April 2004-March 2005

	Wakefield	*Percentage Normanton*
In employment[1]		
Full-time	32	37
Part-time	26	28
Not in employment[2]	42	36
All women aged 16 plus	100	100

[1] Employment includes: employees, self-employed, Government employment and training programmes, and unpaid family workers.

[2] "Not in employment" includes unemployed and economically inactive women.

Source:

ONS Annual Population Survey

SCOTLAND

Departmental Leave (Stress)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many staff have been on sick leave suffering from stress in the Department in each of the last three years; and what percentage of the total staff number this represents. [63530]

David Cairns: Fewer than five people have been affected; to avoid disclosure, the Office does not specify actual figures where the number is below five.

Grievance Procedures

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many grievance procedures have been initiated in the Department in each of the last three years. [63531]

David Cairns: None.

Harassment Procedures

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many complaints of *(a)* bullying and *(b)* sexual harassment have been investigated in the Department in each of the last three years; and how many complaints have been upheld. [63532]

David Cairns: No complaints have been received.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

British Library

Mr. Grogan: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on the future role of the British Library at Boston Spa. [66051]

Mr. Lammy: The future role of the British Library at Boston Spa is a matter for the British Library Board.

Mr. Grogan: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on the respective roles of the reading rooms at the British Library premises in *(a)* London and *(b)* Boston Spa. [66052]

Mr. Lammy: The British Library reading rooms at St. Pancras provide 1,100 reader seats. The reading room at Boston Spa provides 76 reader seats. There are no current plans to alter the reading room provision at Boston Spa.

Commonwealth Games

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on the performance of the British Commonwealth teams in the recent Commonwealth Games. [65307]

Mr. Caborn: The Games were a marvellous occasion, both for the participants and spectators, and there were some truly excellent and inspiring performances by the British teams. As sport is a devolved issue, I will not comment further on the performance of the Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish teams.

The English team had some considerable successes, not least in the swimming pool, the boxing ring and the velodrome, and consolidated its position as the number two Commonwealth nation.

The team's performance also gave some indications of success at future competitions, including the Beijing Olympics in two years' time, the Commonwealth Games in Delhi in 2010, and London 2012. UK Sport, the Government's lead agency for elite sport, will be working with the English and UK National Governing Bodies to help bring performances in line with the very best.

Digital Switchover

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what recent progress her Department has made on digital switchover; and if she will make a statement. [65378]

Tessa Jowell: Good progress continues to be made. The Government have confirmed the regional timetable for switchover and announced support schemes to help the most vulnerable households to make the switch. The not-for-profit organisation Digital UK, which will co-ordinate the switch to digital television, has now been set up.

We will shortly publish the report of the trial conducted in the Bolton area in association with the BBC. The conclusions of the trial together with other research and discussions with the consumer experts group and other stakeholders will inform the development of the nationwide support scheme.

High Definition Television

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when high definition television is expected to be available to viewers across the UK. [65873]

James Purnell: The equipment needed to receive High Definition TV is already available to all Telewest consumers. Customers with such equipment can access free of charge a limited amount of High Definition content from the on-demand library. There are plans to roll out similar equipment to ntl customers but no specific timescales are currently available.

Sky plan to offer high definition services nationally via satellite from late May.

Internet Gambling

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions she has held with the Remote Gambling Association on the effectiveness of its code of practice in discouraging internet gambling addiction. [65471]

Mr. Caborn: The Remote Gambling Association contacted the Department with a draft version of their social responsibility code prior to its publication and asked for comments, which officials provided.

Later this year I will be hosting a Government level international summit to consider the scope for building on best practice and developing international norms in social responsibility for remote gambling operators around the globe.

Olympic Games

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much Exchequer funding forms part of the funding package for the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games. [65040]

Mr. Caborn: As is normal practice, the local organising committee will be largely funded through sponsorship; sale of tickets; and directly from the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

There are no plans to provide Exchequer funding for the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (LOCOG) although the Government have, as required by the IOC, given an assurance that they will act as the ultimate financial guarantor should there be a shortfall between Olympic costs and revenues. However, over £50 million from the Public Sector Funding Package will be going to LOCOG to fund the delivery of the Paralympic Games.

Olympic Games (Shooting)

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans there are for the use of the facility being built in London for indoor and outdoor shooting activities after the 2012 Olympic Games has ended. [65428]

Mr. Caborn: The shooting hall for the 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games is one of a number of temporary venues that will be relocated after the Games has finished.

Decisions on the future use and location of all of the temporary venues will be made on a needs basis, in close consultation with the Home Country Sports Councils and UK Sport, closer to 2012.

Olympic Levy (Bexley)

Mr. Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what representations she has received on the Olympic Levy from residents in the London Borough of Bexley. [65691]

Mr. Caborn: Since 1 April 2005, DCMS has received around 60 letters concerning the Olympic element of the London council tax. Of these, two are from addresses in the London Borough of Bexley.

Smoking

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) what representations her Department has received from the *(a)* theatre, *(b)* film and *(c)* television industry regarding possible exemptions to the ban on smoking in public places for the purposes of artistic productions; and if she will make a statement; [65733]

(2) what discussions her Department has had with the Secretary of State for Health regarding possible exemptions to the ban on smoking in public places for the purposes of *(a)* theatre, *(b)* film and *(c)* television productions; and if she will make a statement. [65734]

Mr. Lammy: I have discussed smoking in public places for the purposes of artistic productions with the Theatrical Management Association/Society for London Theatre. I have received no other representations from the film, broadcasting and theatre industries and I have not discussed this particular point with my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health.

However, my officials have been kept fully informed of the progress of discussions between the Department of Health, Equity and the Theatrical Management Association regarding possible exemptions from the workplace smoking ban.

Sport Funding (South-east London)

Mr. Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what central Government funding has been allocated to sport in South East London during the past eight years. [65692]

Mr. Caborn: Financial support for sport from public sources is primarily channelled through Sport England and UK Sport, the two DCMS sponsored bodies which award Lottery grants and dispense Exchequer funds for sport from DCMS.

Sport England

Since 1997, Sport England has awarded Exchequer funding of approximately £157,000 to South East London[1] boroughs. This is in addition to Lottery funding of £33.5 million[2] which Sport England has awarded to this area for the same period.

UK Sport

It is not possible for UK Sport to determine an amount of Lottery or Exchequer funding allocated to South East London as its funding is not directed to

specific regions. However, UK Sport has identified 18 athletes with a declared address in South East London who have benefited from Lottery funded Athlete Personal Awards of approximately £487,000[3].

[1] For the purposes of this question, Sport England has included funding awarded to the London boroughs of Bexley, Bromley, Greenwich, Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark in its definition of South East London.

[2] This figure includes Lottery awards of approximately £25 million made through programmes such as: Community Capital, Community Investment Fund, Active Communities Development Fund, Active Sports, Active England, Community Athletics Refurbishment Programme, Sport Action Zones and Green Spaces. This also includes mixed Lottery and Exchequer awards of approximately £8.5 million made through programmes such as: School Sports Partnerships and Space for Sport and Arts.

[3] This figure shows the funding awarded since January 2001, the date which UK Sport took over management of Athlete Personal Awards from Sport England.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Asylum Seekers

Mr. Carswell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures exist to deal with asylum seekers who leave the UK under the voluntary return scheme but return to the UK subsequently. [64000]

Mr. McNulty: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given on 10 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 281W.

Carlile Report

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he plans to take concerning the problems with the use of restraint and isolation in secure training centres identified in the Carlile Report. [63422]

Fiona Mactaggart: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply given on 10 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 284W.

Criminal Justice Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the operation of section 118 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003. [64697]

Fiona Mactaggart: I see no need to do so, but if the hon. Member has a particular concern about the operation of the law in this area perhaps he will write to me.

Drug Treatment Programmes

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many Class A drug users who are in treatment have committed an offence in the last three months. [47722]

Paul Goggins: The information is not available in the format requested.

Forensic Science Service

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether spending by the Forensic Science Service on DNA tests in murder cases is subject to a cash limit. [64685]

Andy Burnham: Decisions relating to the costs involved in commissioning the Forensic Science Service to carry out a scientific examination of evidence in a criminal investigation are made by individual police forces, who have responsibility for determining the levels of spending appropriate to each investigation.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department in how many cases in which proceedings are complete the Forensic Science Service has *(a)* lost and *(b)* misinterpreted evidence since 2000; and how many cases were not proceeded with as a result. [64689]

Andy Burnham: The Forensic Science Service (FSS) has reviewed its records and has not identified any completed cases since 2000, in which evidence was lost or misinterpreted. Differences in opinion can arise between expert witnesses providing evidence, based on their interpretation of the information available. The FSS has identified two cases within this time period where timeliness of the identification of evidence could have been improved. Decisions as to whether cases are proceeded with are made by individual police forces and the Crown Prosecution Service.

Prisons

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people under 18 years are detained in each adult prison. [64935]

Fiona Mactaggart: On 30 June 2005 two such persons were held in Eastwood Park.

These young prisoners were female and held in female prisons, in accommodation specially set aside for juveniles on young offender wings. Under 17 year old girls are no longer placed within the Prison Service estate, unless exceptional circumstances apply in an individual case; and four dedicated units, within the Prison Service estate, have now been created for 17 year old girls; a fifth is due to open later this year.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to build medium-secure units within the prison infrastructure to provide support for prisoners who have mental health concerns. [55576]

Fiona Mactaggart: We have no such plans. Low, medium and high secure units are health-care facilities that are part of the hospital system rather than the Prison Service.

Where prisoners require treatment in a medium secure psychiatric setting for a mental disorder, they should be transferred to hospital rather than being treated in prison.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of inmates' *(a)* access to and *(b)* use of acupuncture at each London prison. [62780]

Fiona Mactaggart: None. The provision of therapies for prisoners is a matter for the PCT responsible for commissioning the primary health service at the establishment concerned.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much time is allowed for meetings between inmates and their families, including

children, in *(a)* men's and *(b)* women's prisons; and to what extent arrangements for such visits differ between the two types of prison. [65490]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* The statutory allowance for visits is the same for both men and women and is audited. For convicted prisoners, the statutory minimum is one hour. In exceptional circumstances, the establishment can apply for a temporary reduction to 30 minutes. For unconvicted prisoners, the minimum is one and a half hours a week where the establishment offers visits on a daily basis, or a minimum of one hour in prisons where visits are allowed three days a week as opposed to daily. Visiting arrangements are administered locally at the discretion of governors and directors, taking into account operational requirements. The actual duration of visits is not recorded centrally.

Many prisons offer more than the prescribed minima and the length of the visit may also be linked to the incentives and earned privileges scheme, which is managed by each establishment. An increasing number of establishments also offer extended family or children's visits, typically lasting a half or full day, as well as focussed visits which are structured around the needs of the child and imprisoned parent.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on progress in delivering an electronic system for the transfer of records between prisons. [65798]

Fiona Mactaggart: An electronic case management system enabling both the prisons and probations services to share information in real time (C-NOMIS) will be introduced in July 2006 and rolled out across the services over a period of 24 months.

Road Protests

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost has been of removing protestors from road protest sites in *(a)* England, *(b)* Essex and *(c)* Southend-on-Sea in each year since 1997. [64660]

Paul Goggins: This information is not collected centrally.

Road Traffic Offences

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females driving an emergency vehicle received a notice of prosecution for committing an offence under section 89 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 in (i) Southend-on-Sea, (ii) Essex, (iii) the Metropolitan Police area of London and (iv) England and Wales in each year since 1996. [64682]

Paul Goggins: The information is not collected centrally.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females were imprisoned for failure to pay a fixed penalty as a result of their committing an offence under section 14 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 in each of the last two years for which figures are available, broken down by age. [64704]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information is not available.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the fixed penalty was for a contravention of *(a)* section 33A of the Road Traffic Act 1972 and *(b)* section 14 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 in each year since 1983. [64703]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Road Traffic Act 1972 has been repealed, but its provisions concerning the wearing of protective helmets by riders of motor cycles were re-enacted in the Road Traffic Act 1988. Section 14 of the 1988 Act concerns the wearing of seat belts. The offences are non-endorsable. In 1983 the fixed penalty for non-endorsable offences was £10. In 1986 the penalty was raised to £12. In 1990 the penalty was raised to £16 and in 1992 was raised to £20. From 1 November 2000 the penalty was raised to its current level of £30.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many speed camera tickets have been cancelled in *(a)* England, *(b)* Essex and *(c)* Southend because the driver could show he was attending an emergency in each year since 1997. [64691]

Paul Goggins: Information is not available centrally on the number of drivers of emergency vehicles who elect to challenge a speed camera ticket.

Sentencing Guidelines Council

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had during the last two years with the Sentencing Guidelines Council on the consistency of sentencing; what the *(a)* date, *(b)* time, *(c)* location and *(d)* duration was of each meeting; and if he will make a statement. [64698]

Fiona Mactaggart: Section 170(5)*(a)* of the Criminal Justice Act 2003 provides that the Sentencing Guidelines Council (SGC) must have regard to the need to promote consistency in sentencing when framing or revising sentencing guidelines. Courts are required to have regard to relevant sentencing guidelines and, when departing from them, state the reasons for doing so.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department has not met with the SGC within the last two years.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent assessment he has made of the likely impact of the Sentencing Guidelines Council on the size of the *(a)* probation and *(b)* prisons case load over the next 10 years; and if he will make a statement. [65005]

Fiona Mactaggart: Published projections of future workloads for prison and probation take into account legislative and other changes with an agreed timetable. This includes the new sentences under the Criminal Justice Act 2003 where the Sentencing Guidelines Council (SGC) guideline, published in December 2004, has been taken into account in estimating the likely impacts on workloads. The "Updated and revised prison populations projections: 2005–2011 England and Wales (HOSB 10/05)" were published in July 2005. There may be impacts from future SGC guidelines on specific offences, but until these have been finalised and published, it is not possible to take account of them in our estimates.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the occasions in each of the last three years when he has proposed to the Sentencing Guidelines Council *(a)* that sentencing guidelines and *(b)* allocation guidelines be framed or revised by the council (i) in respect of offences or offenders of a particular category and (ii) in respect of a particular matter affecting sentencing. [65008]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Sentencing Guidelines Council was set up in March 2004. In 2004, the council was asked to consider the level of fines imposed by courts where a fixed penalty notice had been declined for the offence of driving while uninsured. In 2005, the council was asked to consider issuing guidance on the provisions in the Criminal Justice Act 2003 relating to the assessment of dangerousness.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Council Tax Rebate

Mr. Leech: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners received the council tax rebate announced in the 2005 Budget in *(a)* Manchester, Withington and *(b)* England. [64073]

Mr. Timms: This information is not currently available. I shall write to the hon. Member as soon as it is. I expect this to be by the summer.

Government Buildings (Lytham St Annes)

Mr. Jack: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) whether he plans to end in the next five years any of his Department's activities currently undertaken on the Government building site at Heyhouses Lane, Lytham St. Annes; and if he will make a statement; [47074]

(2) if he will list *(a)* the sections of (i) his Department and (ii) its agencies and *(b)* those working on contract for the Department located on the Government building site at Heyhouses Lane, Lytham St. Annes. [47075]

Mrs. McGuire *[holding answer 31 January 2006]:* The Department continues to look for more efficient use of its property and is currently reviewing the size and shape of its Head Office estate as part of its efficiency challenge. Proposals, which include consideration of the Department's buildings in Blackpool and Lytham St. Anne's, including Heyhouses Lane, are currently with the Department's Executive Team and Ministers. Any proposals for change will, of course, be subject to full consultation with staff and departmental trade unions.

The following sections of the Department have staff that are located on the Government building site on Heyhouses Lane, Lytham St. Anne's.

Finance Directorate
Human Resources Directorate
Information Division
Programme and Systems Delivery Group
Work, Welfare and Equality Group

The following agencies of the Department have staff that are located on the Government building site on Heyhouses Lane, Lytham St. Anne's.

Child Support Agency
Jobcentre Plus
The Pension Service

The following contractors of the Department have staff that are located on the Government building site on Heyhouses Lane, Lytham St. Anne's.

British Telecom
Electronic Data Systems

Incapacity Benefit

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many recipients of incapacity benefit in Tamworth had their benefit reduced in each of the last five years, broken down by reason; and if he will make a statement; [48647]

(2) how many people living in Tamworth constituency claimed incapacity benefit in each year since 1997; and what proportion of the working age population in the constituency this represents in each year. [48648]

Mrs. McGuire *[pursuant to the reply, 15 February 2005, Official Report, c. 2184W]:* The only reason for a claimant's incapacity benefit to be reduced is the receipt of an occupational pension in excess of £85.00 a week. The number of cases so affected in Tamworth is too small to be able to provide a precise figure.

Information on the number of incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance claimants in the Tamworth parliamentary constituency is in the table. Working-age population figures are not available for parliamentary constituencies, so the information about proportions cannot be estimated.

Incapacity Benefit (IB) and Severe Disablement Allowance (SDA) claimants in the Tamworth parliamentary constituency

August	*Number*
1997	3,800
1998	3,600
1999	3,400
2000	3,500
2001	3,600
2002	3,600
2003	3,700
2004	3,600
2005	3,600

Notes:
1. The parliamentary constituency figures for the years 1997 to 1998 have been produced using the 5 per cent. data and have been rated up proportionally using the Great Britain WPLS 100 per cent. IB/SDA totals.
2. Figures are rounded to the nearest 100.
3. 'Claimant' figures include all IB and SDA, including IB credits only cases.

Source:
DWP Information Directorate, 5 per cent. samples from 1997 to 1998 and Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study 100 per cent. data thereafter.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many of those making an incapacity benefit claim on grounds of *(a)* certain infectious and parasitic diseases, *(b)* neoplasms, *(c)* diseases of the blood and blood forming organs and certain diseases involving the immune mechanism, *(d)* endocrine, nutritional and metabolic diseases, *(e)* mental and

behavioural disorders, *(f)* diseases of the nervous system, *(g)* diseases of the eye and adnexa, *(h)* diseases of the ear and mastoid process, *(i)* diseases of the circulatory system, *(j)* diseases of the respiratory system, *(k)* factors influencing health status and contact with health services, *(l)* diseases of the digestive system, *(m)* diseases of the skin and subcutaneous system, *(n)* diseases of the musculoskeletal system and connective tissue, *(o)* diseases of the genitourinary system, *(p)* pregnancy, childbirth and the puerperium, *(q)* certain conditions originating in the perinatal period, *(r)* congenital malformations, deformations and chromosomal abnormalities, *(s)* symptoms, signs and abnormal clinical and laboratory findings, not elsewhere classified and *(t)* injury, poisoning and certain other consequences of external causes; were disallowed following a personal capability assessment in each of the last three years. [64497]

Mrs. McGuire: The available information is in the table.

Incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance terminations following personal capability assessments; Great Britain

	Year ending 31 August:		
	2003	2004	2005
All cases	98,700	98,800	108,300
Unknown diagnosis	1,300	1,500	900
Certain infectious and parasitic diseases	500	600	900
Neoplasms	700	800	1,100
Diseases of the blood and blood forming organs and certain diseases involving the immune mechanism	400	400	200
Endocrine, nutritional and metabolic diseases	1,500	1,400	1,600
Mental and behavioural disorders	33,400	32,800	39,100
Diseases of the nervous system	2,100	2,500	2,300
Diseases of the eye and adnexa	500	600	500
Diseases of the ear and mastoid process	200	300	300
Diseases of the circulatory system	5,900	5,900	5,500
Diseases of the respiratory system	2,000	1,900	1,900
Diseases of the digestive system	2,100	2,100	2,000
Diseases of the skin and subcutaneous system	1,000	800	1,100
Diseases of the musculoskeletal system and connective tissue (M00-M99)	18,400	18,800	20,500
Diseases of the genitourinary system	700	900	1,000
Pregnancy, childbirth and the puerperium	400	500	500
Certain conditions originating in the perinatal period	—	—	—
Congenital malformations, deformations and chromosomal abnormalities	—	—	—
Symptoms, signs and abnormal clinical and laboratory findings, not elsewhere classified	15,000	14,200	15,700
Injury, poisoning and certain other consequences of external causes	11,400	11,800	12,400
Factors influencing health status and contact with health services	1,100	1,000	900

Notes:
1. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred. Totals may not sum due to rounding.
2. "—" means nil or negligible.
3. Figures include all incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disablement allowance, including IB credits only cases.
4. Figures for the latest quarter do not include any late notifications and are subject to major changes in future quarters. For illustration purposes, total IB only terminations for May 2004 increased by 33 per cent. in the year following their initial release

Source:
Information Directorate, five per cent. samples.

Teleclaiming

Mr. Rooney: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions at what date a claim is deemed to have commenced under the teleclaiming system where *(a)* there is a gap between the initial telephone contact and the issuing of a claim form and *(b)* there is a delay to the interview date due to the need for an interpreter, advocate or other facilitator to be present. [66068]

Margaret Hodge: To make a new claim to working age benefits through Jobcentre Plus, a customer telephones a contact centre. Contact centre staff ask the customer a series of questions to assess their potential eligibility to Jobcentre Plus benefits. They then arrange to call the customer back at a mutually agreed time, to assist in completion of a claim form.

The customer's date of claim normally commences from the date they first contact the contact centre, except where the customer wishes to claim in advance or in retrospect, in which case there are different processes in place. Any delay that might occur in dealing with a customer's claim does not impact on the initial date of claim. Likewise, if a customer needs an interpreter, advocate or facilitator at any point of the new claim process, any delay in arranging this will not adversely affect the date of claim.

Pathways to Work

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the off-flows from incapacity benefit at six months for each of the pathways to work pilot areas *(a)* were in the last 12-month period for which figures are available prior to the start of pathways to work and *(b)* have been since the start of pathways to work. [41171]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer on 18 January 2006]:* The following table shows the average six month off-flow rate by district for the twelve months immediately prior to the pathways roll-out and the average six month off-flow rate since the pathways roll-out.

The National Benefits Database does not include a proportion of short term incapacity benefit claims, therefore, the off-flow rates presented will be lower than the actual rates; however, trends over time will be consistent.

Percentage

	Phase 1		
	Bridgend Rhondda Cynon and Taff	*Derbyshire*	*RIAB*[1]
Twelve months prior to pathways	35	33	39
Post pathways rollout	40	38	42
Average increase following pathways rollout	5	5	3

	Phase 2			
	Essex	*East Lancashire*	*Gateshead and South Tyneside*	*Somerset*
Twelve months prior to pathways	26	37	33	36
Post pathways rollout	35	41	42	40
Average increase following pathways rollout	8	3	9	4

[1] Renfrewshire, Inverclyde, Argyll and Bute

Note:

The statistics quoted in this response are taken from the Department's National Benefits Database.

Pensions

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the basic state pension was for *(a)* single pensioners and *(b)* pensioner couples in each year since 1997–98; and what the pension will be for each category in 2006–07. [66246]

Mr. Timms: The information is in the table.

£

	Basic state pension for a single pensioner	*Basic state pension for a pensioner couple*
1997–98	62.45	99.80
1998–99	64.70	103.40
1999–2000	66.75	106.70
2000–01	67.50	107.90
2001–02	72.50	115.90
2002–03	75.50	120.70
2003–04	77.45	123.80
2004–05	79.60	127.25
2005–06	82.05	131.20
2006–07	84.25	134.75

Both members of a pensioner couple are entitled to the full basic category A state pension for a single pensioner if they satisfy the contribution conditions. However, the combination of Category A and Category B (based on the husband's contributions) rates is commonly referred to as the couple's rate and is shown in the table.

Remploy

Mr. David: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has for Remploy. [53502]

Mrs. McGuire: The Minister for Disabled People made a written ministerial statement to the House of Commons on the 16 March announcing a review of Remploy. Since then, PricewaterhouseCoopers have been appointed to conduct the review. To ensure that the employment needs of disabled people are fully taken into account, Dr Stephen Duckworth of Disability Matters has joined the review team. The review team will report to Ministers by the end of May.

Social Fund

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many Social Fund grants were made in each year since 1995–96. [63374]

Mr. Plaskitt: The available information is in the table.

Community Care Grants

	Initial awards (thousands)
1995–96	275
1996–97	251
1997–98	234
1998–99	225
1999–2000	220
2000–01	225
2001–02	233
2002–03	245
2003–04	256
2004–05	261
2005–06	275

Notes:

1. Figures are for Great Britain.
2. Figures have been rounded to the nearest 1,000.

Source:

DWP Social Fund Policy, Budget and Management Information System.

Winter Fuel Payment

Mr. Dunne: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether his Department has paid the winter fuel payment automatically to anybody who is not in receipt of another form of benefit since 2000–01. [64916]

Mr. Timms: People who have made a successful claim for a winter fuel payment since winter 2000–01 do not have to claim again in subsequent years, as long as there is no break in their eligibility and they keep us informed of their changes in circumstances.

Anyone who becomes newly eligible for a winter fuel payment and who is in receipt of a DWP benefit will receive a winter fuel payment automatically; others will need to submit a claim.

PRIME MINISTER

Correspondence

Mr. Harper: To ask the Prime Minister when he will reply to the letter, dated 19 January 2006, from the hon. Member for Forest of Dean with regard to Mr. Robin Caulkett. [65549]

The Prime Minister: My Office has replied to the hon. Member.

World Cup (Complimentary Tickets)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Prime Minister how many complimentary tickets his Office has received for games taking place at the FIFA World Cup 2006 in Germany. [63896]

The Prime Minister: I have not received any complimentary tickets for World Cup matches taking place in Germany this summer.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Argentina

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the Government of Argentina about the prosecution of those guilty of human rights violations during the 1976 to 1983 Dirty War. [65644]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The UK and our EU partners welcome the Government of Argentina's decision to tackle impunity and bring to justice those responsible for human rights abuses during the 1976–83 "dirty war". Although my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has had no recent discussions with the Government of Argentina on the issue, it is a frequent subject of conversation between our embassy officials in Buenos Aires and a wide range of government and non-governmental contacts.

Better Regulation

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress was made on better regulation at the recent EU Council. [65396]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Council reinforced the good progress made during the UK presidency, urging the EU Institutions to continue to deliver on their commitments including robust impact assessments and simplification of existing regulations. It asked the Commission to focus on concrete actions, including measuring administrative costs on business and reporting on measurable targets for reducing these burdens by the end of 2006; and to bring forward proposals to benefit small and medium sized enterprises such as longer transition periods for implementation of legislation, reduced fees, simplified reporting requirements and exemptions.

Burma

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when the British ambassador to Burma last met with *(a)* Aung San Suu Kyi and *(b)* members of the democracy movement. [65557]

Ian Pearson: Our ambassador in Rangoon last met Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on 25 April 2003. Since her arrest on 30 May 2003, the Burmese regime has refused all requests by our ambassador to call on her.

Our ambassador last met the leadership of the National League for Democracy on 21 April. She has regular contact with a wide range of opposition and civil society figures in Burma.

Chad

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Government of Chad about the deterioration of Chad's relations with Sudan. [65558]

Ian Pearson: We are concerned about the deterioration in relations between the Governments of Chad and Sudan and its potential negative impact on the Darfur peace talks in Abuja. Our non-resident ambassador to Chad met the Chadian Foreign Minister in N'Djamena on 4 April. He made clear that the UK expects Chad to do its utmost to reduce tensions on the border with Sudan. We continue to call on all sides to show restraint and on the Governments of Chad and Sudan to resolve their differences and restore calm to the region without the use of violence.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what assessment he has made of the extent of involvement of the Government of Sudan in rebel movements operating in Chad; [65646]

(2) what assessment he has made of the extent of support provided by the Government of Sudan to the rebels seeking to overthrow the Government of Chad. [65647]

Ian Pearson: We are aware of reports concerning the Government of Sudan's alleged support for Chadian rebels. We welcome the African Union's (AU) initiative to send a mission to Chad to examine the political situation and investigate such allegations. This mission arrived in N'djamena on 21 April 2006 and will report to the AU Peace and Security Council this week.

We continue to call on all sides to show restraint, and on the Governments of Chad and Sudan to resolve their differences and restore calm to the region without the use of violence.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Government of Chad about the protection of refugees from the conflict in Darfur. [65648]

Ian Pearson: We are concerned about the impact of the current political and security situation in Chad on over 200,000 refugees from Darfur, now sheltering in camps in eastern Chad. Our non-resident ambassador to Chad met the Chadian Foreign Minister on 4 April 2006. He made clear that the UK expects Chad to do its utmost to reduce tensions on the border with Sudan. Nothing should be done to threaten the lives or safety of either the refugees in Chad or the displaced persons in Darfur. We welcome President Deby's announcement on 17 April 2006 that none of these refugees would be forcibly relocated back into Darfur.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of statements by the President of Chad that oil revenues are needed to pay for weapons. [65650]

Ian Pearson: We believe that African oil revenues should be used for sustainable development and poverty reduction, not for weapons purchases. We do not contest the Government of Chad's need to pay and equip the Chadian army for legitimate self-defence. But we believe the immediate priority should be efforts through negotiation to tackle Chad's internal instability and its dispute with Sudan.

Charles Taylor

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Governments of *(a)* Nigeria, *(b)* Sierra Leone and *(c)* Liberia on the prosecution of Charles Taylor. [65686]

Ian Pearson: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and other Ministers have discussed Charles Taylor with the Nigerian authorities and a range of other Governments. The UK has worked hard with international partners to achieve his transfer to the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister has written to the Presidents of Nigeria, Liberia and Sierra Leone to thank them for their role in achieving this outcome. We remain in close touch with them and with our international partners on managing the next steps of the trial process, and stand ready to continue to assist as best we can.

Colombia

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the Government of Colombia about *(a)* respect for human rights, *(b)* progress towards democracy, *(c)* the freedom of the press and *(d)* tackling corruption in Colombia. [65643]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: My noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, last met Colombian Vice President Santos in November 2005 in London to discuss a number of issues, including the human rights situation, democratic development and the fight against corruption. Our ambassador in Bogota and other British officials regularly meet Colombian government Ministers and officials, both bilaterally and through the EU and other international groupings, to discuss progress in implementing the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights recommendations on human rights.

Embassy officials in Bogota have recently discussed the question of freedom of the press with the Vice President's Office. In addition, under the UK Presidency, the EU carried out a lobbying campaign to raise awareness of the importance of freedom of expression in Colombia, particularly in relation to human rights defenders. As Presidency we talked with senior government representatives, including the Fiscal General and the Head of the Armed Forces Human Rights Unit, as well as with non-governmental organisations and the media.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether recent discussions have taken place between Colombian and UK authorities in relation to those citizens travelling on British passports in Colombia during August 2001 who were subsequently convicted by a Colombian court. [65866]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: There have been no recent discussions between the British and Colombian authorities about the case of those individuals who were convicted in 2004 by the Colombian authorities of travelling on false Irish and British passports within Colombia. The individuals concerned are Irish nationals and have returned to Ireland. The case is a matter between the Irish and Colombian governments.

Conference on Disarmament

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list individuals who have served as the UK Permanent Representative to the Conference on Disarmament since 1992; on what date each *(a)* began working for his Department, *(b)* took up this post, *(c)* left this post and *(d)* left employment with his Department; and what post each of those still employed by his Department now holds. [65229]

Dr. Howells: Sir Michael Weston was UK Permanent Representative to the Conference on Disarmament (CD) from April 1992 to July 1997. Rejoined the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) in 1961 and retired from the service in 1997.

Ian Soutar was UK Permanent Representative to the CD from August 1997 to September 2001. He joined the FCO in 1968 and retired from the service in 2003.

David Broucher was UK Permanent Representative to the CD from October 2001 to August 2004. He joined the FCO in 1966 and retired from the service in 2004.

Dr. John Freeman was UK Permanent Representative to the CD from September 2004 to March 2006. He joined the FCO in 1986, following a three year secondment, and is currently seconded as Deputy Director General to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

John Duncan is the current UK Permanent Representative to the CD. He took up his position on 24 April 2006.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list each honour bestowed since 1 May 1997 on present and

former holders of the post of UK Permanent Representative to the Conference on Disarmament; and on what date each honour was bestowed. [65230]

Dr. Howells: No honours have been bestowed on present or former holders of the post of UK Permanent Representative to the Conference on Disarmament since 1997.

Democratic Republic of Congo

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo on addressing the needs of street children. [65655]

Ian Pearson: The UK regularly reminds the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) authorities of the need to protect the rights of all vulnerable groups, including street children. The UK contributes to programmes through the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Save the Children and other non-governmental organisations which aim to protect children. We maintain close and regular contact with the DRC President's ambassador for children, and will continue to work with civil society groups and the Congolese Government to push for further action to bring those who abuse children to justice. We will continue to urge the DRC Government to take more action on child welfare.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps are being taken by his Department to support and promote reform of the *(a)* security sector and *(b)* army in the Democratic Republic of Congo. [65683]

Ian Pearson: Effective security sector reform is essential in ensuring long-term resolution of conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and in the great lakes region. It is a UK priority. We are providing experts to the EU's Security Sector Reform Mission which offers advice to the DRC Government on integrating rebel factions into a unified army, on options for longer term comprehensive security sector reform and which is also implementing a military pay and administration reform project to ensure monthly salaries reach the soldiers on the ground. The UK is allocating approximately £5 million to support soldiers and their families in the newly integrated brigades, and an additional £3 million this year to other army-related interventions. We have contributed US $25 million over five years to the regional Multi-Country Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration Programme, through which DRC's national disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programme is funded, £9 million to a multi-donor police reform project, and £2 million to a justice reform project in the war-affected east of the country, an integral part of which will be support to the military justice system.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo on *(a)* prohibiting physical and sexual abuse of children by law enforcement personnel, *(b)* creating child protection units in all major cities, *(c)* outlawing churches which practise abusive child deliverance ceremonies and *(d)* providing rehabilitative centres for children as an alternative to prison. [65706]

Ian Pearson: The UK frequently reminds the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) authorities of the need to protect the rights of all vulnerable groups, especially children, and to bring to justice all perpetrators of abuse. We and EU colleagues have focused on eliminating abuses committed by security personnel. On 23 January, we and international partners presented President Kabila with a dossier of serious abuses committed by Congolese soldiers, which hon. Members of the All Party Parliamentary Group followed up on 6 April. We continue to support the UN Peacekeeping Mission's work in the human rights field, including their child protection units in major cities.

As part of our presidency of the EU, the UK led an initiative to raise awareness of the problem of so-called "child witches" in DRC. We continue to work with the UN, civil society groups, established churches and the Congolese Government to address this problem and bring those who abuse children to justice. The UK has contributed to training programmes for justice sector workers, which includes training on child protection and the proper treatment of children within the justice system.

Gibraltar

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he will consider the result of the forthcoming referendum in Gibraltar to approve the new constitution as an act of self-determination for the purposes of Government policy on Gibraltar. [65375]

Mr. Douglas Alexander *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* As my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary made clear in his written ministerial statement on 27 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 44–46W, the new constitution confirms that the people of Gibraltar have the right of self-determination.

Nevertheless, the referendum process to approve the new constitution has yet to be settled. It would therefore be premature for the Government to comment at this stage.

India

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his assessment is of trade relations with India. [65394]

Ian Pearson: Trade relations between India and the UK are traditionally strong and bilateral trade continues to show excellent growth.

The value of bilateral trade with India for goods and services in 2004 was approximately £6.41 billion (2005 figures will be released in July 2006). This was an increase from £5.91 billion in 2003. UK exports to India show a 25.4 per cent. increase to December 2005 compared to the same period in 2004.

The UK is currently the fifth biggest investor in India.

To further strengthen bilateral commercial ties the Government have worked with its Indian counterparts in creating the Joint Economic Trade Committee (JETCO). Under JETCO the UK and Indian governments are working on the main action points to enhance bilateral trade and investment in specific sectors.

The Asia Task Force was also created to identify and remove barriers to trade across the whole of Asia, but with particular focus on India and China.

The Government also supports the private sector led Indo-British Partnership Network (IBPN). The main objectives of the IBPN are to provide a networking forum for all UK businesses interested in trade between India and the UK; to identify ways for UK firms to better access the India market and to inform government of the private sector's view of the barriers to trade between the two countries.

Inward Investment

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how he encourages foreign business to invest in the UK. [65395]

Ian Pearson: UK Trade and Investment (UKTI) is the key Government body tasked with attracting inward investment into the UK. It works in partnership with the Regional Development Agencies and the Devolved Administrations. UKTI is focusing its efforts on attracting high tech investments to ensure that the UK meets the challenges and opportunities of globalisation and remains the No. 1 location in Europe for inward investment.

As part of the budget announcement on 22 March 2006, it was announced that UKTI is to take responsibility for co-ordinating a new drive to market the UK internationally as a business centre and to take the lead in a new strategy to attract Research and Development business into the UK.

Iraq (Trade Unions)

Rob Marris: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has received concerning the independence of trade unions in Iraq; and if he will make a statement. [65276]

Dr. Howells: I have received a number of representations concerning the independence of trade unions in Iraq.

In June 2005, I met a delegation from the Iraqi Federation of Trade Unions and the Iraqi Kurdistan General Workers during their visit to the UK. Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials met Iraqi trade union representatives at our Embassy in Baghdad in February 2006.

Article 22 of the Iraqi Constitution guarantees the right of Iraqis to form and join unions and professional associations. However, the Iraqi transitional Government issued Decree 8750 on 8 August 2005, which froze union finances while a new law on trade unions was developed. Unfortunately the hiatus in forming a new government and Parliament has also delayed the legislative programme. The freeze on finances is therefore still in force.

Our embassy in Baghdad raised our concerns about citizens' fundamental right to form trade unions with the Iraqi Minister for Industry in September 2005 and with the Ministry of Civil Society in November 2005. We will continue to raise this issue with the new government, when it has formed.

Israeli Air Force

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 537W, what the outcome was of the UK embassy in Tel Aviv raising on 22 March 2006 the issue of the Israeli Air Force operating low-flying aircraft over the Gaza Strip. [65970]

Dr. Howells: At the meeting on 22 March 2006, our Embassy in Tel Aviv re-enforced our position on the effects of low flying aircraft. There have been no subsequent deliberate sonic booms. The last deliberate sonic boom over Gaza that we are aware of was on 2 January 2006.

Libya

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Government of Libya on the detention of women and girls for social rehabilitation. [65684]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has not discussed the detention of women and girls for social rehabilitation with the Libyan Government. As part of our human rights work with Libya, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office has funded a project providing guidance and training for senior managers and individual prison officers. The project will help to address the needs of women in Libyan prisons.

Marshall Plan

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what sums are being paid to the US Administration arising out of the Marshall Plan. [65379]

Ian Pearson: The UK completed repayment of aid loans under the Marshall Plan in 1987.

Nepal

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the extent of *(a)* extortions and abuses perpetrated by Maoist insurgents in Nepal and *(b)* the importation of explosives and detonators into Nepal by such insurgents. [64636]

Dr. Howells: The Maoists carry out widespread human rights abuses including torture, kidnap, rape, murder and extortion for money. These acts of abuse perpetrated against innocent civilians, including women and children. We condemn these acts of violence. In early April 2006 the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) reported that a large number of children were being used by the Maoists forces as helpers and porters during military operations. The OHCHR assessed that 60 civilians were abducted

during March 2006, but OHCHR had seen the return of about 14 of those who were abducted by early April 2006.

During the run up to Municipal elections in 8 February the Maoists killed at least two election candidates and abducted at least one other. Abductions and extortion continued throughout the period covered by the OHCHR report, though we have not seen a figure for such incidents.

We are aware that the Maoist have been involved in importing explosives and detonators into Nepal. The Royal Nepalese Army seized over 5,000kg of commercial explosives and in excess of 30,000 commercial detonators in separate operations, in March 2006, along the Nepal-India border. We cannot judge what proportion of the overall total of Maoist imports this represents.

Parental Access (Germany)

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions *(a)* he and *(b)* diplomatic and consular staff in Germany have had with German authorities on child custody cases in Germany where British parents experience restrictions on legitimate access. [66046]

Dr. Howells: There have been no recent discussions with the German authorities on this issue involving my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary or other Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Ministers. The FCO provides appropriate consular assistance, when requested, to British nationals involved in disputes over child residence and contact, in conjunction with the Department for Constitutional Affairs as the central authority handling cases brought under the 1980 Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction. This assistance may include consular staff contacting the relevant German authorities on individual cases. Officials have also attended meetings of a taskforce set up by the Federal Ministry of Justice in Germany to discuss such cases.

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many British parents have contacted his Department since 1990 regarding assistance with cases relating to access to children involved in custody disputes in the German courts. [66053]

Dr. Howells: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Child Abduction Section, which was established in 2003, does not have full records of all such cases since 1990. The section does, however, have records of 19 cases concerning child residence or contact disputes in Germany since 2003. seven of which are classified as disputes over access. I also refer the hon. Member to the answer given by the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mike O'Brien) to my hon. Friend the Member for Leicester, East (Keith Vaz) on 7 November 2002, *Official Report,* column 638W, that outlined child contact cases dealt with by consular staff in Germany between 1997 and 2002.

Philippines

Ms Katy Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) if he will make representations to the Philippine government concerning the parliamentarians trapped in their offices in Congress under threat of arrest; [65834]

(2) if he will make a statement on the Philippine parliamentarians who are trapped in their offices in Congress under threat of arrest. [65835]

Ian Pearson: Charges have been laid against the parliamentarians in a Regional Trial Court. In response to questions about the case, the Philippine authorities have specifically assured the diplomatic community of their commitment to, and respect for, due process for all those facing charges in respect of the events leading to the imposition of a State of National Emergency in February. Therefore, at present, my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has no plans to make representations to the Philippine government.

Sudan

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what assessment he has made of the extent of the involvement of Salah Abdullah Gosh in human rights abuses in Darfur; [65743]

(2) what assessment he has made of the impact of the relationship between Salah Abdullah Gosh and *(a)* the British security services and *(b)* the American security services on his immunity from prosecution for human rights abuses in Darfur. [65746]

Ian Pearson: We do not comment on individual cases or on intelligence matters. But the Government have made clear that there can be no impunity for any of those responsible for crimes committed in Darfur. We sponsored United Nations Security Council Resolution 1593, referring the situation in Darfur to the International Criminal Court, which has now begun its work.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Governments of *(a)* China and *(b)* Russia about the proposal to impose UN sanctions on perpetrators of violence in Darfur. [65559]

Ian Pearson: The UK is a leading proponent of sanctions against those who violate human rights or impede the peace process in Darfur. We have identified several individuals from all sides to the conflict who we believe meet this criteria, and on 12 April proposed to the Security Council that they face targeted sanctions under Resolution 1591. Since then we have held discussions on an almost daily basis with our Security Council partners, including China and Russia, on the imposition of sanctions against these individuals. We will continue to press for sanctions against these and other such individuals who meet the criteria.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what *(a)* financially and *(b)* military (i) unilateral and (ii) multilateral assistance the UK Government is prepared to give to enforce peace agreement for Darfur. [64642]

Ian Pearson: The Government stand ready to provide assistance in support of a peace agreement for Darfur. We pledged funding in excess of £250 million for humanitarian, development and other assistance to Sudan for the next two years at the Consortium Meeting in Paris in March 2006. We will allocate development, reconstruction and humanitarian assistance for Darfur once a peace agreement is reached. We are providing practical and financial support to the African Union Mission in Darfur. We have recently pledged a further £20 million, in addition to the £32 million already provided.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations the UK Government has made to the African Union on upholding the United Nations mandate in Sudan. [64645]

Ian Pearson: We welcome the decision by the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council on 10 March to support in principle hand-over of the AU Mission in Darfur to the UN and to request the Chairperson of the AU to work closely with the UN Secretary-General on joint planning. We are working with both the AU and the UN to support a smooth transition.

Terrorism (Compensation)

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what compensation is available to *(a)* British citizens who are injured in terrorist attacks abroad and *(b)* the relatives of those killed; and if he will make a statement. [65556]

Dr. Howells: Those injured abroad, or the relatives or dependants of someone killed abroad, are not currently eligible for compensation under the UK compensation schemes. The Government have been considering the issue of compensation in detail. This was made clear in a consultation paper about the criminal injuries compensation scheme and support for victims of crime which the Home Office issued on 7 December 2005, under the title "Rebuilding Lives: supporting victims of crime". The Home Office will make an announcement in due course.

My right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced in the Budget a £1 million initial endowment to a charitable fund to help the British victims of terrorism. The fund will provide rapid relief to meet the immediate financial needs of those caught up in a terrorist attack, whether in the UK or overseas. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport is working in consultation with the voluntary sector, partners in Government and victims' groups to finalise the details and will make a further announcement in due course.

Separately, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office has in place a package of immediate assistance measures to help victims of terrorism overseas and their families in the immediate aftermath of a terrorist incident overseas.

Uganda

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with his counterparts on the UN Security Council on the merits of a resolution on violence and conflict in Uganda. [65685]

Ian Pearson: The UK has been actively involved in securing two UN Security Council Resolutions in 2006 (1653 and 1663) which have condemned the activities of militias and armed groups such as the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). The LRA continue to attack civilians and UN and humanitarian personnel and commit human rights abuses in Uganda, and elsewhere in the region.

On 19 April the Ugandan Foreign and Defence Ministers briefed the UN Security Council on measures to address the humanitarian and security problems caused by the LRA. Jan Egeland, UN Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs, briefed the Security Council on 20 April following his recent trip to Uganda.

The UN Secretariat has indicated that they will brief the Security Council on possible options for tackling the LRA on 26 April. Once this has taken place we will discuss with Security Council colleagues the best way to further international community engagement on this issue.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Government of Uganda on reducing violence and conflict in Uganda. [65718]

Ian Pearson: We hold regular talks with the Government of Uganda on efforts to find a sustainable solution to the conflict in northern Uganda and alleviate the humanitarian situation for the 1.7 million people living in camps for internally displaced people.

On 20 March my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for International Development (Mr. Thomas), attended a ministerial meeting in Geneva where the conflict was discussed with the Ugandan Foreign Minister, Sam Kutesa.

On 12 April the acting British high commissioner in Kampala met the Ugandan Foreign Minister and on 19 April officials from the UK's Mission to the United Nations in New York exchanged views on northern Uganda with the Ugandan Foreign and Defence Ministers in the UN Security Council.

Uzbekistan

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps are being taken by his Department to build the capacity of *(a)* Kyrgyzstan, *(b)* Tajikistan and *(c)* Kazakhstan to cope with the economic and political consequences of possible future instability in Uzbekistan, with particular reference to (i) assistance with crisis planning, (ii) management of refugee flows, (iii) improving policing and border security, (iv) providing emergency aid and (v) reducing these countries reliance on Uzbekistan for (A) energy and (B) transport. [65687]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The EU encourages greater inter-regional co-operation through regular meetings with all of the countries of Central Asia. The most recent of these EU-Central Asia regional dialogue meetings took place in Kazakhstan on 7 April 2006. The EU supports the efforts of all the countries in the region to diversify their energy supplies. Regional transport co-operation has been identified as a key area in EU programmes in the region.

As an Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) participating State, the UK supports the work of the OSCE in Central Asia as a primary instrument for early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation. The OSCE field missions in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan are currently implementing projects related to border security, policing, trafficking and economic development. The OSCE Police Assistance Programme for Kyrgyzstan in 2006 includes coverage of the problems of refugees. The programme will include the compilation of a manual for police officers on the legal rights of refugees, training for police officers on handling refugee crises and technical equipment for police stations in the Osh border region.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps are being taken by his Department to support *(a)* independent news gathering and *(b)* (i) human rights activists and (ii) journalists operating in Uzbekistan. [65690]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Under our EU presidency, we led a sustained EU lobbying campaign on behalf of individuals in Uzbekistan who were harassed and imprisoned in relation to the events in Andizhan in May 2005. These included human rights defenders such as the journalist Saidajon Zainatbidinov from Andizhan.

Our ambassador and his team in Tashkent are in regular contact with the international press and local independent journalists, as well as non-governmental organisations and other members of civil society. We support their work through a variety of projects and through training and educational support. We made representations to the Uzbek authorities over the closure of the BBC Office, Internews and Radio Liberty. We keep in close contact with the staff of the BBC Monitoring Office in Tashkent.

Promotion of media freedom is also a key part of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe's (OSCE) mandate in Uzbekistan. The OSCE centre in Tashkent runs a media programme focusing on professional development for journalists, media development and the promotion and protection of freedom of the media.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps are being taken by his Department to support broadcasting into Uzbekistan from abroad with particular reference to news and educational programmes. [65693]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: We support a variety of activities by central and regional media outlets in the region, including media outlets in the regions bordering on Uzbekistan.

Last year under the Global Conflict Prevention Fund, we spent £165,000 on a regional media project which provided training to media outlets, supported local publications, encouraged cross border information exchange and cross community special reports, election reporting, public debates and international awareness. The project increased the regional flow of information, and strengthened local networks. Another cross border media training programme supported by the UK encouraged media exchanges between Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.

Our embassies will continue to support media development as a key area of democratic reform.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps are being taken by his Department to support journalism training in Uzbekistan and the surrounding region. [65694]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Since 2003 the Foreign and Commonwealth Office has contributed over £350,000 to a variety of media-based projects with a training component, including to promote cross-border media co-operation and strengthen the independent media in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

Our embassies work closely with the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe's (OSCE) field missions in the region. The OSCE mission in Tashkent runs a media programme focussing on professional development for journalists, media development and the promotion and protection of freedom of the media. We also support the work of the OSCE mission in Tajikistan, where there is a resource centre for journalists which provides specialist literature, training, legal advice and supports independent publications.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps are being taken by his Department to support *(a)* political activity, *(b)* civil society and *(c)* educational opportunities in Uzbekistan. [65695]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Our ambassador and his team in Tashkent meet regularly with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and other members of civil society and support their work through project funds where possible. We use the Chevening Scholarship and Fellowship programmes to provide capacity building in key areas of democratic reform.

The embassy financed the annual conference for disabled peopled NGOs in Tashkent in March. This brought together around 50 local NGOs. The embassy has also funded a project in conjunction with a local NGO and the British Council to make an educational video for school children on the effects of our everyday lives on the environment.

The British Council has been working with the Ministry of Public Education to produce a new generation of textbooks for secondary schools and to ensure that they are affordable and available to pupils around Uzbekistan.

The British Council has also been working with the Ministry of Higher and Specialised Secondary Education to build close partnerships between vocational colleges and relevant businesses or industry in the design of vocational education.

With the Ministry of Public Education, the British Council has been preparing a team of trainers representing all regions of Uzbekistan and a wide range of curriculum subjects to introduce the latest teaching techniques to teachers around the country.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment

he has made of the impact of political instability in Uzbekistan on *(a)* European security and *(b)* stability and security in central Asia. [65896]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: We continue to follow closely the political situation in Uzbekistan. As the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's new White Paper "Active Diplomacy for a Changing World" says, the peaceful transformation of the European continent which promotes security, prosperity and democracy depends upon maintaining the EU's active commitment to engage with neighbours. European countries and the wider international community have an interest in stability in Uzbekistan and the region. We believe the best way of maintaining stability in the region is by encouraging substantive democratic and economic reform.

Zimbabwe

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the human rights situation in Zimbabwe. [65652]

Ian Pearson: The human rights situation in Zimbabwe remains of great concern. We will continue to pressure the Government of Zimbabwe to restore respect for democratic values, human rights and the rule of law.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the safety of failed asylum seekers returned to Zimbabwe. [65653]

Ian Pearson: We continue to assess that individuals repatriated from the United Kingdom are not systematically singled out for abuse by the Zimbabwean authorities. Our embassy in Harare maintains close and regular links with Zimbabwean and international human rights non-governmental organisations, and other relevant institutions, to ensure that we are in the best possible position to know and take appropriate action if there are any genuine cases of failed asylum seekers being mistreated on their return.

We remain concerned at widespread human rights abuses in Zimbabwe. We will continue to provide protection to those individuals who genuinely need it through the asylum process.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with his Chinese counterpart on the level of that country's investment in Zimbabwe. [65756]

Ian Pearson: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has not discussed this subject with the Chinese Foreign Minister, although senior Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials have raised concerns about Zimbabwe with their Chinese counterparts.

The UK Permanent Representative to the UN raised our concerns about the political and economic crisis in Zimbabwe at the United Nations on 19 December 2005, when the Security Council discussed the subject for the third time. As my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary said in his Abuja speech on 14 February, we would like to see China's engagement in Africa support democratic and accountable governance and we will work closely with China to that end.

TREASURY

Avian Influenza

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the expected economic consequences of an avian influenza pandemic in the UK. [65853]

Mr. Des Browne: The Government are closely monitoring the risks posed by a potential avian influenza pandemic and is assessing all relevant aspects, including the possible economic effects.

The economic implications of an avian influenza outbreak would depend on the nature, extent and duration of an outbreak, and associated policy responses.

Births

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many live births there were in *(a)* 2002, *(b)* 2003 and *(c)* 2004 in each primary care trust in England. [65146]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated April 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your question about how many livebirths there were in *(a)* 2002, *(b)* 2003 and *(c)* 2004 in each primary care trust in England. I am replying in her absence. (65146)

The figures requested are shown in the attached table and have also been placed in the House of Commons Library. They are based on the place of mother's usual residence irrespective of where the birth occurred. To allow comparability between years, they all relate to the areas covered by primary care organisations in October 2005.

Live births by mother's usual residence 2002–04, primary care organisation areas[1] in England

Primary care organisation	*Year of birth* 2002	2003	2004
New Forest	1401	1508	1532
Norwich	1271	1367	1528
South Gloucestershire	2756	2871	2905
Havering	2257	2366	2559
Kingston	1816	1859	2041
Bromley	3401	3651	3589
Greenwich Teaching	3345	3448	3717
Barnet	4176	4332	4482
South Manchester	1626	1706	1863
Daventry and South Northamptonshire	1101	1167	1183
North Peterborough	1419	1455	1545
South Peterborough	1140	1165	1314
Tendring	1199	1212	1190
Epping Forest	1338	1410	1428
Southend on Sea	1891	1911	1944
Central Derby	1074	1173	1105
Mansfield District	1027	1074	1182
North East Lincolnshire	1688	1760	1902
Newark and Sherwood	1054	1070	1211
Hillingdon	3292	3333	3473
Airedale	1536	1509	1542
Enfield	3984	4086	4222
Barking and Dagenham	2419	2594	2751
City and Hackney Teaching	4144	4323	4423
Tower Hamlets	3844	3939	4086
Newham	4939	5103	5170
Haringey Teaching	3739	3894	4017
Blackburn with Darwen	2110	2143	2184
North Dorset	781	712	801
Bournemouth Teaching	1401	1479	1495
Bradford City Teaching	3017	3001	3003
Bradford South and West	1770	1915	1981
North Bradford	979	1069	1160
Doncaster Central	832	887	883
Central Manchester	2260	2393	2594
Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley	2539	2611	2685
Herefordshire	1565	1668	1693
Hertsmere	1084	1086	1151
Milton Keynes	2909	3171	3224
North Manchester	1772	1856	2145
South Hams and West Devon	931	959	967
Trafford South	1309	1348	1350
West Norfolk	1555	1545	1669
Solihull	1860	2042	1992
West Lincolnshire	2175	2328	2273
Lincolnshire South West Teaching	1538	1654	1723
Carlisle and District	1151	1217	1231
Eden Valley	565	615	650

Live births by mother's usual residence 2002–04, primary care organisation areas[1] in England

Primary care organisation	*Year of birth* 2002	2003	2004
West Cumbria	1232	1323	1333
Newcastle	2941	2895	2918
North Tyneside	2042	2101	2160
Hartlepool	1010	1065	1073
Harlow	1029	1094	1119
Morecambe Bay	2715	2956	2993
North Hampshire	2440	2487	2534
Isle of Wight	1078	1107	1185
West Wiltshire	1313	1389	1386
South Wiltshire	1166	1219	1244
Newbury and Community	1073	1130	1127
Reading	2541	2612	2674
Slough	1864	1983	2029
Wokingham	1637	1653	1797
Vale of Aylesbury	2299	2315	2411
Burntwood, Lichfield and Tamworth	1541	1762	1732
Wyre Forest	988	1011	1017
North East Oxfordshire	908	949	1006
Cherwell Vale	1448	1489	1490
Oxford City	1724	1836	1908
South East Oxfordshire	811	827	890
South West Oxfordshire	2241	2328	2384
North Tees	2013	2115	2117
Selby and York	2687	2769	2874
East Yorkshire	1590	1572	1669
Yorkshire Wolds and Coast	1252	1322	1367
Eastern Hull	1361	1460	1606
West Hull	1436	1510	1606
Eastern Wakefield	1878	2021	2067
Wakefield West	1431	1525	1625
Mid-Hampshire	1731	1823	1911
Chesterfield	942	1036	1061
Gedling	1073	1077	1139
Amber Valley	1166	1132	1180
North Sheffield	1535	1642	1805
North Lincolnshire	1560	1590	1665
North Eastern Derbyshire	1564	1647	1714
Melton, Rutland and Harborough	1355	1451	1410
Leicester City West	1533	1756	1877
Doncaster East	1153	1198	1226
Doncaster West	1131	1213	1316
Nottingham City	3325	3537	3518
Sheffield West	887	984	1012
Sheffield South West	1137	1224	1276
South East Sheffield	1920	2044	2059
Erewash	1211	1140	1248
Bassetlaw	1043	1078	1133
Broxtowe & Hucknall	1333	1375	1357
Greater Derby	1732	1762	1897
Eastern Leicester	2473	2614	2662
Plymouth Teaching	2574	2722	2781
Chorley and South Ribble	2088	2204	2438
West Lancashire	1066	1142	1179
Heywood and Middleton	817	825	855
Salford	2584	2632	2736
Trafford North	H65	1167	1248
Stockport	2956	2941	3154
Bebington and West Wirral	1079	1097	1128
Southport and Formby	935	1045	1029
Ashfield	942	921	970
Rushcliffe	1051	1076	1126
East Hampshire	1647	1739	1758
Portsmouth City Teaching	2187	2225	2297
South West Kent	2024	2087	2116
Bexhill and Rother	654	674	661
Hastings and St. Leonards	960	952	994
Mid-Sussex	1406	1444	1483
Bath and North East Somerset	1672	1633	1623
West of Cornwall	1530	1460	1488
South and East Dorset	1089	1214	1151
South West Dorset	1247	1227	1233
North Devon	1371	1367	1488

Live births by mother's usual residence 2002–04, primary care organisation areas[1] in England

Primary care organisation	Year of birth 2002	2003	2004
Exeter	1282	1283	1327
East Devon	854	920	947
Mid Devon	930	978	980
Somerset Coast	1230	1357	1330
Mendip	1090	1121	1165
Teignbridge	886	948	959
Southern Norfolk	1903	1970	1998
Bracknell Forest	1323	1425	1461
Windsor, Ascot and Maidenhead	1685	1746	1717
Chiltern and South Bucks	1572	1686	1710
Wycombe	1749	1769	1774
Blackwater Valley and Hart	2104	2123	2217
Hyndburn and Ribble Valley	1415	1544	1522
Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale	2819	2912	3133
North Liverpool	1317	1350	1269
Luton	3114	3085	3181
Bedford	1805	1804	1868
Bedfordshire Heartlands	2730	2798	2879
Huntingdonshire	1672	1700	1686
Welwyn Hatfield	1008	1086	1144
North Hertfordshire and Stevenage	2148	2326	2363
South East Hertfordshire	1925	1995	1999
Royston, Buntingford and Bishop's Stortford	834	831	844
Maldon and South Chelmsford	868	854	862
Colchester	1620	1727	1874
Uttlesford	720	726	718
Billericay, Brentwood and Wickford	1429	1442	1508
Thurrock	1931	1982	2062
Basildon	1402	1473	1453
Great Yarmouth	903	993	1001
Watford and Three Rivers	1947	2071	2156
Dacorum	1554	1666	1579
St. Albans and Harpenden	1693	1805	1740
Hammersmith and Fulham	2587	2558	2624
Birkenhead and Wallasey	2193	2407	2393
Cheshire West	1463	1500	1563
Central Cheshire	2629	2797	2988
Eastern Cheshire	1784	1825	1899
Ellesmere Port and Neston	868	837	856
Derbyshire Dales and South Derbyshire	1178	1254	1223
Rotherham	2734	2871	2931
East Lincolnshire	2326	2309	2492
Central Liverpool	2676	2788	2773
South Liverpool	930	965	1002
Preston	1648	1791	1862
Fylde	573	567	600
Wyre	889	984	1020
Ashton, Leigh and Wigan	3316	3381	3626
Leeds West	1336	1317	1377
Leeds North East	1177	1144	1286
East Leeds	2022	2135	2185
South Leeds	1811	1982	1986
Leeds North West	1516	1520	1597
High Peak and Dales	877	895	960
Blackpool	1403	1549	1686
Bolton	3170	3330	3403
Staffordshire Moorlands	959	1009	1023
Dudley South	2002	1975	2083
Dudley Beacon and Castle	1414	1369	1431
Newcastle-under-Lyme	862	984	1053
Ealing	4436	4480	4767
Hounslow	3251	3305	3638
Halton	1356	1458	1544
Warrington	2208	2203	2291
St. Helens	1809	1969	1980
Knowsley	1734	1736	1898
Oldham	3053	3093	3195
Calderdale	2220	2344	2466
North Kirklees	2483	2568	2584
Durham Dales	832	827	955
Darlington	1139	1179	1254
Hinckley and Bosworth	1138	1251	1282

Live births by mother's usual residence 2002–04, primary care organisation areas[1] in England

Primary care organisation	*Year of birth* 2002	2003	2004
Charnwood and North West Leicestershire	2442	2539	2577
South Leicestershire	1610	1629	1666
Barnsley	2340	2409	2527
Bristol North	2754	2884	3103
Bristol South and West	1954	2139	2176
Cambridge City	1036	1073	1185
South Cambridgeshire	1481	1512	1510
East Cambridgeshire and Fenland	1506	1670	1551
Broadland	1100	1157	1150
North Norfolk	735	780	798
Chelmsford	1356	1441	1429
Castle Point and Rochford	1505	1600	1634
Ipswich	1672	1773	1913
Suffolk Coastal	787	919	876
Central Suffolk	885	968	1048
Waveney	1159	1247	1208
Suffolk West	2385	2526	2613
Bury	2098	2180	2320
Rochdale	1827	1872	1919
South Somerset	1448	1529	1511
Taunton Deane	1062	1098	1093
Swindon	2326	2404	2479
Kennet and North Wiltshire	2215	2341	2248
Brent Teaching	4153	4375	4326
Harrow	2564	2848	2870
Camden	2841	2944	3047
Islington	2508	2671	2676
Croydon	4370	4589	4869
Derwentside	840	874	899
Durham and Chester-le-Street	1352	1330	1342
Easington	987	921	1103
Sedgefield	892	974	1045
Gateshead	2012	2023	2128
South Tyneside	1467	1523	1540
Hambleton and Richmondshire	1143	1251	1212
Craven, Harrogate and Rural District	1982	1961	2022
Scarborough, Whitby and Ryedale	1377	1493	1548
Sunderland Teaching	2930	3012	2971
Middlesbrough	2140	2233	2323
Langbaurgh	912	1000	1035
East Elmbridge and Mid Surrey	2800	2922	2885
East Surrey	1804	1937	1891
North and East Cornwall	1340	1424	1449
Central Cornwall	1708	1792	1839
Poole	1655	1804	1877
Cheltenham and Tewkesbury	1610	1655	1670
West Gloucestershire	2492	2565	2532
Cotswold and Vale	1755	1866	1815
Southampton City	2484	2556	2603
Maidstone Weald	2606	2739	2757
Medway	3259	3261	3265
Swale	1132	1103	1163
Guildford and Waverley	2263	2349	2492
North Surrey	2231	2430	2375
Surrey Heath and Woking	2439	2594	2548
Adur, Arun and Worthing	2102	2184	2292
Western Sussex	1773	1908	1972
Kensington and Chelsea	2156	2237	2204
Westminster	2551	2764	2734
Lambeth	4377	4787	4752
Southwark	4138	4346	4453
Lewisham	3845	3932	4072
Wandsworth	4080	4359	4345
Tameside and Glossop	2738	2813	2973
Huddersfield Central	1720	1823	1884
South Huddersfield	817	864	921
Ashford	1292	1334	1309
Canterbury and Coastal	1618	1671	1619
Bury	2098	2180	2320
Rochdale	1827	1872	1919
South Somerset	1448	1529	1511
Taunton Deane	1062	1098	1093

Live births by mother's usual residence 2002–04, primary care organisation areas[1] in England

Primary care organisation	*Year of birth* 2002	2003	2004
Swindon	2326	2404	2479
Kennet and North Wiltshire	2215	2341	2248
Brent Teaching	4153	4375	4326
Harrow	2564	2848	2870
Camden	2841	2944	3047
Islington	2508	2671	2676
Croydon	4370	4589	4869
Derwentside	840	874	899
Durham and Chester-le-Street	1352	1330	1342
Easington	987	921	1103
Sedgefield	892	974	1045
Gateshead	2012	2023	2128
South Tyneside	1467	1523	1540
Hambleton and Richmondshire	1143	1251	1212
East Kent Coastal	2290	2385	2479
Shepway	975	985	1031
Brighton and Hove City	2740	3043	2901
Eastbourne Downs	1511	1634	1642
Sussex Downs and Weald	1405	1511	1514
Northamptonshire Heartlands	3144	3311	3453
Northampton	2598	2809	2758
Fareham and Gosport	1854	1944	2023
Eastleigh and Test Valley South	1600	1634	1717
South Birmingham	4073	4441	4499
Shropshire County	2740	2837	2751
Walsall Teaching	3238	3337	3417
South Sefton	1573	1712	1698
Richmond and Twickenham	2413	2548	2584
Sutton and Merton	4665	4982	5049
North Somerset	1905	1921	2044
Rugby	968	990	1044
Crawley	1269	1326	1372
Horsham and Chanctonbury	1036	1047	1099
Coventry Teaching	3610	3801	3987
North Stoke	1474	1531	1674
South Stoke	1450	1480	1626
Oldbury and Smethwick	1255	1339	1379
Rowley Regis and Tipton	1274	1269	1356
Wednesbury and West Bromwich	1271	1351	1369
Telford and Wrekin	1921	1912	2096
East Staffordshire	1317	1321	1380
Cannock Chase	1389	1432	1400
South Western Staffordshire	1656	1738	1932
North Warwickshire	1908	1951	2128
South Warwickshire	2425	2448	2599
Redditch and Bromsgrove	1740	1779	1972
South Worcestershire	2805	2980	2989
Wolverhampton City	2805	3055	3069
North Birmingham	1632	1753	1868
Heart of Birmingham Teaching	5759	5958	5913
Eastern Birmingham	3134	3173	3440
Redbridge	3230	3377	3483
Waltham Forest	3566	3769	3957
Northumberland	2762	2934	2952
Witham, Braintree and Halstead	1539	1578	1666
Bexley	2517	2638	2699
Torbay	1152	1267	1292
England[2]	585709	589851	607184

[1] For comparability, 2005 PCO boundaries are used for all years of birth.

[2] The England totals differ slightly from the sum of the PCOs (by 2 for 2002 and by 1 for 2004) because of the use of 2005-based postcode assignment.

Child Tax Credit

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the savings to the Exchequer from tapering away the family element of the child tax credit for incomes between £30,000 and £38,000; and if he will make a statement. [63406]

Dawn Primarolo: The current second income threshold is £50,000. The estimated saving from reducing the second income threshold to £30,000, holding all other rates constant, is £0.8 billion. Around 1.5 million families would see their tax credit award reduced as a result of such a change.

Combined Cadet Forces

Mr. George Howarth: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what discussions he has had with Defence Ministers on plans to create branches of the Combined Cadet Force in state schools which he announced in February 2006. [65829]

Mr. Des Browne: Treasury Ministers have discussions with Defence Ministers on a variety of issues on a regular basis.

Council Tax

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 9 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 1419W, to the hon. Member for Meriden (Mrs. Spelman), on council tax, on what dates each of the current 66 value significant codes were first collected [54530]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

Value significant codes (VSCs) record the existence of a feature that may affect value—but whether a particular feature does affect value in any individual case is a question of fact or degree.

The capability to input VSCs electronically was introduced from March 2003, at which time there were 13 codes. These were expanded to 66 in January 2005. Information about features that are "value significant" has always been collected as part of the process of arriving at fair bandings for council tax purposes, but has not previously been recorded electronically. However there is no mass data collection process under way, nor are VSCs being used to amend existing council tax bands.

EU Budget

Mr. Cash: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he will be in a position to introduce the legislation necessary to implement the EU budget agreed on 15 and 16 December 2005. [65811]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the reply given on 31 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 400W, to the hon. Member for Castle Point (Bob Spink).

Gold Sales

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the loss on gold sales by the Bank of England since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [65097]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The decision to rebalance the reserves portfolio by selling gold was a long-term investment decision not a short-term attempt to play the market. Reducing the riskiness of the portfolio can only be assessed meaningfully in the medium to long term because short-term fluctuations in assets prices could mask the benefits of risk reduction.

Income Tax

Andrew George: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the number of people with *(a)* salaries and *(b)* income generating business who did not earn enough to pay income tax in each of the last 10 years for which records are available. [63876]

Dawn Primarolo: The estimated number of people with self-employment income who have no income tax liability is shown in the following table for the period 1996–97 to 2005–06. Data on the number of employees who did not earn enough to pay income tax are not held.

Thousand

Year[1]	*Number of self-employed non-taxpayers*[2]
1996–97	606
1997–98	638
1998–99	642
1999–2000	747
2000–01	614
2001–02	863
2002–03	884
2003–04	822
2004–05[3]	774
2005–06[3]	779

[1] Estimates obtained from the survey of personal incomes. Estimates for later years should be more accurate and subject to less sampling variation, due to the sample size of the survey increasing from around 50,000 in 1996–97 to over 400,000 by 2002–03.

[2] A person can be both employed and self-employed in the tax year.

[3] Estimates from the 2003–04 survey of personal incomes and projected forward in line with March 2006 Budget assumptions.

London Olympics

Philip Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what systems are in place to collect tax from foreign contractors used for work on the 2012 Olympics. [64818]

Dawn Primarolo: The systems and rules for foreign contractors used on Olympics related projects are the same as those for foreign contractors working on non-Olympics related projects.

Lung Cancer

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many new cases of lung cancer there have been in each of the last six years, broken down by region. [64614]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 26 April 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how many new cases of lung cancer there have been in each of the last six years, broken down by region. [64614]

The most recent available figures for newly diagnosed cases (incidence) of cancer are for 2003. Figures by Government Office Region for the years 1998–2003 are given in the attached table.

Newly diagnosed cases of lung cancer[1] by Government office region, 1998–2003

Government office region	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
North East	2,454	2,448	2,292	2,356	2,335	2,214
North West	5,364	5,365	5,326	5,113	4,997	5,171
Yorkshire and The Humber	3,765	3,640	3,718	3,611	3,650	3,635
East Midlands	2,497	2,632	2,621	2,535	2,463	2,505
West Midlands	3,291	3,338	3,161	3,105	3,146	3,128
East of England	2,954	3,028	2,841	2,885	2,965	2,810
London	4,120	3,873	3,983	3,734	3,537	3,570
South East	4,495	4,454	4,365	4,298	4,177	4,081
South West	2,721	3,068	2,783	2,903	2,708	2,688

[1] International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes C33-C34.

Source:
Office for National Statistics

Ministerial Flights

Nick Harvey: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether air passenger duty is payable on ministerial flights on official business. [64968]

John Healey: Air passenger duty (APD) is payable by aircraft operators that are defined as Air Transport Undertakings under the Air Navigation Order 1982. APD is charged on the number of passengers on board a chargeable aircraft on departure from a UK airport. This includes ministerial flights on official business when commercial flights are used.

Full details of eligibility to pay APD are set out in HM Revenue and Customs Public Notice 550, which is available on their website (www.hmrc.gov.uk)

Online Goods Declaration

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people used the free online service by which traders can declare goods to HM Revenue and Customs in each of the last five years for which records are available. [65858]

Dawn Primarolo: HMRC provide a range of on line communications channels for which we do not charge, enabling our customers or their representatives to submit declarations to us in a way that best suits their business needs. CHIEF is our main frame computer for the processing of third country import/export declarations, it is used by 150,000 customers or their representatives and processes in excess of 20,000,000 declarations per annum—trade take up of our electronic CHIEF services is 99.9 per cent.. Channels to CHIEF include EDI/e-mail, a web service and XML for exports. We also maintain a manual presentation facility for those that are not e-enabled.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment was made of commercial companies already operating in the same field before HM Revenue and Customs launched the free online declaration service. [65860]

Dawn Primarolo: HMRC have an established and comprehensive customer consultation programme. HMRC have actively engaged with individuals and representatives of all those working in the online services area and customers who use the services provided. Ongoing consultation is an essential element of the HMRC online and EU Change programmes, providing suppliers and users with the opportunity to comment on and shape our technical products. Communications mediums/routes are implemented in accordance with our Channels Strategy, focussing on meeting customer needs and making it easier for our customers to comply whilst driving take up of online services.

Parish Councils

Mr. Todd: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will ensure that parish meetings have the same VAT status in relation to works carried out on their behalf as parish councils. [65663]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Parish meetings, unlike parish councils, are not regarded as local authorities. The question of extending the VAT relief given to local authorities to parish meetings has been looked at many times. In general, the amounts of tax involved would be exceeded by the cost of administration and processing each claim. For this reason, successive Governments have concluded that a change in the law would result in disproportionate costs and could not be justified.

I have instructed my officials to explore with parish meetings, relevant representative bodies and other stakeholders whether this remains the case.

However, a different solution is possible. I understand that, under Section 9 of the Local Government Act 1972, a parish meeting can request its district council to establish a parish council for the parish, which is able to recover VAT under the provisions of Section 33 of the VAT Act 1994.

Pensions (Tax Relief)

Chris Huhne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) if he will estimate the number of people who would be affected if pension contributions were allowable for tax relief only against the basic rate of income tax; [65763]

(2) if he will estimate the effect on Government revenues of allowing relief on pension contributions only at the basic rate of income tax. [65764]

Dawn Primarolo: Around 2½ million taxpayers would be affected if tax relief on their pension contributions were limited to the basic rate of income tax.

The estimated yield from restricting income tax relief on employee and self-employed pension contributions to the basic rate is £1.5 billion in 2004–05. The yield from restricting employer contributions is around £3 billion. This estimate assumes that the proportion of total employer contributions relating to higher rate taxpayers is the same as that for employees. The estimates take no account of any behavioural effects that are likely to result from such rule changes. Nor do they account for any knock-on implications for the taxation of pension payments should full relief on contributions be withdrawn.

The information is based on the 2003–04 Survey of Personal Incomes projected to 2004–05.

PFI/PPP Contracts

Adam Price: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in Table 1.10 and Tables 8.10 of Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses 2005, Cm 6521, the capital includes the capital expenditure elements of private finance initiative and public private partnership contracts. [63046]

Mr. Des Browne: PFI/PPP deals may be on or off the government's balance sheet depending on where the balance of risks in the project lies. The decision as to whether a deal is treated as on or off balance sheet is taken by the National Audit Office in the case of central government projects, and the Audit Commission in the instance of local government projects.

Where the NAO or Audit Commission judge that projects are on balance sheet, Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses (PESA) capital expenditure includes the capital expenditure imputed to the public sector, where appropriate for the coverage of each statistical table. For off balance sheet projects, where the asset economically as well as legally belongs to the private sector, the capital expenditure is the private sector's and is not included in PESA 2005, the same as in previous years.

Public Sector Pensions

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the Answer of 2 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 388, on public sector pensions, and the technical note placed in the Library, if he will break down the amount referred to in paragraph 8 by scheme; how the error came to be made; and what steps have been taken to prevent a recurrence. [61347]

Mr. Des Browne: Prior Year Adjustments of £6 billion recorded in the scheme accounts for 2004–05 break down as follows:

	£ billion
Armed Forces Pension Scheme	-0.4
NHS Pension Scheme (E&W)	3.0
NHS Pension Scheme (Scotland)	3.5
Teachers Pension Scheme (E&W)	-0.5
Total	5.6

These adjustments arise because new data became available which were not taken into account in earlier estimates. These primarily related to deferred pensions and guaranteed minimum pensions in NHSPS (England and Wales). Details for the other schemes are given in their resource accounts: Armed Forces (HC 286), Teachers Pension Scheme (HC 627).

Responsibility for NHSPS (Scotland) is devolved to the Scottish Parliament.

Schemes keep their data and administration systems under regular review.

Road Fuel Prices

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent representations he has received requesting that the price of *(a)* petrol and *(b)* diesel be reduced; and if he will make a statement. [65258]

John Healey: The Chancellor receives many representations on a wide range of subjects including fuel duty levels.

These are considered carefully in the context of his Budget statement.

Smuggling (Northern Ireland)

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many prosecutions there were in relation to cross-border fuel smuggling in Northern Ireland in the 2005–06 financial year; how many prosecutions were successful; what the names were of the persons prosecuted in cases in which all proceedings are complete; and what penalties were imposed. [65155]

John Healey: The latest details of prosecutions were published in HMRC Annual Report 2004–05 in which the prosecution details relate to all types of hydrocarbon oils fraud and smuggling, including cross-border smuggling. Prosecution figures for 2005–06 will be published in HMRC's Annual Report 2005–06.

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many fuel tankers were seized in Northern Ireland in the 2005–06 financial year as a result of fuel smuggling. [65156]

John Healey: The HM Revenue and Customs Annual Report records the total number of vehicles seized as a consequence of fuel related offences. This number is not broken down into sub categories. The Annual Report for 2005–06 has not yet been published.

Stamp Duty

Mr. Todd: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer for what period the stamp duty lease calculator was unavailable to users as a consequence of the Budget; and if he will make a statement. [65668]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The online Stamp Duty Land Tax (SDLT) lease calculator tool, available through HMRC's website and offering customers an indicative calculation of the SDLT charge on the grant of a new lease, was temporarily withdrawn for 12 working days following the Chancellor's Budget Statement on 22 March 2006. The Budget change raised the starting Stamp Duty Land Tax threshold of 1 per cent. from £120,000 to £125,000 for all residential transactions including the grant of a new lease. The calculator required revisions to ensure it provided a robust service

for those customers who needed it. While the lease duty calculator was offline HMRC invited practitioners to phone their enquiry line where their operators would make the calculation for them.

Mr. Todd: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many penalties were issued for delays in filing stamp duty returns in each year since 2001. [65669]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Inland Revenue (since April 2005, HMRC) has issued the following number of penalties on late-filed stamp duty and stamp duty land tax cases as follows:

	Number
2001–02	20,609
2002–03	14,916
2003–04	6,889
2004–05	82,302
2005–06	161,016

Mr. Todd: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many penalties were issued for delays in filing stamp duty returns in 2004–05 where the subsequent filing demonstrated stamp duty payable to be nil. [65670]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: In 2004–05 the Inland Revenue issued 82,302 penalty notices for late filed stamp duty land tax (SDLT) and stamp duty cases. The Inland Revenue did not record how many of those notices were for transactions where the SDLT or stamp duty payable was nil.

Mr. Todd: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what representations he has received on the *(a)* functionality and *(b)* ease of completion of stamp duty returns; and if he will make a statement. [65671]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Both issues are regularly reviewed by practitioners and HMRC in the Stamp Tax Working Together Group. Changes made in the summer of 2005, as a result of discussions with the law societies, were welcomed by, for example, the Law Society of England and Wales. Use of HMRC's online filing facility provides the simplest and quickest method of completing Stamp Duty Land Tax Returns.

Suicide Statistics

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many individuals have died as a consequence of their ulnar artery being severed in each year since 1997. [65172]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 26 April 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how many individuals have died as a consequence of their ulnar arteries being severed in each year from 1997. (65172)

The most recent year for which figures are available is 2004. The attached table shows the number of deaths where the main injury was to the ulnar artery in England and Wales for the years 1997 to 2004.

Number of deaths from injury to the ulnar artery[1], England and Wales, 1997 to 2004[2]

	Number of deaths
1997	0
1998	1
1999	0
2000	0
2001	2
2002	1
2003	1
2004	1

[1] The cause of death was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9) code 903.3 for the years 1997 to 2000, and the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes S55.0 and S65.0 for the years 2001 to 2004.

[2] Figures are for deaths occurring in each calendar year.

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many individuals died as a consequence of suicide through the slitting of a wrist or wrists in each year from 1997. [65193]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 26 April 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how many individuals died as a consequence of suicide through the slitting of a wrist or wrists in each year from 1997. (65193)

The most recent year for which figures are available for England and Wales is 2004. It is not possible to tabulate mortality data that exactly fits the cause of death category requested. The closest, shown in the attached table, contains the number of deaths with an underlying cause of suicide or injury of undetermined intent from contact with a sharp object by type of injury sustained for the years 1997 to 2004.

Number of deaths from suicide and injury of undetermined intent from contact with a sharp object[1] by injury sustained, England and Wales, 1997 to 2004[2]

ICD-9	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*
Injury to other and unspecified blood vessels of upper extremity	0	1	0	1
Injury to radial blood vessels	3	1	2	5
Multiple and unspecified open wound of upper limb	1	4	2	2
Open wound of elbow, forearm or wrist	16	26	25	32
Other injury	57	58	57	59
Total[3]	77	90	86	99

ICD-10	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Injury of blood vessels at forearm level	9	2	5	6
Injury of blood vessels at wrist and hand level	2	3	5	2
Open wound of forearm	1	3	1	6
Open wound of wrist and hand	10	12	20	23
Other injury	66	85	95	91
Total[3]	88	105	126	128

[1] The underlying cause of death was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9) codes E956 and E986 for the years 1997 to 2000 and the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes XI8 and Y28 for the years 2001 to 2004.

[2] Figures are for deaths occurring in each calendar year.

[3] All suicides using sharp objects, irrespective of where the cut was made.

Sun Lotion (VAT)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make representations to the EU to enable him to introduce a zero rate of VAT on sun lotion. [64776]

Dawn Primarolo: Under agreements with our European partners we can keep our existing VAT zero rates, but we may not extend them or introduce new ones. This is the case for all member states that retain zero rates. It is therefore not possible to introduce a zero rate of VAT for sun lotion.

Tax Credits

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when *(a)* HM Revenue and Customs officials and *(b)* Ministers were first made aware of identity fraud in the tax credit system; and how many suspected cases of identity fraud there were as of (i) 31 March 2005, (ii) 30 June 2005 and (iii) 30 September 2005. [58460]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Gentleman to my written answer of 10 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 550–51W, and my letter to the Treasury Committee of 9 March. Information relating to suspected cases of identity fraud is not held in the form requested.

Taxation

Mr. Rooney: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he plans to *(a)* calculate and *(b)* publish marginal tax rate tables for disabled people. [66067]

Dawn Primarolo: Information on the number of all taxpayers in each income tax band can be found at http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/income_tax/2_1_dec05.pdf.

This table uses data from the Survey of Personal Incomes (SPI). It is not possible to replicate this table for disabled people only because the SPI does not collect information on whether someone is disabled or not.

However, with the exception of those eligible for blind person's allowance in income tax, disabled people face the same marginal income tax rates as non-disabled people for a given level of taxable income.

NORTHERN IRELAND

IRA

9. **David Simpson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what recent assessment he has made of the IRA's commitment to exclusively peaceful and democratic means. [64532]

Mr. Woodward: The IMC Report published earlier today states it is

> "their absolutely clear view that the IRA leadership has committed itself to following a peaceful path."

Decommissioning

11. **Angela Watkinson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the quantity of arms and explosives put beyond use by the Provisional IRA in each of the acts of decommissioning that took place between October 2001 and September 2005. [64534]

Mr. Hain: In September last year the IICD witnessed a momentous act of decommissioning, and declared in January that "all the arms under [the IRA's] control were decommissioned in September", under its supervision.

The 10th Report of the Independent Monitoring Commission published earlier today states that any weapons reported as having been retained "would have been withheld under local control despite the instructions of the leadership". It goes on to say that "the amount of un-surrendered material was not significant in comparison to what was decommissioned."

Northern Ireland Executive

12. **Mr. Gauke:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make it a condition for all parties serving in the Northern Ireland Executive to make a declaration of support for the police. [64535]

Mr. Hanson: The pledge of office which all Ministers must affirm before taking up posts already requires a commitment to non-violence and exclusively peaceful and democratic means.

In addition, amendments to the Northern Ireland Act 1998 to facilitate consideration of Independent Monitoring Commission recommendations provide sufficient safeguards where Ministers and parties fail to observe the pledge of office.

13. **Mr. Hollobone:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to bring forward proposals to revise the pledge of office in the Northern Ireland Act 1998 for Ministers serving in the Northern Ireland Executive. [64536]

Mr. Hanson: We would consider legislating to amend the pledge of office as part of a package of changes to the Strands 1–3 institutions of the Belfast Agreement in the context of a commitment by all to enter an inclusive power-sharing Executive.

Victims Commissioner

14. **Mr. Ian Austin:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether he plans to appoint a permanent Victims Commissioner when the current interim appointment comes to an end. [64537]

Angela E. Smith: The Government will bring forward legislation to establish the post of Commissioner for Victims and Survivors. The appointment of the Commissioner will be made as soon as practicable after the legislation comes into force. The appointment will be subject to the public appointment process.

Ageing Initiative

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what his assessment is of the effectiveness to date of the ageing in an inclusive society initiative. [65330]

Angela E. Smith: The older people's strategy, "Ageing in an Inclusive Society", which was launched in March 2005, includes an implementation plan for 2005–06

which identifies actions for Northern Ireland Government Departments aimed at, amongst other things, improving the services of older people.

Good progress has been made throughout the year on implementing these actions and a mid-year progress report was placed in the Libraries of the House. The Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister is carrying out an end of year review and will publish a report on the Department's website. Copies of the report will also be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Avian Influenza

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many dead *(a)* wild and *(b)* domesticated birds have been tested for avian influenza in Northern Ireland in each of the past 12 months. [64978]

Angela E. Smith: For the period April 2005 to March 2006 the figures requested are as follows:

Year/month	*Number of dead wild birds tested*	*Number of dead domesticated birds tested*
2005		
April	0	0
May	0	0
June	0	49
July	1	28
August	7	29
September	0	23
October	2	20
November	44	14
December	21	46
2006		
January	8	3
February	31	14
March	9	10

All test results were negative for avian influenza.

Civil Servants (Welfare Rating)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many civil servants have been given a welfare rating on transfer lists in each Department in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [63451]

Angela E. Smith: The information requested is set out in the following table:

Department	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
DHSSPS	0	1	2	4	3
DETI	0	1	0	4	2
DCAL	0	1	1	0	2
DE	2	3	1	1	4
DOE	2	3	6	16	7
DARD	4	12	17	15	20
DEL	6	1	8	6	12
DRD	3	6	12	9	6
DSD	7	9	3	12	19
DFP	1	8	9	4	2
NIO	3	7	8	5	2

Notes:
The figures relate to staff whose names are currently held on the Central Transfer List, together with the years in which they were awarded their respective welfare ratings. Records are not held for those staff who were awarded such ratings and whose transfer requests were subsequently accommodated.

Craigavon Divisional Planning Office

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps are being taken by his Department to assist staff dealing with the applications backlog at Craigavon Divisional Planning Office. [64193]

Angela E. Smith: The Planning Service as a whole has been facing unprecedented operational pressures due to a growth in the number of planning applications received. However, steps are being taken to address those pressures in the short, medium and long-term through the Modernisation and Reform programme.

Since the introduction of revised council consultation procedures last October, across the Agency the number of deferred cases has dropped significantly (by 47 per cent.) and this has released staff time to tackle the live caseload (down by 11 per cent.) and to issue decisions, up 11 per cent. on the same period last year. (Up-dated to the end of February 2006)

In addition, a new procedure to return all invalid planning applications was introduced in Craigavon Divisional Planning Office on 27 February 2006. The new procedure is aimed at improving the quality of applications being made and to help ensure that applications progress smoothly through the system without delay. This will be rolled out across the Agency over coming months.

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when staff vacancies at Craigavon divisional planning office will be filled. [64194]

Angela E. Smith: There are currently two substantive vacancies within the Craigavon divisional planning office and it is anticipated that these will be filled within the next four to six weeks. The planning service management board will continue to monitor the situation and take whatever action is possible to ensure that the Craigavon office has adequate resources to deal with the volume of applications it receives.

Disabled People

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the number of households in Northern Ireland which have at least one adult with a disability living in the home. [65410]

Angela E. Smith: For the financial year 2004–05 the proportion of households with at least one adult with a limiting long-standing illness was 38 per cent.

Domestic Rates

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people in Northern Ireland receive a reduction in their domestic rates assessment on account of their disability; and how this assessment is arrived at. [65409]

Angela E. Smith: During 2005–06 just over 8,000 domestic rate payers in Northern Ireland were awarded disabled persons allowance reducing their rates.

Entitlement to disabled persons allowance depends upon how much the property has been altered or adapted to meet the disabled persons needs, that the disabled person lives in the property and that they are a person to whom section 1 of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons (Northern Ireland) Act 1978 applies.

Properties are inspected to assess the extent of any alternations or adaptations made and to confirm that they are for the benefit of the disabled person. The rateable valuation of such property in the valuation list is reduced accordingly thereby reducing the rate liability.

Driver and Vehicle Testing Agency

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the *(a)* costs and *(b)* receipts were of the driver and vehicle testing agency in each of the last five years. [64190]

Angela E. Smith: The following table details *(a)* costs and *(b)* receipts for the Driver and Vehicle Testing Agency in each of the last five years.

£000

	Income	*Costs*
2000–01	11,261	12,240
2001–02	13,285	12,933
2002–03	18,006	16,816
2003–04	21,454	20,276
2004–05	20,526	21,299

Education and Library Boards

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much has been allocated by each education and library board in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [63386]

Angela E. Smith: The following tables show the funding (recurrent and capital) allocated to each of the education and library boards by the three funding Departments, Department of Education (DE), Department of Culture Arts and Leisure (DCAL) and Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) in the last five financial years i.e. 2001–02 to 2005–06 inclusive.

2005–06 (Final allocation)

	BELB	*NEELB*	*SEELB*	*SELB*	*WELB*	*£ million Total*
Recurrent	220.2	281.2	250.5	296.1	299.9	1,347.9
Capital	10.0	16.7	21.7	16.2	12.7	77.3
Total	230.2	297.9	272.2	312.3	312.6	1425.2

2004–05 (Final allocation)

	BELB	*NEELB*	*SEELB*	*SELB*	*WELB*	*£ million Total*
Recurrent	208.2	261.2	235.3	274.5	284.8	1,264.0
Capital	7.7	14.6	25.8	16.0	21.9	86.0
Total	215.9	275.8	261.1	290.5	306.7	1,350.0

2003–04 (Final allocation)

	BELB	*NEELB*	*SEELB*	*SELB*	*WELB*	*£ million Total*
Recurrent	211.4	265.4	232.9	271.5	258.4	1,239.6
Capital	12.5	13.9	14.3	11.6	13.3	65.6
Total	223.9	279.3	247.2	283.1	271.7	1,305.2

2002–03 (Final allocation)

	BELB	*NEELB*	*SEELB*	*SELB*	*WELB*	*£ million Total*
Recurrent	202.3	246.2	222.5	252.6	234.6	1,158.2
Capital	8.0	12.8	17.8	9.1	12.5	60.2
Total	210.3	259.0	240.3	261.7	247.1	1,218.4

2001–02 (Final allocation)

	BELB	*NEELB*	*SEELB*	*SELB*	*WELB*	*£ million Total*
Recurrent	186.4	222.2	201.9	233.1	220.9	1,064.5
Capital	4.6	10.2	18.2	10.4	7.0	50.4
Total	191.0	232.4	220.1	243.5	227.9	1114.9

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many staff are employed centrally by each of the education and library boards in Northern Ireland in *(a)* human resources, payroll and finance, *(b)* procurement, *(c)* ICT, *(d)* legal services and *(e)* other roles. [65931]

Angela E. Smith: The following table shows the numbers of staff employed centrally by each of the education and library boards in the functions requested. Figures given have been provided by the boards and relate to full-time equivalent staff employed in headquarters administration (central) functions. They do not therefore include staff employed in the direct provision of education and youth services or staff employed in schools.

Number

	Human resources, payroll and finance	*Procurement*	*ICT*	*Legal services*	*Other*
BELB	71.5	7.8	10.8	2.6	109.1
NEELB	89	9.6	14.3	6	75.6
SELB	108.3	16.7	13.5	4	118.6
SEELB	82	7	7	3	96
WELB	49	11.6	8	5	73.5

Note:
These figures include staff employed by a lead board to carry out services on behalf of all five boards.

Efficiency Initiatives

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what efficiency initiatives have been implemented in each Northern Ireland department in each of the last five years. [63485]

Angela E. Smith: Over the last five years Northern Ireland departments have implemented a wide range of efficiency initiatives. Those implemented in 2005–06 are included in efficiency technical notes posted on departmental websites and a summary of initiatives implemented in the preceding four years has been placed in the Library.

Electricity and Rates Arrears

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much is owed in *(a)* electricity and *(b)* rates arrears in (i) Northern Ireland and (ii) each council area of Northern Ireland. [63443]

Angela E. Smith: The following table sets out rate arrears at 31 March 2005. These have been extracted from the Rate Collection Agency's annual report and financial statements for 2004–05.

Final figures for 2005–06 will not be available until June 2006. A copy of the agency's annual report and financial statements for 2005–06 will be sent directly to the hon. Member after it has been laid in the Houses of Parliament in July 2006.

A total of approximately £8,958,000 was owed in electricity arrears across all categories of customers in Northern Ireland at 28 February 2006. A breakdown of this figure on a council area basis could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

District	*Arrears (£)*
01 Antrim	890,622.48
02 Ards	1,191,944.76
03 Armagh	986,109.90
04 Ballymena	663,895.91
05 Ballymoney	462,573.06
06 Banbridge	426,555.60
07 Belfast	11,104,946.89
08 Carrickfergus	545,775.83
09 Castlereagh	832,967.85
10 Colereaine	879,310.98
11 Cookstown	438,003.88
12 Craigavon	1,468,497.35
13 Derry	2,267,498.65
14 Down	1,075,918.76
15 Dungannon	667,455.72
16 Fermanagh	738,798.86
17 Larne	461,106.98
18 Limavady	398,889.88
19 Lisburn	2,677,094.23
20 Magherafelt	419,666.77
21 Moyle	191,652.56
22 Newry	1,884,593.20
23 Newtownabbey	1,729,339.91
24 North Down	1,394,796.36
25 Omagh	772,724.23
26 Strabane	615,441.54
Total rate arrears	35,196,182.14

Farming (Funding Schemes)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many awards have been made in Northern Ireland under the Farm Nutrient Management Scheme; and what the total cost was, broken down by council area. [65366]

Angela E. Smith: 411 approvals have issued. The total grant cost is £12,259,505. The Department only records scheme data by county area and not by council area. The figures broken down by county area are as follows:

County	*Approvals issued*	*Total grant cost (£)*
Antrim	105	3,098,218
Armagh	40	1,338,194
Down	56	2,004,693
Fermanagh	49	1,042,517
Derry	52	1,499,961
Tyrone	109	3,275,922

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many awards were made in Northern Ireland under the Organic Farming (Conversion of Animal Housing) Scheme in 2005–06; and how much of the budget was unspent. [65367]

Angela E. Smith: Of the 76 approved projects under the Organic Farming (Conversion of Animal Housing) Scheme, 34 received payments during the financial year

in 2005–06. Although the entire £2 million budget for the scheme has been allocated, some £1.12 million remained unclaimed at 31 March 2006 due to difficulties experienced in completing approved projects and submitting claims for payment by that date. The date for completion was therefore extended to 31 March 2007.

Festivals

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 21 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 206W, on festivals, what steps he has taken to ensure equality of funding for cultural events for all community backgrounds. [63453]

Mr. Hanson: The Community Festivals Fund, which became operational on 1 April 2006, has been publicly advertised and is open to any organisation to apply. It introduces core criteria that must be satisfied before an event can receive financial support from the Fund. Amongst other requirements, festival organisers must demonstrate their commitment to promoting social cohesion, social inclusion, equality of opportunity and good relations.

Grievance Procedures

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many grievance procedures have been initiated in each department and government agency in Northern Ireland in each of the last three years. [63471]

Angela E. Smith: The Northern Ireland Civil Service Grievance Procedure deals with grievances arising from a Civil Servant's employment. However there are separate procedures for appeals against non-selection for a promotion board, appeals against a marking in an annual performance review, complaints about harassment or bullying, disciplinary matters, and matters raised under the Northern Ireland Civil Service Code of Ethics or Public Interest Disclosure legislation.

Details of grievances initiated under the Grievance Procedure in each of the NI Government Departments and Agencies and the NIO in 2003, 2004 and 2005 are given in the table below. The figures given are those cases escalated for resolution to Departmental Personnel Divisions, as records are not readily available for grievances resolved with line management at the early stages of the procedure. Details are provided separately for the Child Support Agency (CSA), The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA), the Driver and Vehicle Testing Agency (DVTA), the Environment and Heritage Service (EHS), the Planning Service and the Social Security Agency (SSA). Cases in other Government Agencies are included in the figures for the relevant Department.

Department/Agency	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*Total*
CSA	0	0	6	6
DARD	1	2	6	9
DCAL	1	0	1	2
DE	0	1	3	4
DEL	0	0	3	3
DETI	0	0	1	1

Department/Agency	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*Total*
DFP	0	2	3	5
DHSSPS	0	0	0	0
DOE CORE	0	0	1	1
DVLA	0	0	0	0
DVTA	0	1	6	7
DRD	8	15	15	38
DSD CORE	0	0	0	0
EHS	0	0	2	2
NIO	2	5	4	11
OFMDFM	0	0	1	1
Planning Service	0	2	1	3
SSA	2	10	7	19

Harassment Complaints

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many complaints of *(a)* bullying and *(b)* sexual harassment have been investigated in each Department and Government agency in Northern Ireland in each of the last three years; and how many complaints have been upheld. [63472]

Angela E. Smith: The information requested is set out in the tables.

The figures for the number of cases upheld in a year do not necessarily refer to the number of cases investigated in that year as a case may be investigated towards the end of one year while the decision whether or not to uphold the complaint may be taken early in the next year.

2003

Department	*Bullying*		*Sexual Harassment*	
	Investigated	*Upheld*	*Investigated*	*Upheld*
OFMDFM	0	0	0	0
DOE	2	[1]	1	1
DHSSPS	2	0	0	0
NIO[3]	0	0	0	1
DFP	2	0	0	0
DETI	0	0	0	0
DCAL	0	0	0	0
DSDCore	0	0	0	0
SSA	6	1	0	0
CSA	1	0	0	0
DEL	0	0	0	0
DE	3	1	0	0
DRD	4	[2]	0	0
DARD	1	1	0	0

2004

Department	*Bullying*		*Sexual Harassment*	
	Investigated	*Upheld*	*Investigated*	*Upheld*
OFMDFM	0	0	0	0
DOE	1	0	1	0
DHSSPS	1	0	0	0
NIO[3]	0	0	2	0
DFP	2	[1]	0	0
DETI	0	0	1	1
DCAL	0	0	0	0
DSDCore	1	0	0	0
SSA	8	2	3	0
CSA	1	0	0	0
DEL	1	0	0	0
DE	0	0	1	0
DRD	0	0	0	0
DARD	1	1	0	0

2005

Department	Bullying		Sexual Harassment	
	Investigated	Upheld	Investigated	Upheld
OFMDFM	1	0	0	0
DOE	2	[1,2]1	1	[1,2]1
DHSSPS	0	0	0	0
NIO[3]	0	0	4	0
DFP	2	0	0	0
DETI	1	0	0	0
DCAL	0	0	0	0
DSDCore	3	0	0	0
SSA	24	4	1	1
CSA	1	0	0	0
DEL	1	[1]1	0	0
DE	[2]2	1	[2]1	0
DRD	1	0	0	0
DARD	0	0	1	1

[1] Denotes one complaint upheld in part.
[2] Denotes one complaint involving allegations of both bullying and sexual harassment.
[3] Figures relate to all complaints of harassment, as NIO does not require staff to identify specific equality grounds for harassment complaints.

Herceptin

Dr. Blackman-Woods: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the availability of Herceptin to treat early stage breast cancer in Northern Ireland. [64531]

Mr. Woodward: I announced in November 2005, that the cancer drug, Herceptin, may be made available to women with early stage breast cancer where this is clinically appropriate.

The decision to prescribe Herceptin should always be a clinical decision and clinicians must give full consideration to the risks and benefits associated with this treatment.

Home Tuition

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average waiting time is for an individual assessment for home tuition for children absent from school due to prolonged illness or disability in each Education and Library Board area. [65893]

Angela E. Smith: The Education and Library Boards do not assess whether pupils absent from school due to prolonged illness or short term disability should receive home tuition. Education and Library Boards arrange home tuition for such pupils on the basis of a recommendation from the medical profession.

The average waiting time between the receipt of a referral and the commencement of home tuition is 10 working days.

It should be noted that in more complex medical cases it may be necessary to seek additional information from other medical/educational sources. In such cases the waiting time may be longer.

Housing

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 21 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 208W, on housing, how much unpaid Housing Executive rent arrears was recouped in each year; how much new arrears accrued in each year; and how much rent arrears was carried forward into the next financial year in each district in Northern Ireland in each year since 1996. [65154]

Mr. Hanson: The rent account for Housing Executive tenants is a rolling account that contains both the current liability, along with any arrears, and provides an up to date balance. It is, therefore, not possible to provide the information in the form requested.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people in Northern Ireland were registered as being in urgent need of accommodation on the Housing Executive's waiting list at 1 January *(a)* 2001 and *(b)* 2006. [65869]

Mr. Hanson: Complete figures are not available for 1 January 2001, due to the implementation of the common selection scheme at that time. However, figures for the financial year ending 31 March 2001 show that there were 10,639 applicants in housing stress[1]. For the financial year ending 31 March 2006 the comparative figure was 17,433.

[1] Urgent need is now termed "housing stress", and is made-up of applicants and transfer applicants with 3.0-points or more.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many domestic dwellings in Northern Ireland owned by housing associations and the Housing Executive were vacant or not allocated to prospective tenants on 1 January 2006. [65870]

Mr. Hanson: There were a total of 4,288 vacant Northern Ireland Housing Executive properties as at 1 January 2006. Figures for Registered Housing Associations are only collected on an annual basis for the preceding financial year. At 31 March 2005 the Associations reported 1,443 housing units were vacant.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many new dwellings in the social housing sector are expected to be built in Northern Ireland between 1 January and 31 December 2006. [65871]

Mr. Hanson: Forward planning information is held by financial year, rather than calendar year.

Around 1,300 new homes are currently programmed for 'contract completion' in 2006–07.

Individual completions are not counted until the whole contract completes. For example in a contract not due for completion until 2007–08, the individual houses completed in 2006–07 will not score until the entire contract completes in 2007–08.

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many dwellings have been granted planning approval as *(a)* separate units and *(b)* part of housing developments in the BT17 postal code district of Dunmurry in each of the past 10 years. [65918]

Angela E. Smith: Unfortunately, it is not possible to answer the questions asked because the planning service in Northern Ireland does not routinely collect and hold information that would enable numbers of planning decisions relating to particular types of development to be classified by way of postcode.

InterTradeIreland

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the religious composition is of *(a)* the staff and *(b)* the board of InterTradeIreland. [64616]

Angela E. Smith: At 1 April 2006 InterTradeIreland employed 38 permanent staff. The religious composition of these staff has been identified as (i) 31 Roman Catholic (ii) six Protestant and (iii) one non-determined. Information on the religious composition of the InterTradeIreland Board is not held.

Invest Northern Ireland

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans Invest Northern Ireland has to promote inward investment into Northern Ireland following the Smithsonian Folklife Festival in Washington DC during July 2007. [65486]

Angela E. Smith: This festival provides a useful platform to position Northern Ireland positively as a strategic investment and trade partner for US corporations seeking to establish a presence in Europe. Invest NI is inputting to a Smithsonian Ancillary Programme with a series of market visits which will run from March to July 2007, heavily focused on investment, trade, and research and development activities.

Key Stage 3 (Pupil Profile)

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what changes have been made to the proposed pupil profile at key stage 3 to take account of responses of teachers involved in trialling the profile. [64615]

Angela E. Smith: The key stage 3 pupil profile is scheduled for introduction in the 2008–09 academic year. Initial trialing with a small sample of teachers has identified issues which need to be addressed to ensure that the profile is as relevant as possible for parents and pupils, whilst being manageable for teachers.

CCEA is consulting with teachers on these issues, and piloting will continue during the 2006–07 and 2007–08 academic years.

Planning Applications

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the change was in each Northern Ireland district council area in the number of planning applications submitted in the three months before 16 March *(a)* 2005 and *(b)* 2006. [65317]

Angela E. Smith: The following table details the change in the total number of planning applications received in each Northern Ireland district council area between the three month period from December 2004 to February 2005 and the period from December 2005 to February 2006.

District council area	Total December 2004 to February 2005	December 2005 to February 2006	Change	Percentage change
Antrim	305	254	-51	-17
Ards	347	255	-92	-27
Armagh	348	323	-25	-7
Ballymena	300	277	-23	-8
Ballymoney	249	161	-88	-35
Banbridge	288	322	+34	+12
Belfast	618	547	-71	-11
Carrickfergus	66	53	-13	-20
Castlereagh	107	118	+11	+10
Coleraine	337	298	-39	-12
Cookstown	344	331	-13	-4
Craigavon	271	250	-21	-8
Derry	286	251	-35	-12
Down	552	286	-266	-48
Dungannon	634	703	+69	+11
Fermanagh	688	725	+37	+5
Larne	98	95	-3	-3
Limavady	218	149	-69	-32
Lisburn	376	323	-53	-14
Magherafelt	263	280	+17	+6
Moyle	157	100	-57	-36
Newry and Mourne	628	753	+125	+20
Newtownabbey	156	125	-31	-20
North Down	203	203	0	0
Omagh	496	539	+43	+9
Strabane	265	257	-8	-3
Planning Service Total	8,600	7,978	-622	-7

Public Bodies (Membership)

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the membership of the *(a)* Eastern Border Counties Region, *(b)* Irish Cross Border Area Network and *(c)* North West Regional Cross Border Group, broken down by (i) nominating council and (ii) political affiliation. [64358]

Angela E. Smith: The cross border organisations to which the hon. Member refers were all formed by local councils. Those councils are solely responsible for

nominating members to both the organisations and to their boards and it would be inappropriate for me to comment on their composition.

Pupil Exclusions

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the exclusion rates were for the 100 *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in Northern Ireland with the (i) highest and (ii) lowest percentage of children receiving free school meals in each the last three years. [65993]

Angela E. Smith: The Department of Education does not collect all the requested information.

The following table details the number of pupils suspended per 10,000 pupils, in the 100 primary and post primary schools with the highest percentage of free school meals entitlement.

	Number of pupils suspended per 10,000 pupils	
	Primary schools	*Post primary schools*
2002-03	54	522
2003-04	53	559
2004-05	59	540

The following table details the number of pupils suspended per 10,000 pupils, in the 100 primary and post primary schools with the lowest percentage of free school meals entitlement.

	Number of pupils suspended per 10,000 pupils	
	Primary schools	*Post primary schools*
2002-03	3	155
2003-04	5	158
2004-05	2	156

Note:
Figures relate to pupils in post primary schools and in year 1 to year 7 in primary schools.

Schools (Assaults)

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the incidence of reported violence towards *(a)* staff and *(b)* pupils was in the 100 (i) primary and (ii) secondary schools in Northern Ireland with the (A) highest and (B) lowest percentage of children receiving free school meals in each of the last three years. [66088]

Angela E. Smith: The Department of Education does not collect all the information requested.

Statistics on the reasons for suspensions (fixed term exclusions) have been gathered annually, since the 2002–03 school year, from each Education and Library Board.

The following table details the number of occasions where pupils were suspended for physical attacks on *(a)* staff and *(b)* pupils, in the 100 primary and post primary schools with the highest percentage of free school meals entitlement:

Number of occasions

	Primary schools		*Post primary schools*	
	Physical attack on staff	*Physical attack on pupils*	*Physical attack on staff*	*Physical attack on pupils*
2002-03[1]	31	49	190	1,028
2003-04[1]	27	45	159	1,193
2004-05[2]	24	57	117	983

The following table details the number of occasions where pupils were suspended for physical attacks on *(a)* staff and *(b)* pupils, in the 100 primary and post primary schools with the lowest percentage of free school meals entitlement:

Number of occasions

	Primary schools[3]		*Post primary schools*	
	Physical attack on staff	*Physical attack on pupils*	*Physical attack on staff*	*Physical attack on pupils*
2002-03[1]	0	<5	38	335
2003-04[1]	0	<5	31	344
2004-05[2]	<5	<5	29	358

[1] The count of occasions is based on each record of suspension identified by the ELB. In some instances, longer periods of suspension may have more than one record.
[2] The count of occasions is based on each incidence of suspension, where an incident is defined as a count from the first day a pupil is suspended until the last day suspended.
[3] To be consistent with the National Statistics Code of Practice (Protocol on Data Access and Confidentiality), and in accordance with the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency's compliance statement on Confidentiality and Access, a statistical disclosure technique has been employed to meet the confidentiality guarantee. Small cell sizes (counts of 1–4 pupils) have been denoted as <5 rather than state the precise number.

Stillbirths

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many babies have been stillborn in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years; and what percentage of the total this figure represents. [65346]

Angela E. Smith: The following table gives the number of stillbirths registered in Northern Ireland and the percentage of all live births and stillbirths this represents (2001–5):

Registration year	*Stillbirths (number)*	*Percentage of all live births and stillbirths*
2001	112	0.5
2002	122	0.6
2003	108	0.5
2004	113	0.5
2005 (Provisional)	90	0.4

Teacher Training

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people qualified from teacher training in Northern Ireland in each year between 1995 and 2005. [65344]

Angela E. Smith: Students gaining initial teacher training qualifications at NI higher education institutions 1994–95 to 2004–05 are as follows:

	Number of qualifications obtained
1994–95	751
1995–96	774
1996–97	753
1997–98	644
1998–99	649
1999–2000	635
2000–01	700
2001–02	716
2002–03	772
2003–04	779
2004–05	804

Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency.

Unemployment Statistics

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the change was in the number of people unemployed in East Londonderry constituency between March 2001 and March 2006. [65341]

Angela E. Smith: The change in the number of people unemployed in East Londonderry constituency between March 2001 and March 2006 was a decrease of 714 persons, equivalent to a 29.9 per cent. decrease. The corresponding levels are provided in the table as follows.

East Londonderry PCA	Claimant count Number	Percentage
March 2001	2,386	—
March 2006	1,672	—
Change 2001 to 2006	-714	-29.9

Vehicle Excise Duty

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the rates of vehicle excise duty evasion were in each Northern Ireland parliamentary constituency in each year between 2000 and 2005. [65310]

Angela E. Smith: Roadside surveys of evasion of vehicle excise duty are carried out across the UK by the Department of Transport, which has responsibility for the registration and licensing of vehicles. No surveys were undertaken in 2000, 2001 and 2003. Surveys were carried out in 2002, 2004 and 2005.

Figures are produced for the whole of Northern Ireland only; figures are not available for individual parliamentary constituencies.

The rate of evasion of vehicle excise duty by vehicles in traffic in each survey is set out in the following table.

Year of survey	Rate of evasion in traffic (Percentage)
2002	8.2
2004	7.2
2005	5.4

Waterways (Pollution)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people were prosecuted in Northern Ireland between 2000 and 2005 for offences connected with pollution of waterways. [65864]

Angela E. Smith: The number of prosecutions for water pollution offences which occurred during each of the years 2000–05 are as shown.

Because it can take over a year for a case to come to court, a number of prosecution cases from 2005 and some from 2004 are still pending a verdict in court. These pending prosecutions are included in the figures provided.

Year in which pollution offence occurred	Number of prosecutions
2000	83
2001	109
2002	101
2003	123
2004	[1]63
2005	[2]9

[1] Plus 17 cases pending.
[2] Plus 51 cases pending.

It should be noted that, between 1996 and 2005 there was a reduction in the number of water pollution incidents from 2,055 to 1,175, a reduction of some 43 per cent.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Automated Valuation Model

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the datasets that are part of the automated valuation model. [49149]

Mr. Woolas: The Valuation Office Agency (VOA) has a single dataset, which is used to provide input to, but is independent of, the automated valuation model (AVM).

Council Tax

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the Answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 250W, on council tax, what the *(a)* OASIS and *(b)* Tenet products are; and if he will outline their use for council tax valuations. [47018]

Mr. Woolas: 'OASIS' is the trade name of the valuation modelling software provided by Cole Layer Trumble to the Valuation Office Agency (VOA). 'Tenet' is the name used by the VOA for the enhancements to the base digital mapping software supplied by Tenet IT Mapping Limited. Neither 'Tenet' nor OASIS is used for council tax valuation purposes following the postponement of the 2007 council tax revaluation announced by the Minister for Communities and Local Government on 20 September 2005.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Meriden (Mrs. Spelman) of 24 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 2060W, on council tax regulations, what recommendation was made to amend regulation 3 of the Council Tax (Chargeable Dwellings) Order. [50962]

Mr. Woolas: The proposals for changes to council tax regulations referred to in the minutes of Valuation Office Agency Local Authorities Liaison Group meeting of 27 September 2004 relate to discussions by officials of the Valuation Office Agency with officials of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister about amending article 3

of the Council Tax (Chargeable Dwellings) Order 1992 to preclude disaggregation where the whole of a single hereditament is occupied as the sole or main residence of a person. The Government have no current plans to amend this regulation.

Habitat Regulations

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what recent advice he has given to local planning authorities on ensuring that regional and city plans are properly assessed before they are adopted, with particular reference to the Habitat regulations. [64042]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister sent a letter to all regional planning bodies (RPBs) and local planning authorities (LPAs) on the 9 March 2006[1]. It advised RPBs and LPAs of their responsibilities under the Habitats directive 92/43/EEC to carry out an appropriate assessment (AA) on their plans, and provided guidance on its application in the interim period before the amendments to the UK Conservation (Habitats &c) Regulations, 1994 (Habitats Regulations) come into force this September. The letter also referred RPBs and LPAs to existing guidance produced by the European Commission[2]. The ODPM will also issue draft guidance on the application of AA to land use plans for consultation this summer.

[1] The letter is available on the ODPM website: http://www.odpm.gov.uk/pub/56/ApplicationofAppropriateAssessmentunderArticle63and4oftheHabitatsDirective9243Eb_id1164056.pdf

[2] EC Guidance consists of: 'Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The provisions of article 6 of the 'Habitats' directive 92/42/CEE' 2000' and 'Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats directive 92/43/EEC, 2001'.

Hereditaments

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many physical inspections of composite hereditaments were carried out by the Valuation Agency for *(a)* business rates and *(b)* council tax (i) valuation and (ii) liability purposes in each year since 1996–97. [47024]

Mr. Woolas: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member on 20 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1699W. Liability is a matter for billing authorities, not for the Valuation Office Agency.

Liveability Fund

Jonathan Shaw: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what information Medway council has provided to his Department on grants awarded under the liveability fund; and if he will make a statement. [63674]

Yvette Cooper *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* Medway council was one of 27 areas that benefited from the liveability fund, improving local authority service delivery before investing in public space developments. Areas such as the Weedswood Estate in Chatham have seen physical and social improvements, while the Street Guardian scheme will ensure their continued improvement, keeping them cleaner, safer and greener.

In line with all recipients of the fund, Medway council confirmed completion of milestones set out in the grant agreement. Further information and lessons from the liveability fund in Medway are being shared through a good practice programme run by the Improvement and Development Agency.

Local Government Finance

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will place in the Library a copy of the Valuation Office Agency's How2 toolkit for council tax valuation and appeal work. [47885]

Mr. Woolas: This guidance is held in linked electronic formats within the Valuation Office Agency's main IT systems and can only be viewed with full functionality through the appropriate software package. To provide a copy in the Library could be done only at disproportionate cost.

Mobile Telephone Masts

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Meriden of 20 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1693W, on mobile telephone masts, how many communication stations were registered for business rates in England in each local authority area in 1998. [50956]

Mr. Woolas: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Meriden on 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2836W.

Needs Assessments (Young People)

Mr. Love: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what arrangements are in place to ensure that local authorities assess the needs of young people between the ages of 15 to 18 who are leaving care or prison with no financial or family support; and if he will make a statement. [64110]

Maria Eagle: I have been asked to reply.

The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 requires local authorities to assess the needs of care leavers and to draw up a pathway plan for each individual setting out the services and support that they will receive to manage the move to an appropriate level of independence. Each care leaver is entitled to support from a personal adviser who will coordinate the provisions of the pathway plan and keep this under review. Up until the age of eighteen, the local authority will usually be a care leaver's primary source of income. Once care leavers reach 18, they are then entitled to have access to the same mainstream arrangements for obtaining financial help as other young people.

Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) are responsible for resettlement planning for young people who have been made subjects of a custodial sentence, following their cases from pre-sentence stage through custody and into the community. Crucially this involves linking young people to mainstream local services who can to respond to their ongoing needs for accommodation, education, health and other support during and following the end of the period of YOT intervention.

Planning Applications

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to publish the *(a)* criteria and *(b)* guidance on sequential development tests for planning applications for large warehouse complexes, with particular reference to the South East of England; and if he will make a statement. [64780]

Yvette Cooper: The Deputy Prime Minister currently has no plans to publish any specific criteria or guidance on sequential development tests for planning applications for large warehouse complexes. National planning policy for this type of development is contained in planning policy statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (PPS1), planning policy guidance note 4: Industrial and Commercial Development and Small Firms (PPG4), and planning policy guidance note 13: Transport (PPG13). While there is no specific sequential development test for large warehouse complexes, existing planning policy is clear as to the types of location that may be suitable.

PPS1 asks local planning authorities to recognise that in achieving sustainable development they should ensure that suitable locations are available for commercial development, having regard to considerations such as the level of transport accessibility and infrastructure provision.

PPG4 promotes new development in locations which minimise the length and number of trips and which can be served by more energy efficient modes of transport. It also advises that well-planned distribution parks away from urban areas can offer economies of scale, with benefits to business and consumers, and wherever possible should be capable of access by rail or water.

PPG13 requires that sustainable transport choices are promoted for the movement of freight, and it seeks a reduction in the need to travel. It asks for suitable sites which allow road to rail or water transfer of freight to be identified and protected where appropriate. The policy also specifically asks that warehousing which generates substantial freight movements to be located away from congested and residential areas, ensuring adequate access to trunk roads.

To assist planning authorities to make sufficient provision for such development in their plans, we have published guidance on undertaking employment land reviews at both regional and local level ('Employment Land Reviews: Guidance Note' ODPM, 2004).

Regional planning policy for the location of development is set out in the regional planning guidance for the South East (RPG9, 2001), which is the regional spatial strategy for South East England. The strategy is currently under review and the South East England regional assembly has formally submitted the draft South East plan to the Government for consideration. A consultation on the draft plan will run from 31 March 2006 to 23 June 2006.

Once the South East plan has been finalised, following independent testing, it will be published by the Government as a replacement of RPG9. Local authority development plans, and development proposals will need to conform to the South East plan. The South East plan, and the local authority development plans in that region will collectively form the statutory development plan for the South East.

Valuation Office Agency

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to his Answer of 30 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 587W, on the Valuation Office Agency, what the *(a)* start point and *(b)* estimated termination point of the contract with Cole Layer Trumble are; and whether the contract is ongoing. [46993]

Mr. Woolas: The contract between EDS (now managed by Aspire, IT suppliers to HMRC and the Valuation Office Agency) and Cole Layer Trumble (CLT) commenced on 1 September 2003. As the Government have made clear, the VOA will ensure that the country has an up-to-date electronic property database, available as a source of accurate data. It is therefore anticipated that there will be an ongoing contract while the software supplied by CLT (the OASIS modelling software) is in use. A termination point of the contract cannot be estimated.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to his Answer of 30 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 587W, on the Valuation Office Agency, how many meetings his officials and staff from the Valuation Office Agency have had with Cole Layer Trumble since the signing of the contract. [46994]

Mr. Woolas: No meetings involving officials of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister have been held with Cole Layer Trumble (CLT). Staff from the Valuation Office Agency have had regular liaison with representatives of CLT during development of the Agency's Automated Valuation Model (AVM), which is an essential part of ensuring best value for money is delivered from the investment being made in the AVM. No formal count has been kept of the number of meetings held.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to his Answer of 30 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 587W, on the Valuation Office Agency, if he will publish the make and model of the cameras bought in each year. [46995]

Dawn Primarolo: I have been asked to reply.

The VOA has used cameras since the late 1980s. Details of the cameras bought in each year is as shown in the following table: All are standard retail models for amateur photographer use. These replaced circa 1,400 conventional cameras held by the VOA. Digital cameras were introduced on cost savings grounds i.e. to reduce running costs expended on film development costs.

	Number and make	*Total*
2001–02	150 x Fuji	150
2002–03	11 x Fuji 645 x Olympus	656
2003–04	None purchased	—
2004–05	1,270 x Olympus	1,270
2005–06	50 x Olympus	50

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the Answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 273W, on the Valuation Office Agency,

if he will place in the Library a copy of the Valuation Office Agency's document, Dwellinghouse Coding—an Illustrated Guide, or provide a weblink if it is available on the Agency's website. [46999]

Mr. Woolas: In order to protect privacy the document cannot be made publicly available.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if the Valuation Office Agency keeps photographs of properties for *(a)* business rates and *(b)* council tax valuation purposes. [47143]

Mr. Woolas: Some photographs are kept on the Valuation Office Agency's (VOA) secure central database. Photographs are rarely taken inside a person's home and only with the express permission of the occupier e.g. to record a poor state of repair where the occupier believes it affects the value for taxation purposes. VOA policy is to delete photographs taken inside a person's home once they have served their purpose.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the individual datasets are part of the Valuation Office Agency's Automated Valuation Model. [47146]

Mr. Woolas: No. The Valuation Office Agency's (VOA) dataset is independent of the Automated Valuation Model (AVM).

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what use the Valuation Office Agency makes of *(a)* property and *(b)* individual-related data from Experian. [47147]

Mr. Woolas: The information requested is as follows.

(a) The Valuation Office Agency purchases Goad plans and shopping centre reports including footfall information from Experian.

Goad plans are used for identifying occupiers of retail units when undertaking rating valuations and considering proposals.

Footfall count information is used to monitor the impact on rental value of physical changes to the layout of shopping centres.

(b) The Valuation Office Agency does not use individual-related data such as credit ratings from Experian.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what account the Valuation Office Agency takes of the presence of *(a)* fixed kennels, *(b)* stables and *(c)* animal hutches in making a valuation of a domestic property. [47150]

Mr. Woolas: The banding of a domestic property for council tax purposes is based on the valuer's estimate of the capital value of that property. The items referred to would only be taken into account if they form part of a larger property which is itself a dwelling and to the extent which they add to the capital value of the dwelling.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will place a copy of the Valuation Office Agency guidance on the definition and assessment of a fixture for council tax valuation purposes in the Library. [47434]

Mr. Woolas: Guidance on the definition and assessment of a fixture for council tax valuation purposes is contained in the VGA's Council Tax Manual, which is available on the VGA's website www.voa.gov.uk

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 5 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 963W, on the Valuation Office Agency, how many public conveniences were registered for business rates by the Valuation Office Agency in each Government office region in 1998 or the closest year for which figures are available. [47933]

Mr. Woolas: As at 31 March 1998 there were 6,224 public conveniences included in the 1995 Rating List.

Government region	*Number of public conveniences*
Eastern	590
East Midlands	450
London	475
North East	305
North West	613
South East	918
South West	1,058
Wales	762
West Midlands	453
Yorkshire and Humberside	600
Total	6,224

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to his answers of 23 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 2063W, and 6 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1138W, on the Valuation Office Agency, whether the Agency intends to collate dwelling house code data for the remaining homes in England; and whether the agency expects that the number of homes with value significant code data will increase. [48153]

Mr. Woolas: The intention is to continue to develop a database to support the legitimate duty of the Valuation Office Agency's listing officers to compile and maintain valuation lists for council tax purposes, and to do so in a manner that ensures fairness and consistency between taxpayers.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to his answer of 28 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 197W, on council tax revaluation, what targets the Valuation Office Agency has set for collecting dwelling house codes or value significant codes for more domestic properties to maintain valuation lists. [48160]

Mr. Woolas: The Valuation Office Agency has set an internal minimum standard for its newly digitised database so that data on the six main dwelling house codes (group, type, age, area, number of rooms and number of bedrooms) are held in electronic, not paper, form for 97 per cent. of dwellings by 30 June 2006.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Meriden, of 20 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1699W, on the Valuation Office Agency, how many properties Valuation Office Agency inspected to determine whether the property is used for both business and domestic purposes in the most recent year for which figures are available. [50912]

Mr. Woolas: The Valuation Office Agency does not hold this information.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Meriden of 19 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1546W, on

the Valuation Office Agency, if he will place in the Library a copy of the full ruling of the Lands Tribunal of Tully *v.* Jorgensen. [50951]

Mr. Woolas: A copy of the full ruling of the Lands Tribunal of Tully *v.* Jorgensen is published and can be obtained from the Lands Tribunal website www.landstribunal.gov.uk.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Meriden of 19 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1546W, on the Valuation Office Agency, what changes have been made to the criteria applied by valuation officers since May 1997. [50960]

Mr. Woolas: The criteria applied by valuation officers of the Valuation Office Agency (VOA), as set out in the council tax manual published by the VOA on its website at www.voa.gov.uk, remained unchanged until the update, in 2004, which reflected the decision of the Lands Tribunal in the case of Tully *v.* Jorgensen.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the Valuation Office Agency has produced proposals on the sale of its council tax datasets for commercial purposes in the last five years. [51071]

Mr. Woolas: The Valuation Office Agency has not produced any proposals on the sale of its council tax datasets for commercial purposes.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister into how many localities the Valuation Office Agency divided England to assist the valuations of individual properties as part of the council tax revaluation preparations. [56184]

Mr. Woolas: As part of the council tax revaluation preparations, the Valuation Office Agency divided England into approximately 10,000 localities.

HEALTH

Acute Hospital Beds

Dr. Pugh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many acute hospital beds per head of population there are in *(a)* London, *(b)* each region and *(c)* each strategic health authority area. [64332]

Jane Kennedy: Data for the latest available year 2004–05 are shown in the table. Data are not available on a regional basis.

Acute hospital beds per population in each strategic health authority area (SHA)

SHA code	*SHA name*	*Acute beds*	*Population*	*Beds per 100,000 people*
Q01	Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	4,741	2,238,151	211.8
Q02	Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	2,198	1,617,537	135.9
Q03	Essex	2,475	1,635,605	151.3
Q04	North West London	4,012	1,834,066	218.7
Q05	North Central London	3,300	1,227,957	268.8
Q06	North East London	3,392	1,531,427	221.5
Q07	South East London	3,102	1,514,122	204.9
Q08	South West London	2,870	1,321,018	217.3
Q09	Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	3,813	1,396,374	273.0
Q10	County Durham and Tees Valley	2,740	1,148,699	238.5
Q11	North and East Yorkshire and North Lines	3,224	1,652,387	195.1
Q12	West Yorkshire	4,666	2,108,028	221.3
Q13	Cumbria and Lancashire	4,274	1,929,653	221.5
Q14	Greater Manchester	7,080	2,539,043	278.8
Q15	Cheshire and Merseyside	6,512	2,358,474	276.1
Q16	Thames Valley	3,918	2,120,859	184.7
Q17	Hampshire and Isle of Wight	3,601	1,801,442	199.9
Q18	Kent and Medway	2,549	1,610,310	158.3
Q19	Surrey and Sussex	4,748	2,577,631	184.2
Q20	Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	5,393	2,206,246	244.5
Q21	South West Peninsula	4,159	1,619,062	256.9
Q22	Dorset and Somerset	2,647	1,212,892	218.2
Q23	South Yorkshire	3,866	1,278,434	302.4
Q24	Trent	5,130	2,687,496	190.9
Q25	Leicestershire, Northants and Rutland	3,020	1,592,211	189.7
Q26	Shropshire and Staffordshire	2,759	1,499,568	184.0
Q27	Birmingham and the Black Country	6,116	2,274,964	268.9
Q28	West Midlands South	3,199	1,559,474	205.2
	England Total	109,505	50,093,130	218.6

Note:
Data are from financial year 2004–05.
Source:
Department of Health form KH03

BCG Vaccinations

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funding her Department spent delivering BCG vaccinations in *(a)* 2002–03, *(b)* 2003–04, *(c)* 2004–05 and *(d)* 2005–06 in each London borough; how many were delivered in each case; and if she will make a statement. [64401]

Caroline Flint: This information is not available in the form requested.

Funding for immunisation services including the bacille-calmette guerin (BCG) vaccination programme, form part of the annual allocation to primary care trusts (PCTs). PCTs are responsible for the management of those monies and the running of immunisation programmes.

The number of people vaccinated with BCG vaccine is collected annually by PCTs. This information is published by National Statistics in 'NHS Immunisation Statistics, England', which is available in the Library.

Birth Statistics

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many babies were born at *(a)* Liverpool Women's hospital, *(b)* Whiston hospital, *(c)* Southport and Ormskirk NHS Trust, *(d)* Wigan and Wrightington NHS Trust and *(e)* Royal Preston hospital in (i) 2000–01 and (ii) 2004–05. [64231]

Mr. Byrne: The information is not available in the format requested. The information in the table contains figures for deliveries registered for 2000–01 and 2003–04 which is the latest year for which data is available.

	Deliveries registered	
	2000–01	*2003–04*
Liverpool Women's Hospital	5,873	6,456
Whiston Hospital	2,647	2,559
Southport and Ormskirk Hospitals	1,961	2,237
Billinge Hospital, Wigan	2,856	2,829
Sharoe Green Hospital, Preston	3,605	3,717

Blindness

James Duddridge: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what timetable has been set for reviewing progress towards meeting the goal of eradicating preventable blindness under the Vision 2020 initiative; and how her Department plans to measure the progress made. [66115]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We are committed to the principles of Vision 2020 for the elimination of avoidable blindness and have a range of activity in place to improve eye health. By 2008, the maximum waiting time for cataract operations is due to be reduced to 18 weeks from the point of general practitioner referral.

Primary care trusts (PCTs) are expected to deliver the national commitment that by the end of 2007, 100 per cent. of people with diabetes will be offered screening for the early detection (and treatment if needed) of diabetic retinopathy as part of a systematic programme that meets national standards.

The National Institute for Health Clinical Excellence (NICE) issued its guidance on photodynamic therapy on 24 September 2003. Since June 2004, all PCTs have been funding photodynamic therapy treatment for patients with both the wholly classic and predominantly classic forms of age-related macular degeneration.

Glaucoma was referred to NICE in November 2005. NICE will prepare a clinical guideline on the diagnosis and management of raised intraocular pressure and ocular hypertension.

The eye care services steering group has developed evidence-based pathways for four key eye conditions: cataracts, age-related macular degeneration, glaucoma and low vision services. We are currently testing the latter three pathways and will share our findings with the national health service as they progress. The pilots are due to be evaluated later this year.

We expect this programme of work to meet the aims of the Vision 2020 programme. These programmes either have set targets for progress or are subject to regular review as part of mainstream business of delivering health services.

James Duddridge: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps her Department plans to take to increase public awareness of the role an eye test plays in *(a)* preventing avoidable blindness and *(b)* diagnosing diabetes. [66116]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Free sight tests are available under the national health service to large parts of the population including children, those aged 16 to 18 in full-time education, people on benefits, those people at particular risk of developing eye disease, and people who are registered blind or partially sighted or who have a complex spectacle prescription. In addition, in April 1999, we extended free sight tests to all people aged 60 and over. Sight tests allow the opportunity to review all aspects of eye health, including investigations for signs of disease. Those at risk of specific eye disease, for example diabetic retinopathy, may be asked to attend regular screening.

Information about the extensive arrangements for providing help with NHS optical services and other health costs are publicised in leaflet HC11 'Are you entitled to help with health costs?' Posters are also available for display in optical practices and hospital out-patient departments.

The Department is also working with the Department for Work and Pensions on updating their leaflet 'Are you over 50?' This leaflet includes information about health and contact numbers for organisations which can provide further advice. We intend to include information in this publication highlighting the four leading eye conditions and promoting the benefits of regular sight testing.

Capita

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much business her Department has placed with *(a)* Capita Group plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries in each of the last five years; what the total value is of outstanding contracts placed with Capita Group plc and its subsidiaries by her Department; for which current tenders issued by her Department (i) Capita Group plc and (ii) its subsidiaries have been invited to bid; and whether (A) Capita Group plc and (B) its subsidiaries have seconded staff (1) temporarily and (2) on a longer-term basis to (X) her Department and (Y) its agencies. [61075]

Mr. Byrne: The total amount spent with Capita Group plc and its subsidiaries in 2004–05 and to the end of February 2006 for the financial period 2005–06 is shown in the table.

£

	Financial year	
Capita subsidiary	*2004–05*	*2005–06*[1]
Capita Business Services Ltd.	540,112	314,625
Capita Healthcare Solutions	55,419	62,591
Capita SHG Resourcing	Nil	1,002,325

[1] To end of February 2006

Information prior to 2004–05 is not readily available and could not be obtained without incurring disproportionate costs.

The only outstanding contract is with Capita Health Solutions to provide the Department's occupational health services. The total value of this contract is £195,000.

We do not hold centrally information that would allow for an analysis of how many tenders Capita Group plc or its subsidiaries have been invited to bid for, and could not obtain this information without incurring disproportionate costs.

Our records indicate that currently, there are no staff seconded to the Department from Capita Group plc or its subsidiaries.

James Brokenshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the value of contracts held by her Department with *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries was in the last three financial years. [61465]

Mr. Byrne: The total amount spent with Capita Group plc and its subsidiaries in 2004–05 and to the end of February 2006 for the financial period 2005–06 is shown in the following table.

£

Capita subsidiary	*Financial year* 2004–05	2005–06[1]
Capita Business Services Ltd.	540,112	314,625
Capita Healthcare Solutions	55,419	62,591
Capita SHG Resourcing	Nil	1,002,325

[1] As at 28 February 2006

Information prior to 2004–05 is not readily available and could not be obtained without incurring disproportionate costs.

Children's Hospices

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent representations she has received on the funding of children's hospices; and if she will make a statement. [62752]

Mr. Byrne: We have received a number of representations about the funding of children's hospices. On 15 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1454, the Prime Minister answered a question from the hon. Member for Castle Point (Bob Spink). I have answered a number of questions on the funding of children's hospices and it was debated on 13 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1385WH. The hon. Member for Castle Point also presented a petition from the residents of Essex and others on 25 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1476. There have been a number of early day motions and letters to Ministers. I met with my hon. Friend, the Member for Middlesbrough, South and East Cleveland (Dr. Ashok Kumar) on 14 February 2006.

On the 9 February 2006, a number of commissioners of palliative care for children and young people, representatives of the children's hospice movement and other interested parties were invited to discuss a range of issues affecting the provision of palliative care and I attended another seminar on 22 March. I also understand the Sun Campaign petition was presented to the Prime Minister on 16 March.

Our manifesto commitment to double funding for end of life care will give more families the choice to have their child or young person with a life-threatening or life-limiting condition to be treated at home. An announcement about this funding will be made in due course.

Community Hospitals

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations she has received regarding the closure of local community hospitals in *(a)* South West London, *(b)* Surrey, *(c)* Middlesex, *(d)* Greater London and *(e)* England. [58917]

Mr. Byrne: Providing an exhaustive list of representations in the format requested would be of a disproportionate cost.

However, a brief search has identified representations from the public and hon. Members relating to a number of community hospitals across the country including:

Edward VII in Chichester;

Surbiton;

Epsom;

Townlands in Oxford;

Ludlow;

Telford;

Walnut Tree in Suffolk; and

Keswick.

Connecting for Health Computer System

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much her Department has *(a)* spent on and *(b)* committed to the NHS Connecting for Health computer system. [65943]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 25 April 2006]:* The value of contracts let for the original core components of the programme amounts to £6.2 billion over 10 years. Payments made for work completed under those contracts totalled £502.58 million as at 21 April 2006.

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what her Department expects to be the completion date of the NHS Connecting for Health computer system. [65963]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 25 April 2006]:* The Department's NHS Connecting for Health Agency is aiming to achieve substantial integration of health and social care information systems in England under the national programme for information technology by 2010. Information technology systems will need to be upgraded in the light of new technology and new national health service requirements beyond that date.

Continuing Care Assessments

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will take steps to prevent a Director of Finance sitting on a primary care trust review and funding panel which collates the eligibility assessments for continuing care from health and social care professionals. [65145]

Mr. Byrne: Review panels have independent chairmen who lead members appointed by the relevant national health service and local government bodies.

We will soon publish for consultation a national framework for NHS continuing care which will give further clarity and consistency on the responsibilities of NHS and social services for long term care. The national framework will include guidance on the processes and considerations to take into account when making decisions on the responsibility of the NHS and social services for long-term care.

We will carefully consider all responses to the consultation when preparing the final version of the framework.

Dentistry

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what percentage of the *(a)* adult and *(b)* child population of (i) East Hull and West Hull primary care trust area, (ii) Yorkshire and the Humber and (iii) England was registered with an NHS general dental practitioner in each year since 1997; [64095]

(2) how many NHS patients were registered with NHS general dental practitioners in the Eastern Hull and West Hull primary care trust area in each year since 1997. [64092]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is set out in the tables.

Table 1 shows the number of adults and children in England, North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire strategic health authority (SHA) (and Eastern Hull and West Hull primary care trusts (PCTS)), West Yorkshire SHA and South Yorkshire SHA who were registered with an national health service dentist as at 31 December in each specified year.

This is expressed as an estimated proportion of the populations for each of these areas. Table 2 shows the number of NHS patients who were registered with NHS general dental practitioners in the Eastern Hull and West Hull PCT area in each year since 1997.

Table 1

Percentage

	England	*North and East Yorkshire and STET and Northern Lincolnshire*	*Eastern Hull PCT*	*West Hull PCT*	*West Yorkshire*	*South Yorkshire*
1997						
Adults	53	53	[1]	[1]	60	61
Children	69	72	[1]	[1]	68	74
1998						
Adults	46	48	[1]	[1]	54	55
Children	62	67	[1]	[1]	62	67
1999						
Adults	45	48	[1]	[1]	53	54
Children	62	67	[1]	[1]	62	67
2000						
Adults	46	48	[1]	[1]	52	55
Children	63	68	[1]	[1]	62	68
2001						
Adults	45	48	36	69	52	56
Children	63	68	55	101	62	69
2002						
Adults	45	48	33	67	51	56
Children	63	66	51	98	63	68
2003						
Adults	44	47	29	71	51	56
Children	62	65	44	102	63	68
2004						
Adults	45	46	33	73	53	57
Children	63	66	47	103	66	69
2005						
Adults	45	48	36	84	51	55
Children	64	67	46	112	65	69

[1] Population estimates are not available at PCT level prior to 2001

Notes:

1. Patients may be registered with a dentist outside the area in which they live. This explains why the number of children registered with dentists in some areas exceeds the size of the children's population for those areas.

2. The drop in registrations between December 1997 and December 1998 is mostly attributable to the reduction in re-registration period from two years to fifteen months.

3. Registration rates, that is the percentage of the population registered with a dentist, have been estimated by including registrations in the area of the dentist, that is according to the postcode of the dental surgery and not the patient's address. So the registration rates for some areas may be affected by some patients receiving dental treatment in a different area from the one in which they live. This can lead to figures being unusually high, even over 100 per cent., for child registrations, whilst other areas may have estimated rates which are lower than the actual (but unknown) proportion of residents who are registered with a dentist in or outside their own area.
4. Personal dental services (PDS) schemes have varying registration periods. To ensure comparability with corresponding general dental services (CDS) data, PDS registrations for established PDS practices are estimated using proxy registrations, namely the number of patients seen by PDS practices in the past 15 months.
5. Data for 2003 and earlier do not include those PDS schemes that do not have any registrations (for example dental access centres), and is therefore not directly comparable with 2004 and 2005 data.
6. Official 2005 population data are not yet available. 2005 data have therefore been estimated using office for National Statistics 2004 mid-year population estimates based on the 2001 Census as these are the latest available.
7. Prison contracts have not been included in this analysis

Source:
NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre and Business Services Authority

Table 2 Number of patients registered with a NHS dentist in Eastern Hull and West Hull PCTs as at31 December in each specified year

	Eastern Hull	*West Hull*
1997	48,017	105,091
1998	43,959	97,447
1999	42,719	95,698
2000	44,746	101,664
2001	49,076	98,908
2002	44,565	95,449
2003	39,025	99,961
2004	43,812	102,509
2005	45,763	115,716

Notes:
1. The drop in registrations between December 1997 and December 1998 is mostly attributable to the reduction in re-registration period from two years to fifteen months.
2. PDS schemes have varying registration periods. To ensure comparability with corresponding GDS data, PDS registrations for established PDS practices are estimated using proxy registrations, namely the number of patients seen by PDS practices in the past 15 months.
3. Data for 2003 and earlier do not include those PDS schemes that do not have any registrations, (for example dental access centres), and is therefore not directly comparable with 2004 and 2005 data.
4. Prison contracts have not been included in this analysis.

Diabetes

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will estimate the number of people with diabetes for whom the drug Exubera may be clinically appropriate. [65921]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 25 April 2006]:* This information is not centrally held.

The choice of insulin prescribed to a patient is a clinical decision made as a result of a joint decision making process between the patient and their clinician taking into account all available evidence and the individual's specific clinical needs.

Diet-drug Interactions

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she will *(a)* publish the Committee on Toxicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment working paper on diet-drug interactions and *(b)* make recommendations for action in relation to drug-diet interactions for (i) babies, (ii) young children, (iii) over 75-year-olds and (iv) people with long-term conditions. [64179]

Caroline Flint: The joint statement of the Committee on Toxicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COT) and the Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM) on the joint COT/CSM meeting on diet-drug interactions was published on the Food Standards Agency's website on 2 February 2006. The statement will also be included in the 2005 annual reports of the two committees.

As yet, there is insufficient data to draw conclusions or make recommendations for specific population groups, however appropriate information is supplied with specific pharmaceutical agents where necessary.

Emergency Contraception

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what guidance her Department *(a)* has issued and *(b)* plans to issue to (i) general practitioners and (ii) pharmacists on the availability of emergency contraception over the counter without prescription from dispensing chemists; [64371]

(2) what follow-up care is available to women prescribed the morning-after pill *(a)* on prescription and *(b)* over the counter without prescription from dispensing chemists; and if she will make a statement; [64372]

(3) if she will bring forward proposals to ensure that a woman's medical history is known before she is provided with the morning-after pill *(a)* on prescription and *(b)* over the counter without prescription from dispensing chemists; and if she will make a statement. [64373]

Caroline Flint: I refer the hon. Member to the replies I gave on 21 July 2005, *Official Report*, columns 2159–60W.

Fibromyalgia

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what *(a)* recent discussions she has had and *(b)* representations she has received on fibromyalgia; [65794]

(2) what progress is being made in improving NHS *(a)* diagnosis and *(b)* treatment of fibromyalgia. [65795]

Mr. Byrne: I have had no recent discussions about fibromyalgia specifically, and have received no representations other than those from the hon. Member for Jarrow on 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2143W and on 16 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1300W.

I am advised that the Department has received 25 pieces of correspondence on the subject of fibromyalgia since August 2005.

In August 2003, the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) issued a newsletter to all doctors in England, specifically addressing the problem of fibromyalgia information dissemination. The CMO acknowledges the condition and the extent to which it affects the population. He raised awareness of a leaflet about fibromyalgia, which was made available to all general practitioner surgeries in the United Kingdom. The leaflet offers guidance on the main symptoms, diagnosis and treatment of fibromyalgia together with a brief summary of the current ideas for the underlying pathogenesis. In addition, NHS Direct, NHS Direct Online and NHS Direct Interactive have been established to give people access to information on a range of conditions and illnesses, including fibromyalgia.

General Practitioners

Ann Keen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many general practitioner surgeries in Brentford and Isleworth have been *(a)* newly built and *(b)* modernised since 1997. [64278]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Health White Paper

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects to make changes to the primary care contracts to ensure better opening hours as described in paragraph 3.58 of the White Paper, 'Our Health, Our Care, Our Say', and if she will make a statement. [49555]

Mr. Byrne: We are continually exploring ways to improve patient access to national health service primary medical care. The revised general practice contract framework for 2006–07 includes incentives to encourage practices to improve access across a broader range of patient experiences. We shall be reviewing that framework again for 2007–08 and later years with the aim of supporting delivery of the commitments set out in the White Paper, including the provision of more flexible opening hours.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the evidential basis was for the statement in paragraph 3.49 of the White Paper, 'Our Health, Our Care, Our Say', that a minority of practices had stopped taking advance bookings; and what evidence suggests that the number of practices which have stopped taking advance bookings is growing. [49557]

Mr. Byrne: Initial evidence that some practices were denying patients the opportunity to book ahead was based on correspondence and other representations from hon. Members and the public. Since the Department started collecting information about this practice and discouraging it, the incidence reported by practices through their primary care trusts has reduced from affecting over 12 per cent. of patients in November 2004 to less than one per cent. in March 2006. We are continuing action to stop this practice.

Late Terminations

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research her Department has commissioned into the impact of late termination of the foetus; and what effect the result of such research has had on policy. [65971]

Caroline Flint: The Department has commissioned no research into the impact of late termination of the foetus. The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists has, however, published various advice for professionals on abortion (including late gestation abortions), including its evidence-based clinical guideline on "The Care of Women Requesting Induced Abortion".

It is accepted parliamentary practice that proposals for changes in the law on abortion are made on the basis of free votes. Parliament agreed in 1990 that the legal limit for most abortions should be 24 weeks gestation. The limit remains therefore a matter for Parliament to decide.

Local Improvement Finance Trusts

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the length is of the lease of each local improvement finance trust company. [61871]

Mr. Byrne: Information is not held centrally on the length of leases held by each individual local improvement finance trust (LIFT) company. Departmental guidance allows for the length of lease period for each LIFT to be up to 30 years. Normally 25 years is the period for the lease, although we are aware of instances where it is up to 30 years.

Major Trauma Centres

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many accident and emergency departments are designated as major trauma centres; and if she will make a statement. [62819]

Mr. Byrne: No accident and emergency departments in England are formally designated as major trauma centres.

Medicine Reviews

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps are being taken to quality assure the conduct of medicine reviews for *(a)* babies, *(b)* young children, *(c)* over 75-year-olds and *(d)* people with long-term conditions. [64180]

Jane Kennedy: A medicine use review (MUR) service is a nationally specified service within the new contractual framework for community pharmacy, which went live in April 2005 and is underpinned by robust clinical governance arrangements. Where pharmacies choose to provide these services, both the community pharmacist and the premises must be accredited. The purpose of the MUR service is, with the patient's agreement, to improve their knowledge and use of medicines.

Primary care trusts (PCTs) monitor services provided by community pharmacies under the new contractual framework. Directions have been issued to PCTs setting out the requirements for a MUR service.

A leaflet has also been developed by Medicines Partnership, which provides information to patients about what they can expect from a MUR.

Meningitis

Mr. Heald: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what hospital treatment protocols there are for meningitis; what such protocols have been issued in the last five years; who is responsible for issuing guidance to hospitals about the best and latest protocols for the treatment of meningitis; and if she will make a statement. [61093]

Caroline Flint: There are a number of authorities responsible for the issue of guidance to hospitals on the treatment of meningitis. Like all guidance based advice it should be provided using the most up to date evidence. The Department endorses the guidance produced by the meningitis research foundation (MRF) and has funded the MRF to produce a junior doctor handbook.

The Department has asked the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence to provide guidance on the management of meningococcal disease and meningitis in children and adolescents.

Mr. Heald: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the ability of hospitals in England to treat meningitis; and what steps her Department is taking to improve the treatment of meningitis in hospitals. [61095]

Caroline Flint: The Department has funded research to carry out an audit of the hospital management of acute bacterial meningitis and meningococcal septicaemia. This work will be published in a peer-reviewed journal and guidance issued following its publication.

Mr. Heald: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent representations she has received about the standard of care in the NHS for patients with suspected cases of meningitis. [61096]

Caroline Flint: In 2005–06, there were no early day motions or adjournment debates on meningitis. In 2005–06, 15 parliamentary questions were answered that were in relation to meningitis. From August 2005, 67 cases were recorded on the Department's central correspondence system with a mention of meningitis in the reply.

Ministerial Visits

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she next plans to visit Coventry. [65393]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Secretary of State for Health has accepted an invitation to officially open the NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement in Coventry, at a date to be agreed by the Secretary of State's office and the organisation.

MRSA

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the merits of phage therapy as a means of tackling MRSA in hospitals; and if she will make a statement. [64185]

Jane Kennedy: The therapeutic use of bacteriophages may be a valuable approach but the safe and controlled use of phage therapy requires more detailed study.

Musculoskeletal Framework

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when her Department will publish the Musculoskeletal Framework. [63619]

Mr. Byrne: Draft musculoskeletal framework proposals are currently subject to comment from key stakeholders. The outcome of this process will be published later this year.

NHS (Private Providers)

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether private providers which carry out NHS work will be subject to the patient involvement schemes which operate in NHS organisations. [54289]

Mr. Byrne: Strategic health authorities and primary care trusts are responsible for ensuring that section 11 of the Health and Social Care Act 2001—the duty to involve and consult patients and the public—s complied with when making arrangements for another organisation, person or people to provide services. This includes independent sector providers.

NHS Appointments

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will take steps to revise the rules for appointments within health bodies to ensure *(a)* the process is transparent and *(b)* those appointed have (i) suitable skills and background experience and (ii) do not have a record of financial mismanagement. [61884]

Mr. Byrne: The Secretary of State for Health has delegated her appointments function relating to national health service chairs and non-executives to the NHS Appointments Commission.

Candidates for appointment are measured against detailed appointment and person specifications and are required to declare any potential conflict of interest. These processes are designed to minimise the risk of those without the necessary skills and experience being appointed and to ensure financial probity.

The NHS Appointments Commission processes are required to meet the highest standards of openness, transparency and probity set by the commissioner for public appointments and are also subject to periodic audit by the commissioner.

Recruitment of staff in the NHS is a local matter but NHS employers are expected to have fair and transparent recruitment processes as part of good human resources practice.

NHS Tariff

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the NHS tariff for 2006–07; and what methodology was used for its calculation. [60645]

Mr. Byrne: The corrected national tariff has now been issued for the national health service to refine its planning for 2006–07. The methodology used for its calculation is set out in 'Implementing Payment By Results: Technical Guidance 2006–07: Executive Summary' published on 26 January 2006.

NHS Trusts

Ann Keen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on her Department's plans to tackle deficits in NHS trusts in the new financial year. [64062]

Jane Kennedy: In 2006–07, the priority will be to restore financial balance in the national health service, although this may not be possible for each and every organisation.

We are making a number of changes to deal with the financial problems in a minority of organisations, including the following:

we have increased transparency of reporting so that problems are identified;

the use of turnaround expertise from the private sector combined with the techniques we have used in the NHS to deliver on other targets such as waiting and accident and emergency. This includes the spread of best practice to all overspending organisations, not just those officially part of the turnaround process; and

establishing the right culture for financial correction, by:

changing the incentives, such as: increasing the emphasis in the ratings system on financial management, moving forward with the reform programme of payment by results, and practice based commissioning;

emphasising the accountability of boards, executives and non-executives, for financial as well as service performance; and

strengthening the financial challenge function in the Department to ensure that we do not add to the cost burdens.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects to make an announcement on the approval of foundation status for the next tranche of NHS Trusts; what effects changes to NHS tariffs have had on the timing of the announcement; and if she will make a statement. [61649]

Mr. Byrne: Decisions on authorising and announcing NHS trusts as NHS foundation trusts are a matter for Monitor (the statutory name of which is the Independent Regulator of NHS Foundation Trusts).

Monitor has revised the authorisation dates for 24 wave two applicants—if successful—from 1 April and 1 July to 1 May (four mental health trusts), 1 June (six acute trusts) and 1 August (13 acute, and one mental health trust). All 24 trusts have previously received the support from the Secretary of State to go forward to Monitor and will be assessed against the criteria laid down in the Health and Social Care (Community Health Standards) Act 2003.

East Somerset NHS Trust is being considered for authorisation on 1 June.

Patient Costs (Reimbursement)

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether provision exists for patients not able to receive timely treatment under the NHS and who paid the cost of their own treatment, to receive reimbursement of those costs. [61722]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 27 March 2006]:* No. If a patient receives private treatment without prior authorisation from the appropriate commissioning authority, they will not be a national health service patient for the purposes of that treatment. The patient would be a private patient and therefore be responsible for meeting the cost of the treatment themselves. The powers of the Secretary of State underlying the NHS are in sections 1 to 5 of the NHS Act 1977 and are not such as to enable the Secretary of State, or those to whom her powers have been delegated, to reimburse charges a patient has incurred for private treatment they have themselves acquired.

There are powers under European law for NHS commissioners to authorise treatment overseas within the European Union in some circumstances. Prior authorisation before treatment is currently required. There is no right for NHS patients to be treated outside of the European Economic Area (EEA). All patients seeking treatment outside of the EEA must have prior authorisation from their primary care trust before travelling for treatment. The NHS will not reimburse the cost of any treatment outside of the EEA where prior approval was either not sought or granted.

Primary Care Trusts (Non-local Services)

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how much was spent in 2005–06 on the commissioning of non-local services by primary care trusts in strategic health authorities *(a)* where authorities have been instructed that the sub-regional health economy must balance its budget for 2005–06 and *(b)* where authorities have not been so instructed; [57102]

(2) what research her Department has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the effect of making regional health economies balance their budgets on commissioning of non-local services by primary care trusts. [57103]

Mr. Byrne: The Department does not hold this information centrally nor has it commissioned research on the commissioning of non-local services. This is a matter for primary care trusts.

Public Appointments

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2726W, on public appointments, when she now expects that details of those who have been appointed by the NHS Appointments Commission will be made public. [61558]

Mr. Byrne: The NHS Appointments Commission has given a commitment to publish details of the public appointments it makes on behalf of Secretary of State. This information is now available on the NHS Appointments Commission's website at:
www.appointments.org.uk/publications.asp

School Nurses

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how much her Department spent producing the 2006 edition of the "School Nurse: Practice Development Resource Pack"; which organisations her Department consulted prior to publication; and if she will make a statement; [62880]

(2) if she will list the main changes between the 2001 and 2006 editions of the "School Nurse: Practice Development Resource Pack"; and if she will make a statement; [62881]

(3) to whom copies of the 2006 edition of the "School Nurse: Practice Development Resource Pack" were sent; at what cost; and if she will make a statement. [62882]

Mr. Byrne: The Department spent £14,679 producing the "School Nurse: Practice Development Resource Pack". The pack was prepared in consultation with the Royal College of Nursing, Community Practitioner and Health Visitor Association, National Children's Bureau, Nursing and Midwifery Council, Sheffield University and the Department for Education and Skills.

The original "School Nurse: Practice Development Resource Pack" was published in 2001. It has been updated to reflect the changing policy and health context in which school nurses are now working. It is one product of the work led by the Chief Nursing Officer to promote a modern role for school nurses and to increase the number of school nurses as announced in "Choosing Health". The main changes include an update on Government policy including "Choosing Health, Every Child Matters", the national service framework for children, young people and maternity and healthy schools. It also contains additional information on today's health priorities, such as obesity, smoking and mental health.

There has been no distribution of this pack. Copies are available from the Department's website at:

www.dh.gov.uk

A copy is available in the Library.

Sunsmart Campaign

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what resources have been made available to the SunSmart campaign for 2006–07; and what assessment she has made of the merits of increasing funding to the campaign. [65084]

Caroline Flint: SunSmart, the national skin cancer and sun protection campaign run by Cancer Research UK is funded by the United Kingdom health Departments. The Department will be writing in the near future to confirm its contribution to the overall amount. All such campaigns are kept under regular review and are assessed in the light of their merits and the overall funding position of the Department.

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Health on what issues the SunSmart campaign will be focusing resources during the summer of 2006. [65085]

Caroline Flint: Cancer Research UK runs SunSmart, the national skin cancer prevention campaign, on behalf of the United Kingdom health departments. It advises people about how to enjoy the sun safely, to avoid sunburn by using protective screening methods and about the risks of using sun beds for cosmetic purposes.

In 2006, SunSmart is targeting men and outdoor workers as malignant melanoma rates have quadrupled in men in the last 30 years and outdoor workers are exposed to three to four times more ultraviolet rays than indoor workers.

Tanning Salons

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what discussions her Department has had with the coin-operated tanning salon industry regarding *(a)* skin cancer awareness and *(b)* access to such equipment by under 16-year-olds; [65081]

(2) if she will assess the implications for the incidence of skin cancer of trends in the number of unstaffed coin-operated tanning salons in England; and if she will make a statement; [65082]

(3) whether the Sunsmart campaign has undertaken work to raise awareness of coin-operated tanning equipment use. [65083]

Caroline Flint: Excessive exposure to ultraviolet radiation, both natural and artificial, is the most important modifiable risk factor regarding skin cancer. Recent decades have seen significant increases in the number of people in the United Kingdom being diagnosed with this condition which kills around 2,000 people each year.

The Government are therefore concerned about the apparent increased use of sunbeds for cosmetic purposes, especially by children, including that which takes place in coin operated salons. On our behalf, Cancer Research UK is in discussions with the sun bed industry to review industry practices and the scope for self-regulation. These discussions have covered restrictions on the use of sunbeds by under 16s, the displaying of information about the use of sunbeds, their risks to health especially to children, and specific concerns about unsupervised tanning devices.

. Cancer Research UK also runs SunSmart, the national skin cancer prevention campaign, on behalf of the UK health Departments. It advises people about how to enjoy the sun safely, to avoid sunburn by using protective screening methods and about the risks of using sunbeds for cosmetic purposes. The SunSmart campaign has focused on the dangers of sunbeds generally and the SunSmart website has a dedicated section on this, which includes a recommendation for under 16s never to use sunbeds for cosmetic purposes.

Television Sets

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many television sets are in operation in the Department *(a)* in total, *(b)* in Minister's private offices and *(c)* in each office building in the Department; and how many television licences are held by the Department. [62793]

Mr. Byrne: The Department of Health has a total of 126 television (TV) sets. The number of TV sets in Ministers' Private Offices is 16. The number in each office building is:

Skipton House—3

Richmond House—111

New Kings Beam House—2

Market Towers—5

Quarry House—5

The Department does not hold any TV licences.

Tuberculosis

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many incidences of tuberculosis were identified in each primary care trust in London in *(a)* 2002–03, *(b)* 2003–04, *(c)* 2004–05 and *(d)* 2005–06; and if she will make a statement. [64403]

Jane Kennedy: The data for the calendar years 2002, 2003 and 2004 are shown in the table.

Primary care trusts	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Barking and Dagenham	35	42	43
Barnet	103	102	94
Bexley Care Trust	21	25	29
Brent Teaching	204	217	233
Bromley	24	31	28
Camden	117	106	77
City and Hackney Teaching	144	157	157
Croydon	108	113	119
Ealing	197	187	256
Enfield	80	97	96
Greenwich Teaching	73	72	88
Hammersmith and Fulham	82	64	69
Haringey Teaching	139	127	149
Harrow	115	115	99
Havering	19	13	12
Hillingdon	95	116	118
Hounslow	121	98	117
Islington	105	94	89
Kensington and Chelsea	30	51	48
Kingston	18	19	23
Lambeth	159	155	127
Lewisham	91	79	77
Newham	215	246	242
Redbridge	92	110	111
Richmond and Twickenham	14	12	12
Southwark	106	101	133
Sutton and Merton	85	70	85
Tower Hamlets	123	146	118
Waltham Forest	103	99	99
Wandsworth	93	96	96
Westminster	75	89	85
Total	2,986	3,049	3,129

Notes:
1. Since case numbers in some primary care trusts (PCTs) are small, numbers may fluctuate from year-to-year, and thus any apparent 'trends' in the data should be interpreted with caution.
2. Population estimates for PCTs are only available from 2001 onwards. Data on tuberculosis rates for the years 2001 to 2004 can only be provided.
3. Data as at 12 April 2006.

Source:
Health Protection Agency enhanced tuberculosis surveillance system.

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the enhanced tuberculosis surveillance TB incidence rates were for Wandsworth primary care trust for each year since 1998 *(a)* by rate per 100,000 population and *(b)* as a mean average over the period; and if she will make a statement. [64404]

Jane Kennedy: The data for the calendar years 2001, 2002, 2003 and 2004 are shown in the table.

Wandsworth primary care trust: tuberculosis case reports and rates 2001–04

	Cases	*Rate (per 100,000)*	*Average rate (2001–04)*
2001	51	18.8	30.7
2002	93	34.0	
2003	96	35.0	
2004	96	34.7	

Notes:
1. The numbers of tuberculosis cases in some primary care trusts (PCTs) across London are small. In view of this, numbers may fluctuate from year to year, and thus any apparent trends in the data should be interpreted with caution. Any apparent trend or comparison between Wandsworth PCT and other PCTs in London has little validity.
2. Population estimates for PCTs are only available from 2001 onwards. The Health Protection Agency enhanced tuberculosis surveillance (ETS) system started collecting information on the PCT of residence of reported cases during 2003. Population estimates (Office of National Statistics) by PCT are only available from 2001. Wandsworth PCT rates for 2001 and 2002 have been derived retrospectively based on ONS population estimates.

Source:
Health Protection Agency ETS system. Data as at 12 April 2006

Winter Report

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health for what reasons a year in which there was an influenza epidemic was chosen as the basis for comparison with the winter of 2005–06 in her Department's Winter Report 2005–06. [63110]

Jane Kennedy: 1999–2000 was the comparison used in the Winter Report for 2005–06 because it was the first year that a comparable report was published examining the performance of the national health service during the winter and so it provides the baseline comparison.

In addition the 10-year NHS Plan was launched in 2000. As this year's report took the theme of reform, comparing performance during winter now with that during 1999–2000 enabled this year's report to explore the improvements due to reforms outlined in the NHS Plan.

World Cup (Complimentary Tickets)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many complimentary tickets her Department has received for games taking place at the FIFA World cup 2006 in Germany. [63903]

Mr. Byrne: The Department has not received any complimentary tickets for FIFA World cup games taking place in Germany in 2006. Ministers currently have no plans to attend any of the matches.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Bullying/Sexual Harassment

David Simpson: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many people in her Department have been *(a)* disciplined and *(b)* dismissed in the last 3 years as a result of a complaint against them of (i) bullying and (ii) sexual harassment being upheld. [65933]

Ms Harman: Three individuals were dismissed for bullying, eight received final written warnings, five resigned before charges could be brought and five cases are ongoing.

In the two cases of sexual harassment which were upheld in the last 3 years, both respondents resigned before charges could be brought.

David Simpson: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much compensation her Department has paid out in the last 3 years as a result of complaints of *(a)* bullying and *(b)* sexual harassment being upheld. [65934]

Ms Harman: None.

Electoral Registration

Chris Ruane: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the advertising budget was for promoting electoral registration in each of the past 10 years for *(a)* central government and *(b)* each local authority area. [65900]

Bridget Prentice: The information is as follows.

(a) The Government have not specifically allocated an annual budget for the promotion of electoral registration over the past 10 years. However, the Government have run two campaigns during this period. The first was a Home Office campaign in 2001 jointly to promote the then newly introduced systems of rolling registration and postal voting on demand, as introduced by the RPA 2000. Expenditure figures for this are not available. Recently, the Government, in co-operation with several organisations, lead the 1,824 Collective registration campaign to encourage electors in London to register for the 2006 local elections. Central Government expenditure on the media campaign was £52,618.36.

(b) This information is not held centrally.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many electoral registration officers there are. [66064]

Bridget Prentice: There are 391 electoral registration officers in Great Britain. In Northern Ireland the Chief Electoral Officer is responsible for electoral registration.

Grievance Procedures

David Simpson: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs pursuant to the Answer of 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 43W, on grievance procedures, how many grievances have been initiated in her Department involving *(a)* equality issues and *(b)* diversity issues in each of the last 3 years; and how many such procedures resulted in (i) disciplinary action and (ii) dismissal. [65935]

Ms Harman: My Department's Equality and Diversity Grievances procedure is applied to all grievances with equality and diversity elements; they are not sub-divided into equality grievances and diversity grievances.

The total number of equality and diversity grievances investigated over the last 3 years including those stated in my previous reply are as follows:

	Number of cases
2003–04	16
2004–05	16
2005–06	27

Three individuals were dismissed, nine were given final written warnings, seven resigned before charges could be brought, and seven cases are ongoing.

Written Answers to Questions

Thursday 27 April 2006

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Disabled People

Tom Levitt: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission if he will make a statement on the Commission's progress in fulfilling its statutory obligation to promote the rights of disabled people. [66020]

Nick Harvey: A number of specific actions are in hand to address disability issues. For example:

The visitor reception building currently under construction will facilitate access for those with mobility problems, providing level access for the first time for all visitors to Westminster Hall and the associated public facilities, and an alternative covered route for ambulatory disabled visitors to Central Lobby and the Palace via Star Chamber Court;

A programme to improve signage around the parliamentary estate is in hand;

Hearing loops have been installed in all Committee rooms as well as the Chamber;

The project to upgrade the parliamentary website is addressing disability access, and disabled users have been consulted as part of the trial;

Information is being collated on reasonable adjustments that have been made for staff so as to create a 'one stop shop' for information in this area, making it easier for staff and managers to access the information;

Workshops and guidance notes on supporting staff with disabilities will be available to staff and managers after the summer recess.

European Scrutiny Committee Reports

Michael Gove: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission how many copies of European Scrutiny Committee reports have been sold in each of the last five years. [66131]

Nick Harvey: The number of copies of European Scrutiny Committee publications (reports, special reports and minutes of evidence volumes) sold in each of the last five financial years is as follows:

	Copies
2001–02	3,999
2002–03	5,451
2003–04	5,041
2004–05	3,765
2005–06	2,793

TRANSPORT

Concessionary Travel

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what reasons underlay the Government's decision not to include community transport schemes within the definition of bus services eligible for the purposes of statutory concessionary travel schemes under the Travel Concessions (Eligible Services) Order 2002; and if he will make a statement. [66055]

Dr. Ladyman: The Travel Concessions (Eligible Services) Order 2002 was made under the Transport Act 2000 and reflects the policy that the statutory entitlement to concessionary fares applies to local bus travel. Concessions on community transport services can be provided at the discretion of individual local authorities along with other help towards costs.

Highway Maintenance (Peterborough)

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will instruct his officials to review the Local Transport Plan highway maintenance allocation to Peterborough city council for 2006–07, with particular reference to the impact of the formulaic approach to capital allocation; and if he will make a statement. [66751]

Dr. Ladyman: In December 2004 Peterborough was given indicative allocations for highway maintenance in the Local Transport Plan settlement of £2.409 million for 2005–06 and £2.209 million for 2006–07.

These sums were calculated by formula and included specific amounts for strengthening structures on the primary route network. The formula had a dampening mechanism that prevented maintenance allocations varying by more than 25 per cent. from the previous year, and in the case of Peterborough the sums given to them for primary route work had the effect of depressing the amount available to them for other maintenance work.

A consultation on the LTP maintenance formula took place in 2005, and it was decided that from 2007–08 primary route network allocations will not be included when applying the 25 per cent. year on year dampening mechanism. This will rectify the problem experienced by Peterborough.

Ministerial Cars (Fuel Costs)

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the fuel costs were for ministerial cars used by his Department in each of the last five years. [67005]

Dr. Ladyman: Ministerial cars are provided by the Government Car Service (GCS) in accordance with the Prime Minister's guidance 'Travel by Ministers'. A breakdown of the figures in the format requested is not readily available and could be obtained only at a disproportionate cost.

Parking

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) when the Government last published guidelines to local authorities on parking enforcement and what the title of the publication was; [66288]

(2) what plans the Government has to issue revised guidelines to local authorities on parking enforcement. [66289]

Dr. Ladyman: The Government published Local Authority Circular 1/95 (Welsh Office Circular 26/95), "Guidance on Decriminalised Parking Enforcement outside London" in 1995. The Department is producing regulations and statutory guidance on civil parking enforcement under Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004; in addition the Department is revising Local Authority Circular 1/95. Public consultation will take place later this year with implementation in 2007.

Mr. Burrowes: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport with what requirements private parking enforcement companies have to comply to gain access to personal information from the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency in the process of enforcing penalties for parking offences. [66647]

Dr. Ladyman: Regulation 27(1)*(e)* of the Road Vehicles (Registration and Licensing) Regulations 2002 requires DVLA to release information held on its vehicle record to anyone who can demonstrate 'reasonable cause' to have that information.

Companies that make regular requests for information are required to provide a full résumé of their business practices, detailing how they meet 'reasonable cause' and outline how they will use any information they receive. Information is then released on the basis that it will be used only for that purpose. Applicants are reminded that use of the information for any other purpose is an offence under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Companies that request and receive information electronically are visited by DVLA staff prior to any link being established. These links are operated in the context of clear terms of agreement, which outlines when information may be requested, how it can be used and how it should be stored. The DVLA has the right to carry out ad hoc audits on companies to ensure that all inquires are appropriate. Any suspected abuses will be investigated and, when appropriate, referred to the Information Commissioner for prosecution.

Railways

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on proposals for a high speed rail link between Scotland and England. [66371]

Derek Twigg: The Government have a manifesto commitment to look at the feasibility and affordability of a new North-South high-speed link. The merits of a high speed line need to be rigorously examined before we will be in a position to make an announcement.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport announced on 15 March that the Department will publish a long term strategy for the railways along side the High Level Output Specification. The Department will take forward consideration of high speed lines as part of this work.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when *(a)* he and *(b)* one of his agencies last carried out a national survey of railway station usage. [62464]

Derek Twigg: The Department for Transport has been collecting usage data from stations across Great Britain over 2004 and 2005 to complete the National Rail Travel Survey. Results from this survey should be available towards the end of 2006.

Seat Belts

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has had with representatives of the media on the reporting of serious road traffic accidents and whether those involved were wearing seat-belts. [65180]

Dr. Ladyman: As part of the Think! road safety campaign we engage regularly with the media to encourage the promotion of road safety messages.

Ministers or officials in this Department have not had discussions with the media specifically about the reporting of accidents and whether those involved in the accidents were wearing seat-belts.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Entrepreneurs

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps his Department is taking to increase the number of entrepreneurs above the age of 50 years in the North East. [65765]

Alun Michael: The Government encourage people of all ages to become entrepreneurs and I recognise the considerable potential that exists among people also over the age of 50 years. Most business support is available to people over 50, but we do recognise a need for specific advice and assistance to increase entrepreneurial activity in this age group.

ONE North East has produced the North East of England Enterprise Strategy in association with regional partners in the public and private sectors. The strategy draws together the priorities for encouraging and developing existing and potential entrepreneurial talent across all age groups, and outlines the actions, time scales and responsibilities for their delivery.

One example of funding specifically targeted at the over 50s age group is the Challenge Fund strand of the Small Business Service's Phoenix Fund which awarded PRIME (the Prince's Initiative for Mature Enterprise) some £1.4 million in revenue and loan guarantees up to 31 March 2006 to support that organisation's national activities to help people aged over 50 set up in business.

More generally, the following DTI supported initiatives are also contributing to increased entrepreneurial activity in the region across all sectors and age groups:

support provided through the Business Link network in the region,

ongoing restructuring and simplification of Government business support,

some £2 million Phoenix Fund support for four community development finance institutions in the region to provide finance and support to enterprises and entrepreneurs in under-represented and disadvantaged groups,

£26.4 million to be shared by Easington, Derwentside, Wear Valley, Sedgefield and South Tyneside under the local enterprise growth initiative (LEGI).

EU Structural Funds

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which *(a)* areas and *(b)* regions are due to receive less EU structural funds over the next financial perspective than under their current allocation; and what the difference in the sums allocated is in each case. [66251]

Alun Michael: On 20 December 2005 I made a written statement to the House on the outcome of the European Council regarding reform of the EU structural and cohesion funds. My statement set out the implications of the budgetary agreement for the UK for the 2007–13 financial perspective. The progress made was very good news for the UK and a positive achievement of the UK presidency.

The position remains as I set out in my statement. It is not possible at this stage to provide precise figures for the amounts to be received by individual regions post-2006. We will only know this once the European Commission has produced official structural funds allocations for the UK and its regions.

Glass Manufacturing

Mr. Illsley: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what forecast his Department has made of employment levels in the UK container glass manufacturing industry over the next five years. [64145]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The department does not make forecasts for employment in the glass container industry. However I am aware that the total UK glass industry, including glazing for construction and the automotive sector, employs 31,000[1].

[1] Office for National Statistics Annual Business Inquiry 2004.

Hearing Loss Compensation

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what consideration has been given by Ministers to the implications for claimants for compensation of noise-induced hearing loss of breaches of rule 4(2)c of the Conditional Fee Agreement Regulations 2000. [65162]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The implications for claimants of a breach of the above regulations are:

1. The compensation to be paid by the Department would be unaffected.

2. If the agreement between the claimant and their representative is deemed to be invalid then the claimant has no liability to his solicitor for his solicitors costs.

3. The claimant's liability for disbursements remains (except possibly for the After The Event Insurance (ATE) premium, depending on what a court might decide) and the Department has therefore instructed that interim payments on account of disbursements be made as appropriate and on a case-by-case basis.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement about breaches of rule 4(2)c of the Conditional Fee Agreement Regulations 2000 in relation to noise-induced hearing loss cases. [65163]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Matters are presently before the courts and it would be wrong to make a statement while the issue is under consideration.

Sex Discrimination Cases

Ed Balls: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many sex discrimination cases have been initiated by people in *(a)* Wakefield District and *(b)* Normanton constituency over the past five years; and how many of these have been successful. [66027]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The following table shows the total number of sex discrimination claims that have been registered by the Employment Tribunals Service over the past five years and the number of successful cases at tribunal. Statistical information for individual districts and constituencies is not readily available and could be produced only at disproportionate cost.

	Total claims registered	*Successful at tribunal*
2004–05	11,726	299
2003–04	17,722	306
2002–03	11,001	363
2001–02	15,703	368
2000–01	25,940	417

Source:
Employment Tribunals Service Annual Reports

Sunday Trading

Mr. Malik: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will seek to amend schedule 4 of the Sunday Trading Act 1994 to extend the right not to work on any Sunday exercisable by shop workers to include distribution workers who work in the retail sector. [65980]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Sunday shopping review is looking at the restrictions on Sunday shop opening hours. The issue of the right not to work on Sundays is not within the scope of the review and we have no plans to extend protection in this area.

Mr. Grogan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether potential liberalisation of Sunday trading hours will be undertaken by *(a)* primary legislation and *(b)* an amendment to the Sunday Trading Act 1994 using a regulatory reform order. [66049]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Ministers have yet to take a view on the review of Sunday shop opening hours. However if we were to relax the current restrictions, it would be by primary legislation.

World Heritage Sites

David Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which Minister in his Department has responsibility for issues relating to world heritage sites. [64829]

Alan Johnson: Lead responsibility for policy on world heritage sites rests with my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport works closely with relevant Government Departments on all issues affecting world heritage sites. Within DTI, there is no

single Minister with specific responsibilities for world heritage sites and any issues relating to DTI are dealt with by the appropriate Minister concerned.

WALES

Superannuation Liability

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what total amount of employers' normal contributions accruing superannuation liability charge have been accounted for by his Department in each of the last five years for which data are available. [61355]

Mr. Hain: The amount of employers' accruing superannuation liability charges in respect of Wales Office members of the principal civil service pension scheme in the last five years is as follows:

	£000
2005–06	333
2004–05	215
2003–04	202
2002–03	181
2001–02	160

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Fledgling Democracies

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much UK aid will be provided *(a)* bilaterally and *(b)* multilaterally to promote and further democracy in 2006–07. [64626]

Mr. Thomas: DFID tracks its bilateral expenditure by monitoring expenditure against specific sector objectives, one of which is improved governance. This includes different aspects of state building such as support to improve popular participation in the decision making process, and building capacity to improve government's accountability to its citizens. It also covers the encouragement of more pluralist and democratic political systems.

Some funding decisions are still being taken, however, given the importance that DFID attaches to governance, I would expect the share of bilateral governance expenditure to be at least maintained at current levels, and probably increased. Based on figures for 2005–06 this suggests somewhere in the order of £347 million or 13.9 per cent. of the total bilateral spend.

In addition, DFID provides funding to a number of multilateral institutions such as the European Development Fund, World Bank, United Nations Agencies and Regional Development Banks, and this is pooled with other donors. In many cases these institutions support a range of activities, including governance. The UK share of this is not tracked.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Departmental Websites

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list *(a)* the websites operated by her Department and *(b)* the reports placed on the internet in March 2006, indicating in each case whether paper copies were also made available. [65213]

Mr. Lammy: The information is as follows.

(a)

Website	*URL*
BBC Charter Review	http://www.bbccharterreview.org.uk/
Better Public Buildings	http://www.betterpublicbuildings.gov.uk
Break Out	http://www.culture.gov.uk/breakout/fl/index.htm
Communications Act 2003	http://www.communicationsact.gov.uk/
Communications Bill	http://www.communicationsbill.gov.uk
Communications White Paper	http://www.communicationswhitepaper.gov.uk
Culture Online	http://www.cultureonline.gov.uk/
DCMS (main site)	http://www.culture.gov.uk
Digital Television	http://www.digitaltelevision.gov.uk
Flying the Union Flag	http://www.culture.gov.uk/flagflying/default.htm
Government Art Collection	http://www.gac.culture.gov.uk/home/index.asp
Lottery 2009 shares consultation	http://www.lottery2009.culture.gov.uk/
Mobility of Collections	http://www.culture.gov.uk/mobility/
UK World Heritage site	http://www.ukworldheritage.org.uk/

(b)

	Report	*Availability*
March 2006	Your BBC, You've Spoken: White Paper summary leaflets (English and Welsh Versions)	Available on paper
March 2006	White Paper "A public service for all: the BBC in the digital age", DCMS, March 2006	Available on paper
March 2006	Draft Royal Charter and Framework Agreement (BBC)	Only online and in the Libraries of both Houses
March 2006	Regulatory Impact Assessment (BBC Charter Review)	Only online and in the Libraries of both Houses
1 March 2006	Report of the Spoliation Advisory Panel in respect of a painting held by the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford	Available on paper
1 March 2006	Sustainable Development Action Plan	Available on paper
13 March 2006	Independent Review into the purpose and function of the AERC	Available on paper
13 March 2006	Summary of Responses and Conclusion on the Three-year (Gambling) Licensing Policy Statement Regulations Consultation	Available on paper

(b)

	Report	Availability
16 March 2006	Advertising By Remote Gaming Operators	Available on paper
25 March 2006	Reflecting on the past and looking to the future: The 2007 Bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade in the British Empire	Available on paper
30 March 2006	London Olympic Games and Paralympic Games Act: Regulatory Impact Assessment	Available on paper
31 March2006	Response to the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee Report on Broadcasting Rights for Cricket Session 2005–06 Cm 6772	Available on paper

Heritage Lottery Fund

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much has been awarded by the Heritage Lottery Fund to organisations and projects in *(a)* each constituency and *(b)* each council district in Northern Ireland. [65340]

Mr. Lammy: Details of grants awarded by the Heritage Lottery Fund to organisations and projects in Northern Ireland between April 1994 and March 2006 are set out as follows.

UK constituency	*Total (£)*
Belfast, East	2,508,674
Belfast, North	5,880,819
Belfast, South	17,965,910
Belfast, West	4,410,764
East Antrim	7,143,152
East Londonderry	3,289,493
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	4,060,555
Foyle	6,613,184
Lagan Valley	7,324,516
Mid Ulster	2,377,513
Mid-Ulster	1,236,201
Newry and Armagh	9,525,380
North Antrim	8,213,825
North Down	2,029,400
South Antrim	1,533,002
South Down	6,944,365
Strangford	5,432,816
Upper Bann	2,373,610
West Tyrone	3,689,838
Grand total	102,553,017
Local authority	
Antrim	1,470,120
Ards	5,015,900
Armagh	5,716,761
Ballymena	6,301,242
Ballymoney	347,595
Banbridge	729,007
Belfast	28,728,081
Carrickfergus	1,992,500
Castlereagh	1,658,406
Coleraine	1,719,800
Cookstown	1,041,421
Craigavon	2,347,960
Derry City	6,608,184
Down	5,755,280
Dungannon	2,282,619
Fermanagh	2,345,166
Larne	4,732,152
Limavady	1,566,998
Lisburn	6,629,348
Magherafelt	2,005,063
Moyle	1,574,683
Newry and Mourne	5,393,506
Newtownabbey	824,751
North Down	2,029,400
Omagh	1,593,355
Strabane	2,096,483
No local authority given	47,236
Grand total	102,553,017

Internet Gambling

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) what research her Department has *(a)* carried out and *(b)* commissioned into of internet gambling addiction among young people; [65472]

(2) what assessment she has made of the problem of internet gambling addiction among young people; [65473]

(3) what research she has *(a)* carried out and *(b)* commissioned into the use of internet gambling sites by underage people; [65474]

(4) what assessment she had made of the use of internet gambling sites by under-age people. [65475]

Mr. Caborn: In 2001, the National Lottery Commission published research monitoring trends in the level of participation in National Lottery games by 12 to 15-year-olds. The research also looked into the prevalence of problem gambling by under-16s and considered under-16s participation in some other forms of gambling, but not internet gambling. (Under-16s and the National lottery Tracking Survey, July 2000.)

This research is being updated currently and the results, which are due to be published at the end of summer 2006, will include some comparative information about under-16s participation in other forms of gambling, irrespective of the way in which facilities to gamble are provided, and will also contain specific information on internet lottery use.

Olympic Games

Meg Hillier: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions she has had with *(a)* local authorities, *(b)* the Olympic Delivery Authority and *(c)* other agencies on the future of Hackney Marshes and the Olympic precinct in Hackney following the Games in 2012. [65111]

Mr. Caborn: The London Development Agency is currently working with the London borough of Hackney to develop a comprehensive proposal of improvements for the future of the Marshes, recognising that it is a very important local recreational facility and ecological site. It is expected that plans for the Marshes will be publicly consulted on over the summer.

In terms of the temporary use of East Marsh during the Games, this part of the Marshes will be fully restored after the Games as part of the overall improvement plan for the Marshes. Restoring East Marsh back to its current use is a commitment that the Games stakeholders are firmly committed to; furthermore it is a legally binding condition of the planning consent granted in October 2004.

In line with Hackney borough council's aspirations, the legacy development will provide space for industrial and other workspace units and areas of new open space. In addition, one of the three indoor arenas will be retained in order to provide a sports venue for Hackney.

The Olympic Delivery Authority, which has recently been established, will be working with boroughs and other stakeholders to ensure that there are viable and sustainable legacy plans for all permanent venues and infrastructure.

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will take steps to allow Olympic participants in pistol shooting events to practise for the events in the UK. [65427]

Mr. Caborn: Under current legislation, as a result of the Firearms Amendment Act (1997), three of the 15 shooting disciplines defined as an Olympic sport cannot be practised within Britain.

This legislation is the responsibility of the Home Office.

Strong representations have been made on this matter, which I have brought to the attention of my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary for consideration.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Forestry

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the environmental record of the Australian Forest Standard; and if she will make a statement. [65242]

Mr. Morley: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2394W, about the remit of the Central Point of Expertise on Timber (CPET) and the Australian Forest Standard.

CPET checked the PEFC scheme in February 2006 to see how the endorsed national schemes were implementing the new requirements introduced by the PEFC Council in 2004 and 2005. CPET examined 14 national schemes, one of which was the Australian Forest Certification Scheme.

CPET did not assess the performance outcomes of the Australian Forest Standard. Instead the focus was on whether the PEFC system had been adopted at the national scheme level. The Government have decided to give further consideration to the PEFC scheme as part of a wider review of all the forest certification schemes assessed by CPET in 2004. This was announced in Defra News release 144/06 on 30 March 2006, see: http://www.defra.gov.uk/news/2006/060330g.htm

Further details on the CPET assessments can be found on the website: http://www.proforest.net/cpet

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in what circumstances the Central Point of Expertise on Timber would remove the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification scheme from its approved list of certifiers of sustainable timber. [65245]

Mr. Morley: The Central Point of Expertise on Timber (CPET) may assess a forest certification scheme as no longer meeting the Government's criteria for robust assurance of sustainable timber sources but it would be for the Government to decide what advice CPET should give to central departments as a result.

The circumstances under which a forest certification scheme would fail the test for credible assurance are explained in the CPET document—"Criteria for Evaluating Certification Schemes"—see CPET website at http://www.proforest.net/cpet. In essence, if a scheme were assessed as scoring zero on any one of the relevant assessment criteria or scoring less than 75 per cent. of the total possible score on the relevant criteria then it would fail the test. Any such failure would cause the Government to consider changing the status of that scheme in respect of the level of assurance it would accept.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures the Government are taking to ensure that the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification scheme includes mandatory and enforceable minimum standards for all its national members. [65246]

Mr. Morley: The Government currently accept certificates from the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) scheme as assurance of legal and sustainable timber sources. This acceptance is subject to the UK Government being satisfied that national forest certification schemes endorsed by PEFC are all applying the PEFC standard consistently in their own countries. A sample check has been undertaken to establish to position. The initial findings led the Government to conclude that further examination and consultation should be undertaken before reaching a decision and that the forthcoming review of PEFC and the other schemes assessed by the Central Point of Expertise on Timber would provide an appropriate opportunity to do that.

The Government cannot ensure that PEFC includes mandatory and enforceable minimum standards for all its national members. PEFC is an independent private sector organisation that sets its own standard and system requirements for implementation. However, the UK Government could choose not to accept PEFC certificates as assurance of responsible timber sources and that is why we are undertaking the assessments and reviews already mentioned.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on what dates discussions have been held between representatives of the British and Australian governments regarding the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification scheme; and if she will make a statement. [65247]

Mr. Morley: Representatives of the UK and Australian Governments, including officials as well as Ministers of State, met with each other on the following dates to discuss the UK Government's timber procurement policy and within those discussions talked about the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes:

07 March 2006—Ministers and officials

20 March 2006—officials only

24 April 2006—officials only

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the 'outstanding issues' were which were found by the review of the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification scheme which caused the probation period to be extended. [65249]

Mr. Morley: The outstanding issues relate to the decision making process for forest management standard setting as adopted by the national schemes that have been endorsed by the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC). The PEFC Council's new requirement for standard setting is that

"The formal approval of standards shall be based on evidence of consensus".

An initial examination of some of the national schemes showed that the various national decision making processes were not identical. Subsequent information supplied by the schemes indicated that the processes adopted may nevertheless result in compliance with the PEFC Council requirements but the situation was not at all clear-cut and called for more examination.

Another factor considered was the impending review of all the forest certification schemes assessed by CPET in 2004. The Government has decided that this review will, in addition to examining published scheme requirements, consider evidence of failure to adopt scheme system requirements. A decision now on PEFC's probationary status may be overturned following the review. That would create significant confusion in the market place and loss of credibility for the CPET assessment process.

The UK Government was mindful of the implications any ill judged decision would have on all the stakeholders involved and was anxious to be as objective and fair as possible. Consequently, the decision was to postpone making a decision on PEFC's probationary status until after the review of schemes scheduled for late spring 2006.

Grievance Procedures

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many grievance procedures have been initiated in her Department in each of the last three years. [63545]

Jim Knight: The Civil Service Management Code sets out the requirements for Departments to have procedures in place to deal with grievances. The Defra Grievance Procedures are laid down on the Departmental intranet.

The central guidance lays down that where there have been less than five grievances raised in any one year that the information is suppressed on the grounds of confidentiality.

The number of formal grievances that have been initiated in the core-Department in each of the last three years are as follows:

2003—less than 5

2004—7

2005—less than 5

National Equine Database

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to increase the take-up of the National Equine Database. [64867]

Jim Knight: 75 of the 80 equine data supplier organisations are already providing the compulsory passport data and some voluntary data. It is in the voluntary data that the value of National Equine Database (NED), and its use to the public, lies—to enable the combination of pedigree and performance data to inform the breeding and buying public so that they can purchase horses and make breeding decisions with a greater degree of confidence.

NED already holds over 673,000 records, however we do need more pedigree data in NED if the on-line services are to be launched on schedule later this year. The Industry/Government partnership delivering NED is in direct contact with the few breed societies yet to supply pedigree data, with a view to helping them come to a decision to provide this information this summer. Personal presentations on the benefit of NED to the industry and NED Newsletters have proved an excellent tool to promote NED—see www.ned.uk.com for information.

We are planning an extensive marketing campaign to inform the equestrian public of the value of NED and its relevance to their particular interests. This will begin in August, leading to the launch of www.nedonline.co.uk, which is scheduled for end October.

Single Farm Payments

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the reasons for the difference in the actual and projected number of applications for Single Farm Payment; and how many of these additional applicants she expects to be *(a)* eligible for entitlement and *(b)* disallowed. [63334]

Jim Knight: The Rural Payments Agency (RPA) has recorded a total of 120,367 claim forms under the Single Payment Scheme in England, but this may include some duplicates. However, it is expected that the final number will remain in line with forecasts, which ranged from 110,000 to 130,000.

Given that the validation of claims is still progressing it is not possible at this stage to give meaningful figures on the number of claimants who will not receive a payment and/or entitlements.

Social Exclusion

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what funding streams her Department plans to finance in 2006–07 to tackle social exclusion. [56220]

Jim Knight: There are a number of relevant funding streams that will be financed by Defra in the period 2006–07,covering two aspects of social exclusion in particular: fuel poverty and rural disadvantage.

Defra plays a leading role in taking forward the Government's commitment to tackle fuel poverty in vulnerable households in England by 2010. The new phase of the Warm Front Scheme, which is the key tool for tackling fuel poverty in the private sector in England, was launched in June 2005. In addition, it was announced in the 2005 Pre-Budget Report that an additional £300 million would be made available to tackle fuel poverty across the UK over the 2005–08 period. In England, this means that total fuel poverty funding over the same period will exceed £800 million.

The new Rural Social and Community programme, will provide funding for locally-determined activities aimed at tackling social exclusion and community capacity building in rural areas. The programme, worth £27 million over two years, commences on 1 April 2006.

In addition, Defra is investing £21.3 million through the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) in order to promote sustainable delivery of rural services such as health, transport and education.

Water Companies

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the estimated amount of water lost through broken pipes by each of the privatised water companies was in the last period for which figures are available. [65831]

Mr. Morley: The Director General of Water Services publishes leakage figures annually in the 'Security of supply, leakage and the efficient use of water' reports. Total water company leakage for 2004–05, in megalitres per day, was reported as follows:

	Megalitres
Anglian	214
Bournemouth and W Hants	22
Bristol	53
Cambridge	14
Dee Valley	11
Dwr Cymru	226
Folkestone and Dover	8
Mid Kent	29
Northumbrian North	155
Northumbrian South	67
Portsmouth	30
Severn Trent	502
South East	69
South Staffordshire	74
South West	83
Southern	92
Sutton and East Surrey	24
Tendring Hundred	5
Thames	915
Three Valleys	149
United Utilities	500
Wessex	73
Yorkshire	293

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what assessment she has made of the level of dividends passed by water companies to their shareholders in each year since water services were privatised; [65102]

(2) what *(a)* amount and *(b)* proportion of total income of each water company was paid (i) to service debt and borrowing and (ii) in dividend payments to shareholders in each year since privatisation for which records are available. [65103]

Mr. Morley: Ofwat is the economic regulator of the water and sewerage companies in England and Wales. It sets price limits for each water company at price reviews. These are the maximum by which average charges may change each year. Ofwat sets price limits that allow each company to finance and fulfil its functions.

Dividends declared by the regulated companies are paid to their parent companies and are in their regulatory accounts. The companies are also required by Ofwat to provide a comprehensive explanation of the basis of the dividend. The parent companies report in their statutory accounts what is actually paid to shareholders.

Companies report to Ofwat each year in their profit and loss accounts the level of dividends and interest payments to service debt and borrowing. I will place copies in the House Library.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Alzheimer's Disease

Dr. Alasdair McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what response he has made to the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence appraisal consultation document on drugs for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease in relation to Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [66143]

Mr. Woodward: Guidance produced by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence is only applicable to England and Wales and does not currently extend to Northern Ireland. In light of this, the Department of Health, Social Service and Public Safety has not made a response to the Institute's appraisal consultation documents on drugs for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease.

The Department is in the process of establishing formal links with the Institute and will advise the Health and Personal Social Services on the applicability to Northern Ireland of the Institute's final recommendations on the Alzheimer's drugs.

Capital Expenditure (Schools)

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the total capital expenditure has been for each school in the 100 *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in Northern Ireland with the (i) highest and (ii) lowest percentage of children receiving free school meals in each of the last 10 years. [65995]

Angela E. Smith: Free school meals entitlement instead of pupils receiving free school meals is a better measure of need. Data for percentages of pupils actually receiving free school meals are held by Education and Library Boards and it would not have been possible to extract the data for all the years requested inside the allocated timescale.

The information on major works capital expenditure using free school meals entitlement will be placed in the Library.

Child Sex Abuse

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what correspondence he has received from members of the public on child sexual abuse by clerics. [65506]

Mr. Woodward: The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety has received one letter asking if there was going to be an independent public inquiry into allegations of clerical child sexual abuse and two telephone calls seeking advice on how to report allegations of abuse by clergy.

The Police Services of Northern Ireland (PSNI) has received two pieces of correspondence from members of the public on this subject during the past year.

PSNI and Social Services are the statutory organisations with powers to investigate allegations of abuse.

Civil Partnerships

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 24 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 2197W, on homosexual civil partnerships, whether *(a)* council staff and *(b)* registrar's office staff who have objections of a religious, moral or conscience nature can refuse to participate in civil partnership ceremonies. [36561]

Angela E. Smith: I am sorry for the delay in replying which was caused by an administrative error.

Each district council in its role as a local registration authority is required to appoint a Registrar of Civil Partnerships. In discharging this duty district councils as employers are required to comply with all relevant legislation.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 24 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 2197W, on homosexual civil partnerships, what plans he has to provide *(a)* information, *(b)* training and *(c)* assistance to ensure that (i) council staff and (ii) registrar's office staff with objections to homosexual and lesbian civil partnership ceremonies of a religious, moral or conscience nature are properly protected. [36562]

Angela E. Smith: I am sorry for the delay in replying which was caused by an administrative error.

Each district council in its role as a local registration authority is required to appoint a Registrar of Civil Partnerships. In discharging this duty district councils as employers are required to advise staff of their rights and responsibilities under the law.

Deaf Young People

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much the Department for Education has spent on educating deaf post-primary children and young people outside Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [65892]

Angela E. Smith: The following table shows the amount spent by each Education and Library Board on educating deaf post-primary children and young people outside Northern Ireland, for the last five years, where available.

Education and Library	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06*	*Total*
Belfast[1]	58,850.00	58,850.00	58,850.00	29,425.00	[3]—	205,975.00
North Eastern	n/a	n/a	36,702.00	67,886.00	88,376.00	n/a
South Eastern	118,000.00	179,000.00	151,000.00	172,000.00	57,000.00	676,000.00
Southern	21,527.60	[3]—	[3]—	6,923.30	27,169.00	48,696.60
Western[2]	33,400.70	36,677.32	40,568.83	43,518.38	44,599.31	198,764.54

n/a = not available.
[1] Belfast Education and Library Board Estimate based on average costs.
[2] Western Education and Library Board includes Transport Costs averaged over five years.
[3] No children funded to attend schools outside Northern Ireland.
Note:
Total costs for 2001–02 and 2002–03 in the North Eastern Education and Library Board are not available as separate records were not kept until 2003.

Free Transport (Senior Citizens)

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment has he made of the impact on Northern Ireland of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's announcement on the free national transport scheme for the elderly. [65988]

Mr. Woodward: The provision of concessionary fares on public transport is a devolved matter throughout the United Kingdom. The Chancellor of the Exchequer's announcement referred to arrangements in England. In Northern Ireland the current concessionary fares scheme already allows for free travel for senior citizens throughout Northern Ireland.

Multi-storey Car Parks

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many multi-storey car parks have been constructed in Northern Ireland under the auspices of a Government Department in each of the last 10 years. [65311]

Mr. Woodward: The Chief Executive of Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has been asked to write to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Dr. Malcolm McKibbin, dated 27 April 2006:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question regarding how many multi-storey car parks have been constructed in Northern Ireland under the auspices of a Government department in each of the last 10 years. I have been asked to reply.

Roads Service has now constructed any multi-storey car parks in the last 10 years. However a two-storey car park was constructed in 1997–98 in Newry by Translink replacing car park spaces lost through construction of a new bus station.

I can also advise that the Department for Social Development has provided support for two retail developments, which include the provision of multi storey car parking facilities, within the last 10 years. These developments are in Londonderry in the Foyleside Shopping Centre which includes two multi-storey car parks, and in Spencer Road/Duke Street which includes one multi-storey car park.

Planning Area Enforcement Orders

Dr. Alasdair McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the penalty is for non-compliance with an enforcement order issued by a planning area in Northern Ireland. [66139]

Angela E. Smith: Failure to comply with an enforcement notice which has taken effect is an offence. A person found guilty of such an offence shall be liable to a fine which shall be determined by the courts. The maximum penalty for an offence is £30,000 on summary conviction in the magistrates court. If a person is convicted in a Crown court then the fine could be unlimited. In determining the amount of any fine to be imposed on a person, the legislation indicates that the court shall in particular have regard to any financial benefit which has accrued or appears likely to accrue in consequence of the offence.

Postgraduate Studentships

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people in Northern Ireland have been awarded postgraduate studentships since October 2005; and at what cost to public funds. [65331]

Angela E. Smith: The Department makes available funding for a number of postgraduate awards for higher degree courses leading to Masters and PhDs at Queen's University Belfast and the University of Ulster and the universities select, by competition, the students to fill these awards. Since the beginning of the academic year in October 2005, the universities have made a total of 218 postgraduate studentships at a cost of £2.095 million.

Public Transport

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland by how much *(a)* weekly, *(b)* monthly and *(c)* daily train and bus fares between (i) Lurgan and Belfast, (ii) Lisburn and Belfast, (iii) Antrim and Belfast, (iv) Bangor and Belfast and (v) Londonderry and Belfast have changed in the last 12 months. [65501]

Mr. Woodward: Translink has advised that the information is not available in the format requested as Ulsterbus issue 10 and 40 journey tickets, rather than weekly and monthly tickets.

There have been two fare increases in the financial year to 31 March 2006. The following table details the percentage increase in NI Railway and Ulsterbus fares.

Percentage

Belfast to	*NI Railways*		*Ulsterbus*	
Lurgan	Single	9.3	Single	10
	Weekly	12.9	10 journey	10
	Monthly	13.9	40 journey	15.7
Lisburn	Single	8.0	Single	9.5
	Weekly	10.8	10 journey	9.4
	Monthly	13.9	40 journey	9.3
Antrim	Single	8.6	Single	9.1
	Weekly	7.5	10 journey	8.0
	Monthly	13.9	40 journey	8.4
Bangor	Single	8.6	Single	11.1
	Weekly	7.5	10 journey	12.2
	Monthly	13.9	40 journey	11.5
Londonderry	Single	8.9	Single	9.3
	Weekly	13.7	10 journey	10.0
	Monthly	13.6	40 journey	17.4

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland which were the busiest *(a)* rail and *(b)* bus routes between Belfast and other provincial towns in Northern Ireland in the last period for which figures are available. [65502]

Mr. Woodward: Translink has advised me that in the last financial year (1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006) the Belfast to Portadown rail route carried the highest number of passengers, as did the Belfast to Londonderry bus route.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* rail and *(b)* bus passengers were carried on average each day between (i) Lurgan and Belfast, (ii) Portadown and Belfast, (iii) Lisburn and Belfast, (iv) Antrim and Belfast, (v) Bangor and Belfast and (vi) Londonderry and Belfast in the latest period for which figures are available. [65503]

Mr. Woodward: The daily figures in the following tables were calculated by dividing the total figures for the final accounting period of 2005–06 by 35 (as there were 35 days in that accounting period).

The following table provides the average number of rail journeys each day on the routes requested. All journeys are between the station stated and the four Belfast stations taken as a group (Central, Botanic, City hospital and Great Victoria street) and do not include passengers who boarded at intermediate points.

Rail passenger journeys each day, March 2006

Between location	*Journey*
Belfast and Portadown	760
Belfast and Lurgan	1,056
Belfast and Lisburn	1,364
Belfast and Antrim	170
Belfast and Bangor	2,275
Belfast and Londonderry	82

The following table provides the average number of bus journeys each day on the routes requested. All journeys are between any stage within the named town (e.g. Bangor, Bangor depot, Bangor station, Bangor town centre etc.) and Belfast (e.g. Belfast Great Victoria street, Belfast Laganside, Belfast city centre etc. taken as a group). Again the figures do not include passengers boarding at intermediate points.

Bus passenger journeys each day, March 2006

Between location	*Journey*
Belfast and Portadown	43
Belfast and Lurgan	68
Belfast and Lisburn	375
Belfast and Antrim	290
Belfast and Bangor	235
Belfast and Londonderry	1,040

Smithsonian Folklife Festival

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to promote in Northern Ireland the Smithsonian Folklife Festival to be held in Washington D.C. during the summer of 2007. [65709]

Mr. Hanson: A communications strategy is being developed to promote to the general public, opinion formers, politicians and the media, the benefits of Northern Ireland's participation in the Smithsonian Institution's Folklife Festival in 2007. Although there has been some publicity, the main actions cannot commence until July when the Smithsonian Institution announce Northern Ireland's representation at the festival.

Superannuation Entitlements

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many part-time members of staff at each health trust in the Province have submitted industrial tribunal applications regarding non-payment of superannuation entitlements. [65347]

Mr. Woodward: 281 industrial tribunal applications have been lodged by part-time staff seeking retrospective access to the HPSS Superannuation Scheme.

Details of numbers of applications by Trust are not held centrally. I will write to the hon. Member with the information as soon as it becomes available and place a copy in the Library.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many industrial tribunal applications by part-time staff from each health trust in the Province regarding superannuation entitlements *(a)* have been successful, *(b)* have been rejected and *(c)* are still to be resolved. [65348]

Mr. Woodward: This information is not held centrally. I will write to the hon. Member with the information as soon as it becomes available and place a copy in the Library.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether job contracts from prior to 1976 stating that part-time staff payments to NHS staff in the Province are not superannuable have been considered significant by the industrial tribunal. [65349]

Mr. Woodward: Any HPSS employee who worked at least half the standard weekly contractual hours has been entitled to join the HPSS superannuation scheme since 1 April 1973. The industrial tribunal has no jurisdiction to consider claims for exclusion from the superannuation scheme in respect of any period earlier than 8 April 1976. This was the date on which the European Court of Justice decided that pensions formed part of pay and that the provisions about equality between men and women applied to access to pension schemes in the public service. These provisions are identical to those applicable in Great Britain.

Undercover Agents

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will review the adequacy of the arrangements for the permanent protection of former undercover agents in the republican movement. [64914]

Mr. Woodward: I am satisfied there are adequate arrangements in place to counter the threat to individuals across a range of circumstances, including where individuals are suspected of providing assistant in confidence to the authorities.

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what provisions exist for the protection of current and former undercover agents in the Republican movement once exposed; and whether such protection was offered to Denis Donaldson. [65385]

Mr. Woodward: It is not Government policy to comment on specific national security and intelligence matters.

Vice Chancellor (University of Ulster)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the cost to public funds has been of the suspension of the previous Vice Chancellor of the University of Ulster since December 2004. [65091]

Angela E. Smith: The former Vice Chancellor, Professor McKenna, was at no time suspended from duty. The question of cost to public funds as a result of suspension does therefore not apply.

Visitor Attractions

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the change was in annual numbers recorded at each of the 10 most frequented visitor attractions in Northern Ireland over the last 10 years. [65926]

Angela E. Smith: The NITB conducts a voluntary annual survey designed to give an overview of the visitor numbers to the various attractions across Northern Ireland. Of the top 10 attractions participating in the 2005 survey, eight had previously participated in the 1995 survey. The results are presented in the following table.

Top 10 participating tourist attractions visited, 2005

Rank	Attraction	Visitor numbers 2005	1995	Percentage change on 1995
1	Crawfordsburn Country Park, Belfast[1]	850,921	—	—
2	Botanic Gardens, Belfast	700,000	600,000	+16.7
3	Lagan Valley Regional Park[2]	500,000	—	—
4	Giants Causeway Visitor Centre	464,243	408,790	+13.6
5	Cavehill Country Park, Belfast	383,900	410,000	-6.4
6	Roe Valley Country Park, Limavady	317,431	120,000	+164.5
7	Colin Glen Forest Park, Belfast	242,526	10,000	+2,325.3
8	Oxford Island National Nature Reserve	234,925	143,300	+63.9
9	Scrabo Country Park, Newtownards	225,000	200,000	+12.5
10	Ulster Museum	212,073	319,534	-33.6

[1] Nearest survey return for Crawfordsburn Country Park to the year 1995 was in 1993, with 700,000 visitors.
[2] 2005 is the first time that Lagan Valley Regional Park has participated in the survey.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Departmental Websites

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list *(a)* the websites operated by his Department and *(b)* the reports placed on the internet in March 2006, indicating in each case whether paper copies were also made available. [65205]

Mr. Charles Clarke: As of 21 April 2006, the Home Office operates 40 websites.

The core Home Office website also has a number of sub-domains, such as police.homeoffice.gov.uk, which act as portal sites for practitioners around policy issues.

After a major redevelopment in September 2005, which brought nine separate websites under the main Home Office domain, a plan is under way to consolidate all of our sites by March 2007.

The Home Office does not keep a central record of all of the reports published on its websites. The information requested about numbers of reports published on the internet in March 2006—and also made available in paper copy—can therefore not be collected without incurring disproportionate cost.

Sites:

www.homeoffice.gov.uk
www.commercial.homeoffice.gov.uk
www.communities.homeoffice.gov.uk
www.drugs.homeoffice.gov.uk
www.police.homeoffice.gov.uk
www.press.homeoffice.gov.uk
www.scienceandresearch.homeoffice.gov.uk
www.security.homeoffice.gov.uk
www.snen.homeoffice.gov.uk
www.inspectorates.homeoffice.gov.uk
www.careers.homeoffice.gov.uk
www.homeoffice.gov.uk/
www.rdsnoms.homeoffice.gov.uk
www.crimereduction.gov.uk
www.crimestatistics.org.uk
www.probation.homeoffice.gov.uk
www.treatmenttheworks.comtogether.gov.uk
www.respect.gov.uk
www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk
www.indmps.co.uk
www.employingmigrantworkers.org.uk
www.lifeintheuktest.gov.uk
www.nirf.org.uk
www.uknationality.gov.uk
www.workingintheuk.gov.uk
www.bicester-centre.co.uk
www.hmprisonservice.gov.uk
www.identitycards.gov.uk
www.hmpenterprises.co.uk
www.passport.gov.uk
www.crb.gov.uk
www.forensic.gov.uk
www.secureyourmotor.gov.uk
www.citizensday.org.uk
www.connected.gov.uk
www.good2besecure.co.uk
www.identity-theft.org.uk
www.thinkuknow.co.uk
www.policecouldyou.co.uk
www.policehighpotential.org.uk
www.sharpendmag.com
www.imb.gov.uk
www.ipcc.gov.uk
www.ipt-uk.com
www.ppo.gov.uk
www.bichard-inquiry.org.uk
www.russellcommission.org
www.zahidmubarekinquiry.org.uk

Grievance Procedures

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many grievance procedures have been initiated in his Department in each of the last three years. [63551]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The following table provides the available information about the number of grievances raised within the Department in the last three years.

Number of grievances

Home Office (excluding immigration and nationality directorate)	
2004	[1]—
2005	[1]—
2006	[2]4

	Number of grievances
Home Office (excluding immigration and nationality directorate)	
Immigration and nationality directorate	
2004	[1]—
2005	101
2006	[2]12
Her Majesty's Prison Service	[1]—
Identity and passport services	
April 2003 to March 2004	4
April 2004 to March 2005	3
April 2005 to March 2006	3

[1] Comprehensive information is not available in the requested format and could be obtained only at a disproportionate cost.
[2] Have been raised to date.

Highly Skilled Migrant Programme

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether doctors with existing leave under the Highly Skilled Migrant Programme will require work permits under the new arrangements. [65013]

Andy Burnham: Those with leave under the Highly Skilled Migrant Programme are permitted to take employment or self-employment in the UK without requiring a work permit. Therefore doctors with existing leave under the Highly Skilled Migrant Programme will not require work permits for the duration of this leave. However, they will need to meet other requirements such as registration with the GMC and those employing doctors on the Highly Skilled Migrant Programme need to follow Department of Health recruitment policies.

Offender Assessment System

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on progress in implementing the offender assessment system. [65797]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Offender Assessment System, OASys, has been implemented in all public sector prisons and all 42 areas of the national probation service. Full connectivity between the Prison Service and national probation service OASys systems was achieved in March 2006. Full access to OASys has recently been given to the contracted out prisons although not all have started using it yet.

Prisons

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of prisoners involved in work activity are placed in prison workshops. [65611]

Fiona Mactaggart: In the public sector Prison Service, approximately 13 per cent. of all prisoners are employed in a prison industries workshop on a daily basis. This represents about one in five of all work places.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of prisoners are involved in *(a)* work activity and *(b)* education or training. [65612]

Fiona Mactaggart: Data in the specific format requested in the question are not collected centrally. However, the number of prisoners undertaking each type of prisoner activity is provided as a proxy. Prisoners that take part more than one type of activity may be counted more than once. Therefore, the following number cannot be used to calculate a proportion.

In 2005–06, 50,078 prisoners were recorded as undertaking work activities and 43,249 participated in education or training across the prison system.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent estimate he has made of the number of hours of purposeful activity undertaken by each prisoner per week. [65616]

Fiona Mactaggart: Provisional data for 2005–06 show the average number of hours of purposeful activity for the prison system to be 25.2 hours per prisoner per week.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his estimate is of prison capacity in England and Wales by 2010. [65617]

Fiona Mactaggart: There is no estimate of prison capacity for 2010. Current plans are to increase the total capacity of the prison estate to around 80,400 in 2007.

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which companies provide telephone services for prisoners in each prison. [64169]

Fiona Mactaggart: Telecom services within the Prison Service are provided by British Telecommunications (BT) and Global Communications and Consultancy Ltd. (GCC). These companies provide telephone services throughout the prison estate with the exception of Ashfield and Lowdham Grange prisons. Telecommunication services for Ashfield are provided by Thus telecommunications and Lowdham Grange's service providers are Voice Products Ltd. and Your Communications.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on his plans for continuity of provision of education and training for released prisoners. [65560]

Phil Hope: I have been asked to reply.

The Government's plans for ensuring continuity of provision of learning and skills for released prisoners were set out in the Green Paper 'Reducing Re-Offending Through Skills and Employment', published in December 2005.

No separate estimate has been made of the costs of bridging the gap between education inside and outside prisons. The new providers being appointed by the Learning and Skills Council are required contractually to deliver the requirements of the Offender's Learning Journey, the document that specifies the service to the offender. That document includes a requirement on the provider to join up learning commenced in custody with that available in the community. The costs of bridging that gap are straightforwardly part of the contract price.

Probation/Bail Hostel (West Midlands)

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will place in the Library the letter of 23 June 1994 designating Sycamore Lodge, Langley, Oldbury West Midlands as an approved probation and bail hostel. [66066]

Fiona Mactaggart: I will arrange for a copy of the Home Office letter of 23 June 1994 to be laid in the Libraries of both Houses.

Witnesses

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many vulnerable witnesses in each of the pilot schemes have successfully used intermediaries provided for in the special measures for vulnerable witnesses of the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999; and if he will make a statement. [65488]

Fiona Mactaggart: The available data are set out in the table.

Area	*Intermediary scheme start date*	*Number of witnesses assisted by an intermediary as at 21 April 2006*[1]
Merseyside	23 February 2004	27
West Midlands	13 September 2004 (Wolverhampton area) 1 November 2004 (all courts in West Midlands)	36
Thames Valley	2 October 2004	85
South Wales[2]	1 February 2005–6 February 2006	5
Norfolk	1 February 2005	31
Devon and Cornwall[3]	20 June 2005	11
Total		195

[1] Data refer to the number of witnesses for whom the Office for Criminal Justice Reform has provided a registered intermediary where the intermediary has, or is expected to, carried out a communication needs analysis relating to the witness or has assisted them to understand questions or to make their answers understood during a criminal investigation or trial. In a small number of these cases the intermediary may not have actually carried out these functions.

[2] Data refer only to pathfinder areas where notification of availability of the intermediary special measure has been made to courts in accordance with section 18(2) of the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999. Intermediaries have also been appointed in other criminal justice areas—such cases are not included in these data.

[3] Initial findings are that intermediaries are bringing considerable benefits to the criminal justice system by helping more vulnerable witnesses to give their best evidence and providing practitioners with more comprehensive information about witnesses to help guide their decisions.

World Cup

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many British football hooligans are banned in each police authority from travelling to the World Cup. [65301]

Paul Goggins: As at 20 April 2006 there are 3,286 Football Banning Orders in place. Details of the police authority area in which the subjects reside is provided in the following table. Each of the individuals concerned will be required to report to a designated police station and surrender their passports 10 days prior to the opening match and on every England match day during the tournament.

Police authority area	*Individuals subject to a football banning order*
Avon and Somerset Constabulary	52
Bedfordshire Police	29
Cambridgeshire Constabulary	35
Cheshire Constabulary	32
Cleveland Constabulary	104
Cumbria Constabulary	31
Derbyshire Constabulary	104
Devon and Cornwall Constabulary	70
Dorset Police	15
Durham Constabulary	26
Dyfed-Powys Police	3
Essex Police	50
Gloucestershire Constabulary	4
Greater Manchester Police	247
Gwent Constabulary	25
Hampshire Constabulary	155
Hertfordshire Constabulary	34
Humberside Police	132
Kent Constabulary	29
Lancashire Constabulary	134
Leicestershire Constabulary	43
Lincolnshire Constabulary	51
Merseyside Police	114
Metropolitan Police	267
Norfolk Constabulary	15
North Wales Police	50
North Yorkshire Police	28
Northamptonshire Constabulary	10
Northumbria Police	90
Nottinghamshire Constabulary	94
South Wales Police	130
South Yorkshire Police	264
Staffordshire Police	154
Suffolk Constabulary	10
Surrey Constabulary	17
Sussex Police	25
Thames Valley Police	60
Warwickshire Constabulary	15
West Mercia Constabulary	43
West Midlands Police	290
West Yorkshire Police	172
Wiltshire Constabulary	33

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

British Nationals Abroad

Sir John Stanley: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his statement of 21 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 157, on British nationals abroad, whether the future announcement to which he referred in his statement was that made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on 22 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 298,

announcing a new charitable fund to support British citizens injured in or affected by terrorist acts at home or abroad. [66759]

Dr. Howells: No. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary had in mind the future announcement which the Department of Culture, Media and Sport will make once the Government have fully considered the matter.

Colombia

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of *(a)* the likely effects of the decision by the United States Administration to offer rewards for the capture of Colombian drug dealers and *(b)* the effectiveness of this policy in (i) tackling the drug trade and (ii) reducing the impact of the drug trade on Colombian politics and society. [65666]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Government are committed to tackling the trade in illicit drugs in Latin America. As such we work alongside the US and other partners to counter the activities of those involved in the drugs trade. The decision to adopt a policy of offering rewards is a matter for the US Administration and is just one of many measures taken by them to prevent the flow of drugs from Colombia.

EU Commission (Plan D Programme)

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what contribution the Government *(a)* have made and *(b)* are planning to make to the European Commission's Plan D programme. [66129]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Government welcomes the principles behind the European Commission's Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate but insists that its implementation must be in co-operation with Member States and respect national circumstances. The Government welcomes ideas such as visits from Commissioners as part of the Plan D programme. Officials are in frequent touch with the Commission's Representation in London to co-ordinate events and activities and, in particular, work closely with them to make its Europe Direct project a success.

The Government do not plan to make a direct financial contribution to the Commission's Plan D. The Commission will finance Plan D using funding from the budget line for the future of Europe debate.

EU Website

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when the Government plans to launch the website described in the UK's contribution to the EU's interim report on the national debates during the reflection period on the future of Europe; and how much the website will cost *(a)* to build and *(b)* to maintain. [66125]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) launched the new Britain in the EU section of the FCO website on 13 April 2006. The new site, which can be found at www.europe.gov.uk, will be both a valuable resource on UK EU policy and the debate on the future direction of the EU. A Future of Europe section will set out a range of opinions on the EU and invite people to contribute to the debate. The site has been developed with a budget of £43,974 in the 2004–05 financial year, and a budget allocation of £80,000 in the 2005–06 financial year. The 2006–07 budget for maintaining the site has not yet been finalised.

Europe Direct

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many calls have been made to Europe Direct in the UK to date; and how much has been spent on *(a)* setting up and *(b)* running the service. [66126]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Europe Direct information line is based in Brussels and run by the European Commission. According to information published by the Commission, the service handled 112,000 queries from all members of the public in 2005. The total number of queries from the UK was 12,004; this figure represents 7,270 calls, 3,897 e-mails and 837 web-assistance queries. The basic annual cost of the service across the whole of the EU is €2.3 million. Further information on the Commission's Europe Direct service can be found at:

www.europa.eu.int/europedirect.

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs why the launch of the Europe Direct service was delayed for a year. [66127]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: In March 2005, the Government asked the European Commission to postpone the opening of Europe Direct Centres in this country, pending further work on their purpose and scope. In July 2005, having considered the project further, the Government confirmed to the Commission that the centres could go ahead with immediate effect. Based in Brussels, the EU-wide Europe Direct information line was launched in 2000.

Syria (Resolution 1559)

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with his *(a)* US and *(b)* EU counterparts on Syrian compliance with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559 (2004); and if he will make a statement. [66329]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has discussed Syrian compliance with his US and EU counterparts on a regular basis since the UN Security Council adopted UN Security Council Resolution 1559 on 19 October 2004. He last discussed Syria and Lebanon with EU colleagues at the General Affairs and External Relations Council in Brussels on 20 March and with his US counterpart on 3 April.

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of Syrian compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559 (2004); and if he will make a statement. [66330]

Dr. Howells: The UN Security Council agreed a presidential statement on 23 January, which noted that several provisions of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1559 had yet to be implemented, in particular the disbanding and disarming of militias and free and fair

Lebanese presidential elections. The full text of the statement can be found on the UN website at: http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N06/218/09/PDF/N0621809,pdf?OpenElement.

This Government continue to support the full implementation of UNSCR 1559.

While the UN has confirmed that Syria has withdrawn its troops from Lebanon, Syria has yet to establish diplomatic relations with Lebanon or to demarcate its border with Lebanon. Syria also has a role to play in stopping arms transfers to Lebanese-based militias, including Hizballah.

The UK stands ready to assist the Lebanese government to implement the outstanding provisions of UNSCR 1559.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Apprenticeships

16. **Meg Hillier:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent assessment she has made of the young modern apprenticeship programme; and if she will make a statement. [66220]

Phil Hope: The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) leads on the delivery of the Young Apprenticeship Programme and has put in place a comprehensive national evaluation strategy, supported by the sector skills councils involved. Ofsted is also monitoring the programme. The LSC plans to issue a formal report by early 2007. Interim feedback is positive, and Ofsted has confirmed that the programme has made a positive start and is popular with pupils.

Mr. McGovern: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she is taking to promote apprenticeships among young people. [66218]

Phil Hope: The Department and its key partners such as the LSC and Connexions are very active in promoting apprenticeships to young people. The evidence is compelling, with a quarter of a million young people currently participating, the highest number ever. We pay particular attention to ensuring equal opportunities for all young people. We are also strongly committed to promoting the quality of the Apprenticeship Programme which is celebrated at the annual Apprenticeship Awards.

Community Learning

17. **Miss McIntosh:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what provision is being made for adult learning in the community in 2006–07. [66221]

Phil Hope: We have allocated £210 million of taxpayers money in 2006–07 to support learning for personal and community development. This includes help for family learning, for example, to improve people's literacy and numeracy and for learning in deprived communities.

Head Teacher Vacancies

Mark Pritchard: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many head teacher vacancies there are in England; and if she will make a statement. [66203]

Jacqui Smith: The first release of school workforce statistical information published this morning indicates that in January 2006, there were 180 head teacher vacancies in local authority maintained schools in England—a vacancy rate of 0.8 per cent. This confirms the current trend for low and stable vacancy rates since 1997.

Figures out today also show that the vacancy rate for deputy and assistant head teachers are also low. Down to 0.7 per cent. in 2006 from 1.2 per cent. in 1997.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when the Secretary of State expects to answer the letter of 21 February from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, about Mr. J. Horluck, transferred from the Department for Constitutional Affairs. [63929]

Maria Eagle: I responded to my right hon. Friend on 18 April.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when she will provide substantive replies to the letters of *(a)* 9 December, *(b)* 12 January and *(c)* 21 February on an NSPCC campaign from the hon. Member for Isle of Wight. [64405]

Maria Eagle *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* I responded to the hon. Member on 19 April.

Early-years Education

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many families in Nottinghamshire claimed free nursery education funding in *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06. [65285]

Beverley Hughes: The information is not collected in the form requested.

Since April 2004 all three and four year olds have been entitled to a free, good quality, part-time early education place. The free entitlement consists of a minimum of 12. 5 hours per week for 38 weeks of the year and will be extended to 15 hours a week by 2010. By that time, parents who wish to do so will also be able to access the free entitlement flexibly across a minimum of three days.

Some local authorities may additionally offer subsidised childcare places but this information is not collected centrally.

Figures for January 2005 show that all four year old children receive some form of free entitlement. The figure for three year olds is 96 per cent. This covers all maintained, private, voluntary and independent providers and represents 535,100 three year olds and 568,300 four year olds. Provisional figures for January 2006 will be published in Statistical First Release 17/2006 "Provision for children under five years of age in

England—January 2005 (provisional)" at 9:30 am on 27 April 2006, which will be made available on my Department's website www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/.

The available information on the number of free nursery education places taken up by three and four year olds in Nottinghamshire local authority area is shown in the table. Sub-national figures for 2006 will be published in a Statistical First Release in August 2006.

The latest figures on early education places for three and four year olds in England were published in Statistical First Release 43/2005 "Provision for children under five years of age in England—January 2005 (final)" in September, which is available on my Department's website www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/.

Number of free nursery education places[1] taken up by three and four year olds—Local authority Nottinghamshire

Position in January	*Three year olds Maintained nursery and primary schools[2]*	*Other maintained and private, voluntary and independent providers*	*Total three year olds*	*Four year olds maintained nursery and primary schools[3]*	*other maintained and private, voluntary and independent providers*	*Total four year olds*
2005	3,900	[4]2,900	6,800	6,300	[5]1,500	7,700

[1] Figures are rounded to the nearest 10 or 100 as appropriate.
[2] Headcount of children aged three at 31 December in the previous calendar year from the Annual Schools' Census.
[3] Headcount of children aged four at 31 December in the previous calendar year from the Annual Schools' Census.
[4] Part-time equivalent number of children aged three at 31 December in the previous calendar year from the Early Years Census and the Annual Schools' Census.
[5] Part-time equivalent number of children aged four at 31 December in the previous calendar year from the Early Years Census and the Annual Schools' Census.

Special Needs Tribunals

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what recent estimate she has made of the average cost of special needs tribunal hearings to *(a)* parents and *(b)* local education authorities; [65291]

(2) if she will take steps to reduce the cost of special needs tribunals to parents. [65292]

Maria Eagle: No charge is made to parents who bring cases before the special educational needs and disability tribunal and certain necessary expenses are met by the tribunal.

Neither the Department nor the tribunal have made an estimate of the average cost of tribunal hearings to the respective parties.

Foreign Students

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many students from Iran have enrolled at universities in the UK in each year since 1997; and which subjects they have studied; [64895]

(2) pursuant to the answer of 17 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1232W, on foreign students, what subjects were being studied by the 1,750 Iranian students attending universities in 2004–05; and how many were studying each subject. [64892]

Bill Rammell *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* The latest information is given in the following tables. In respect of subjects relevant to weapons of mass destruction counter proliferation concern, the student voluntary vetting scheme has been in operation since 1994. Its guiding principle is to prevent academic contact and access to postgraduate studies that might be of significant value to countries of WMD proliferation concern.

Students[1] from Iran studying at higher education institutions in the UK by subject of study[2]

Subject of study:	*1997/98*	*1998/99*	*1999/2000*	*2000/01*	*2001/02*
Medicine and Dentistry	45	60	65	50	55
Subjects allied to Medicine	30	25	35	45	60
Biological Sciences	55	65	75	75	85
Veterinary Science	—	—	0	—	—
Agriculture and related subjects	40	30	30	25	20
Physical Sciences	40	45	50	45	40
Mathematical Sciences	25	25	20	15	15
Computer Science	25	30	30	40	60
Engineering and Technology	185	165	170	175	185
Architecture, Building and Planning	20	20	20	20	20
Social, Economic and Political Studies	35	40	35	30	35
Law	15	5	10	10	15
Business and Administrative Studies	50	30	30	35	75
Librarianship and Information Science	5	0	—	5	5
Languages	25	25	25	25	45
Humanities	10	10	10	10	15
Creative arts and design	10	10	10	25	20
Education	10	10	35	20	25
Combined	15	20	35	35	35
Total	640	620	685	690	805

Subject of study:	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2004/05[1]
Medicine and dentistry	55	60	65	85
Subjects allied to medicine	70	80	75	95
Biological sciences	75	90	70	100
Veterinary science	—	—	5	5
Agriculture and related subjects	15	10	15	20
Physical sciences	40	55	65	75
Mathematical sciences	15	20	30	35
Computer science	90	140	170	190
Engineering and technology	225	310	350	445
Architecture, building and planning	30	50	80	90
Social studies	35	45	55	75
Law	20	20	25	40
Business and administrative studies	65	95	165	200
Mass communications and documentation	5	10	15	15
Languages	40	60	75	110
Historical and philosophical studies	10	20	25	30
Creative arts and design	30	35	50	60
Education	20	35	45	70
Combined	15	10	15	15
Total	860	1,145	1,395	1,750

[1] Covers postgraduate and undergraduate students. The figures are based on a snapshot count of students who were in attendance on 1 December in each year. The figure of 1,750 in the earlier answer (43079) was based on a whole year count of students, which counts students who were in attendance at any point in the academic year. It is not possible to give a time series back to 1997/98 using the whole year count for all years, so the snapshot count has been used for consistency. An additional column has been added to the table to show students split by subject in 2004/05 using the whole year count.

[2] In 2002/03, a new subject classification, and a new method of allocating students to subjects, were introduced, which means that the figures for the years up to 2001/02 are not directly comparable with those for later years. The new allocation method takes account of all subjects studied by the student rather than just their main subject, and the main effect of this is to decrease the number of students who are allocated to the "combined" category, and increase the number of students who are allocated to specific named subjects.

Source:

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 5 so components may not sum to totals.

Learning and Skills Council

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the estimated cost is of potential redundancies resulting from the current restructuring of the Learning and Skills Council in *(a)* direct payments to individuals and *(b)* additional payments into the Principal Civil Service Pension scheme. [66743]

Bill Rammell: The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) is planning to introduce a radical new structure which will enable it to operate more effectively at all levels. As a result of these changes, it is expected that around 1,100 fewer posts will be needed once the new structure is in place. It is estimated that up to £40 million will be saved in management and running costs, which could be redirected to support front-line services.

The LSC is currently in the process of consulting staff and making appointments to posts in the new structure. The final number of staff who leave the LSC as a result of the restructuring will depend to a significant degree on individual circumstances. The LSC is looking for every opportunity to redeploy staff to other suitable positions and has expressed its commitment to maximise the appointments of existing employees and to minimise compulsory redundancies.

The cost of potential redundancies resulting from the restructuring of the LSC depends upon the individual circumstances of each person affected. The current estimate is that the cost of redundancies will be around £32 million.

Prison Education

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans she has to change the process whereby contracting arrangements in prisons education and vocational training are organised separately. [65562]

Phil Hope: Separate arrangements for delivering education and vocational training in prisons come to an end as the Learning and Skills Council becomes responsible for planning and funding offender learning. Education and vocational training is already joined up in the North East, North West and South West, and will become so across England from 31 July 2006.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) if she will provide the Learning and Skills Council with the necessary resources to apply its standard funding methodology so that prisons have access to all of the funding streams available to mainstream colleges;

(2) if she will ensure that the additional learning support funding approach is applied to prison education. [65564]

Phil Hope: The Learning and Skills Council is developing a funding methodology for offender learning that aims to replicate as closely as possible that in use for mainstream provision whilst taking into account the costs differences within prisons. The new funding arrangements will ensure that proper regard is paid to the additional learning support needs of offenders, and the Learning and Skills Council will be expected to fund offender learning from within its main Grant from the Department.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funds she is providing to ensure that the specialist role of teaching staff in prisons is properly rewarded. [65566]

Phil Hope: There are no separately identifiable funds transferring to the Learning and Skills Council to reward the specialist role of teaching staff in prisons. However, as the Green Paper "Reducing Re-Offending Through Skills and Employment" noted, there are issues to be addressed concerning the offender learning work force. The full engagement of the Learning and Skills Council in offender learning, with the introduction of new providers delivering a new joined-up service is expected to have a significant impact on all aspects of the employment conditions of staff who deliver learning to prisoners integrating it with those of their mainstream colleagues.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of prisoners in 2005 had access to prison education at any one time. [65567]

Phil Hope: All prisoners had access to education in 2005, although not all took up that opportunity.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of prison education inspected by the Adult Learning Inspectorate in 2005 was judged to be inadequate. [65568]

Phil Hope: The proportion of prison education judged to be inadequate by the Adult Learning Inspectorate in 2004–05, as reported in the Annual Report of the Chief Inspector 2004–05 is 55 per cent. The proportion of prison education judged as inadequate on reinspection over the same period is given as 33 per cent.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of prisoners have access to the internet as part of their education or training *(a)* daily and *(b)* weekly. [65569]

Phil Hope: This information is not collected centrally.

For security reasons prisons have been cautious about opening up access to e-learning facilities, but the government are keen to make more progress in this area. We are actively investigating ways of providing secure access for prisoners who need it to support their learning activities.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funding was allocated to vocational education provision in prisons in 2005–06; what funding has been allocated for 2006–07; and if she will make a statement. [65572]

Phil Hope: Funding for vocational training in prisons in 2005–06 was £8.8 million and is planned to be £8.8 million for 2006–07.

The new LSC-led delivery arrangements aim explicitly to join up the provision of 'education' and Vocational training in prisons, introducing a seamless service that meets holistically the offender's assessed individual learning needs. In many cases, "Skills for Life" will be embedded in work related learning. In this second year of transition from the old arrangements to the new it is possible to identify separately the funding for vocational training, but that is unlikely to be possible for future years.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she has taken to ensure that closer links are forged between prisons and further education colleges, universities and employers. [65574]

Phil Hope: The new arrangements for Offenders Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) ensures that better links are forged between prisons, further education colleges, universities and employers. OLASS'S approach involves development of different ways of working through new relationships with providers. Regional Partnership Boards provide governance to OLASS and these include representatives from all key stakeholders.

Additionally, we have announced in the December 2005 Green Paper "Reducing Re-Offending Through Skills and Employment" our intention to consult on piloting on a new model for delivery—the "Offender Learning Campus"—to develop new centres of excellence and better links with mainstream education and training, including higher education.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will undertake a review of the different charities working in the prison education sector with a view to identifying the most successful for national recognition, funding and support. [65577]

Fiona Mactaggart: I have been asked to reply.

A recent survey was conducted by the Voluntary Sector Unit of the National Offender Management Unit. This did not focus specifically on organisations engaged in delivering education but these were included among those delivering employment, training and education (ETE). This shows that as of February 2006 there were 583 organisations delivering ETE across the prison and probation services, of which 450 were working with prisons.

Most of these organisations are small and work at a very local level. Funding is already provided to a number of organisations through grants and contracts and it is anticipated that the introduction of full commissioning in NOMS will increase the range of opportunities available to the voluntary and community sector. There are already established recognition schemes such as the Butler Trust which has included awards to organisations providing education services to prisons.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many juvenile prison establishments meet the Youth Justice Board target of 30 hours per week in education and training. [65583]

Fiona Mactaggart: I have been asked to reply.

The Youth Justice Board (YJB) set the young people's secure estate a national average of 25 hours a week education and training provision, rising to 30 when resources become available. Between April 2005 and March 2006, eight young offender institutions (YOI) met the national average and eight did not.

In the 2005–08 service level agreement between the YJB and the Prison Service, each YOI was set an agreed target for the provision of education and training. Between April 2005 and March 2006, five YOIs met their individual target and 11 did not.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the expenditure per head on education in juvenile young offender institutions was in *(a)* 2001–02, *(b)* 2002–03, *(c)* 2003–04, *(d)* 2004–05 and *(e)* 2005–06; and what the planned figure is for 2006–07. [65584]

Phil Hope: The expenditure per head on education in juvenile young offender institutions is set out in the following table:

	Expenditure per head (£)
2003–04	6,363
2004–05	7,272
2005–06	8,181

Expenditure in 2001–02 and 2002–03 is not available.

The Department for Education and Skills budget transfer to the Youth Justice Board for 2006–07 has not yet been finally agreed: an estimate of planned expenditure per head on education in juvenile young offender institutions for 2006–07 is not yet available.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what progress has been made in delivering on the commitment to implement a system of individual learning plans for prisoners linked to sentence plans; [65799]

(2) if she will make a statement on progress on introducing a learner-centred system of prison education. [65802]

Phil Hope: The Learning and Skills Council took responsibility for offenders' learning and skills in three development regions (North West, North East and South West) from 1 August 2005, as part of the new Offenders Learning and Skills Service (OLASS). These arrangements will be put in place in the remaining six English regions from 31 July 2006. Under the new Offenders Learning and Skills Service planned and funded by the LSC, contracted providers will be required to assess individual learners' needs, develop a learning plan, and provide the tailored support which addresses these needs.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research has been undertaken by her Department to identify what type of education and training provision will have the greatest impact on meeting the individual learning needs of prisoners and providing them with real alternatives to crime on release. [65804]

Phil Hope: We recently commissioned a systematic review of the empirical evidence into interventions that promote employment for offenders last year. This showed that employment focused interventions, such as vocational training, can make a significant difference to the employment rates of offenders.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding would be necessary for the Learning and Skills Council to bridge the gap between education inside and outside prisons; and if she will make a statement. [65561]

Phil Hope: The Government's plans for ensuring continuity of provision of learning and skills for released prisoners were set out in the Green Paper 'Reducing Re-Offending Through Skills and Employment', published in December 2005.

No separate estimate has been made of the costs of bridging the gap between education inside and outside prisons. The new providers being appointed by the Learning and Skills Council are required contractually to deliver the requirements of the Offender's Learning Journey, the document that specifies the service to the offender. That document includes a requirement on the provider to join up learning commenced in custody with that available in the community. The costs of bridging that gap are straightforwardly part of the contract price.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Persistent Offenders

23. **Mr. Hollobone:** To ask the Solicitor-General how persistent and prolific offenders are treated differently from other offenders by the Crown Prosecution Service. [66199]

The Solicitor-General: Persistent and prolific offenders receive a 'Premium Service' from the CPS and other Criminal Justice agencies. CPS prosecutors work with the courts to give these cases priority, and review the progress of these cases with local police crime managers. When presenting these cases CPS prosecutors ensure the full extent of the criminal activity is brought to the attention of the court.

Fraud Review

24. **Miss McIntosh:** To ask the Solicitor-General pursuant to the written statement of 22 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 26WS, on the fraud review, what representations he has received on the interim report on fraud. [66201]

The Solicitor-General: The interim report of the Fraud Review was published on 22 March. Since then the Fraud Review team have received representations from the Association of Payment and Clearance Services (APACS) and the Association of British Insurers (ABI).

My right hon. Friend the Attorney-General has also held a seminar involving representatives of the public sector, the legal professions and the private sector to discuss the report's emerging findings.

Victims of Crime

25. **Mr. Dodds:** To ask the Solicitor-General what steps the Government are taking to ensure victims of crime are kept informed of the progress of prosecutions of defendants accused of crimes against them. [66202]

The Solicitor-General: In England and Wales, joint CPS/police witness care units must notify victims of all court hearings in their cases and if convicted any sentence received. The Prosecutor's Pledge provides that a prosecutor should inform a victim where a charge is dropped or substantially altered and, where practical, seek the views of the victim when considering the acceptability of a plea.

In Northern Ireland, the victim is notified in all cases when a decision has been made and what that decision is and given contact details from which further information may be obtained. A dedicated section of specially trained staff provide an information line to assist with any queries a victim may have, and, if the victim requests will refer them to specialist support agencies, such as Victim Support. In all regions, PPSNI work closely with police Family Liaison Officers.

Crown Prosecution Service

Mr. Amess: To ask the Solicitor-General what action can be taken against those responsible in cases where the Crown Prosecution Service makes a mistake in not laying charges within a given time period. [65662]

The Solicitor-General: The Code for Crown Prosecutors gives guidance on the general principles to be applied when making decisions about prosecutions. In addition, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) has a code of conduct, job descriptions and person specifications so that managers and staff know what is expected of them.

In the event of an apparent failure to deliver to the necessary standard, it is for line management to identify the causes and to take action, whether on grounds of capability or conduct, using the appropriate employment procedures.

Ministerial Meetings

Richard Burden: To ask the Solicitor-General what plans the Attorney-General has to meet the family of *(a)* Tom Hurndall and *(b)* James Miller. [66029]

The Solicitor-General: The Attorney-General has agreed to meet with the families of Tom Hurndall and James Miller on Friday 5 May 2006.

Police Forces (Reorganisation)

Mr. Bone: To ask the Solicitor-General what assessment he has made of the potential impact on the Crown Prosecution Service of the proposed reorganisation of police forces. [66428]

The Solicitor-General: The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) will seek to reorganise on a similar basis to the police. Organisational alignments are proving successful on the current boundaries and the CPS would seek to maintain their relationship.

DEFENCE

A400M

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much has been spent to date on the A400M future large aircraft; and when it is likely to enter service. [65218]

Mr. Ingram: The amount spent to date for the A400M programme at the end of March 2006 was £1[illegible] million and the In Service Date (defined as acceptance into service of the 7th aircraft) is 2011.

Afghanistan

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of support by the Pakistan government for insurgents in Helmand province in Afghanistan. [65956]

John Reid: The Government have no credible evidence of direct support by the Pakistani Government to insurgents in Helmand province. President Musharraf has made extensive efforts to improve the rule of law in border areas, and we continue to work with Pakistan to ensure that appropriate action is taken to prevent the border area from providing a safe haven for enemy forces.

African Union

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will increase the number of British military advisors to the African Union; and if he will help with strategic transport, including helicopters, in Sudan. [66715]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence is making an important and proportionate contribution in support of the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS). We are providing one staff officer adviser to the Joint Logistics Operations Centre in El Fashir, and will deploy a second officer to the Joint Operations Centre (JOC) when it is established; both under an European Union umbrella. UK personnel have also deployed from within the NATO Command Structure to help co-ordinate the lift of national contingents, as liaison staff at the African Union (AU) headquarters in Addis Ababa and to provide capacity building training for AMIS staff. Further NATO-hatted UK staffs are likely to be deployed in the event that the AU requests additional NATO support. In addition, one UK officer is currently attached to the UN Department for Peacekeeping Operations to help develop UN plans for Darfur. He may likewise deploy to the JOC in an advisory capacity.

The requirement for helicopters has, to date, been met by Canada, while HMG has made a substantial contribution to strategic lift through payment for the movement of three Nigerian battalions. Any further requests from the AU for additional support will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Aircraft

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the timescale is for the *(a)* Future Strategic Tanker Aircraft and *(b)* Nimrod MRA4 programmes; and if he will make a statement. [64795]

Mr. Ingram: The timescales for these projects will not be set until they have received Main Gate approval.

BAE Systems

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether his Department provided a Crown guarantee to the BAE Systems pension scheme. [66539]

Mr. Touhig: I can confirm that the Ministry of Defence has not given a Crown guarantee to the BAE Systems pension scheme.

Combined Cadet Force

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what progress has been made in implementing the plans announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in February 2006 to create branches of the Combined Cadet Force in state schools. [65916]

Mr. Touhig: There continues to be discussions between the Ministry of Defence and officials at the Department for Education and Skills and the Treasury to ensure the opportunities offered by the Combined Cadet Force (CCF) will be available to the widest possible audience. Progress continues to be made along the lines outlined to the House on 27 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 532.

In addition, the list of candidate schools continues to be developed with the assistance of officials at the Department for Education and Skills.

Combined Services Detailed Interrogation Centres

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent representations he has received about the Combined Services Detailed Interrogation Centres; what response he has made; and if he will make a statement. [65400]

Mr. Ingram: No representations (as distinct from questions) are known to have been made directly to the Ministry of Defence, but to say this with certainty would require a trawl throughout MOD records which could be undertaken only at disproportionate costs.

Diplomatic Contacts

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions British Embassy staff in Washington have had with members of the US Congress on defence technology and related matters in the last 12 months; and if he will make a statement. [64607]

John Reid: British embassy staff in Washington DC regularly meet with members of the US Congress and their professional staff in a wide variety of fora, both formal and informal. Their discussions range across the full spectrum of issues of bilateral interest, including discussions about defence technology and related matters.

Eurofighter Typhoon

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Typhoon aircraft have been delivered to the RAF; how many are currently unserviceable; and if he will list the length of time for which each unserviceable Typhoon aircraft has been in that condition. [65917]

Mr. Ingram: 26 Typhoon aircraft have been delivered to the RAF to date. In common with all aircraft types, the availability of Typhoon varies from day-to-day to take into account planned maintenance and issues arising during flying sorties. As an example, on 25 April 2006 two of the 26 aircraft were out of service as part of a pre-planned retrofit programme being conducted at BAES Warton (seven and 77 days), and one aircraft was undergoing routine technical maintenance (14 days) for which a near-term solution is in prospect. A further three aircraft were awaiting longer-term logistic support solutions that are being addressed as the fleet grows incrementally (30 days, 57 days and 12 months). Finally, one aircraft is awaiting repair following a controlled emergency landing in January 2006.

Ex-Servicemen

Mr. Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate he has made of the number of surviving ex-servicemen who served at any stage during 1939–1945. [65197]

Mr. Touhig: We do not keep statistics on the total numbers of surviving ex-servicemen who served during 1939 to 1945 and we have not made an estimate. We estimate that there are some 70,000 war pensions in payment to those whose injuries or illnesses relate to their service in world war II though the total number of survivors will be very much larger than this.

Helicopters

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Royal Navy *(a)* Sea King, *(b)* Merlin and *(c)* Lynx helicopters are (i) in service and (ii) fit for purpose. [65449]

Mr. Ingram: The latest information records the number of Royal Navy helicopters in service and fit for purpose as:

	In service	*Fit for purpose*
Sea King (Mk 4, Mk 5, MK 7)	51	27
Merlin (Mk 1)	24	11
Lynx (Mk 3, Mk 8)	47	23

In service aircraft are those located at front line and training units. "Fit for Purpose" describes an aircraft that is available, reliable, airworthy and capable of carrying out its planned mission on a given date. The numbers of fit for purpose aircraft can vary, depending on operational requirements.

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the underlying cause was of the action for which his Department received damages from Textron Lycoming in respect of damage caused to an RAF Chinook HC Mk1 aircraft during development testing of a pre-production Full Authority Digital Electronic Control system; and whether this underlying cause was removed from the system fitted to Chinook HC2 ZD576. [65736]

Mr. Ingram: It is not immediately possible to provide the information requested and archive records will need to be researched. I will write to the hon. Member as soon as further information is available.

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the differences to the FADEC system between the pre-production system and the system installed in Chinook HC2 ZD576. [65737]

Mr. Ingram: It is not immediately possible to list the differences to the FADEC system between the pre-production system and the system installed in Chinook HC2 ZD576. No records exist in the MOD. The original equipment manufacturer, Honeywell, have been asked to supply the information. I will write to the right hon. Member when the information is available.

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what evidence he has received to discount an uncommanded flying control movement of 12 degree nose down pitch by RAF Chinook ZD576 prior to impact into the Mull. [65738]

Mr. Ingram: There is no factual evidence to either support or discount an uncommanded flying control movement of 12 degree nose pitch down by RAF Chinook ZD576 prior to impact into the Mull of Kintyre. There is, however, the physical evidence at the crash site and wreckage characteristics which indicate that the aircraft first impacted the hillside while climbing at relatively high forward ground speed in an erect, steeply nose up attitude. The evidence for this is the alignment of the aircraft controls. The collective control, which controls power was set at or near full travel at impact, with the cyclic control, which controls pitch or elevation, at 25 per cent. aft and 23 per cent. left of neutral, all indicating a demand for high power and nose-up attitude prior to impact.

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the minimum height is at which autorotation is considered safe for a Chinook HC2; and whether this figure differs from the safe autorotation height for a Chinook with a weight limitation of 18,000 kg. [65739]

Mr. Ingram: Autorotation is defined as the unpowered rotation of helicopter rotor blades that may occur during engine failure, thereby allowing the aircraft to effectively 'glide' to a safe landing. The minimum height at which autorotation is considered safe for a Chinook HC2 is 100 ft above ground level. Weight has no significant impact on autorotation flight performance. However, practice autorotations for Chinooks are not allowed to be carried out above the regulatory maximum weight of 20,000 kg.

HMS Gannet

Mr. Donohoe: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the future use of the helicopter search and rescue service HMS Gannet. [66372]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence provides a 24-hour search and rescue (SAR) service at HMS Gannet. The MOD and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) are currently assessing options for the provision of a replacement UK SAR service when the existing helicopters, including those at Gannet, come to the end of their useful lives around the middle of the next decade. An announcement setting out further details on the way ahead will be made in due course.

Human Centrifuge

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he plans to replace the human centrifuge operated by QinetiQ at Farnborough when its scheduled out of service date is reached in 2008. [63807]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence is committed to ensuring that the United Kingdom has ongoing access to the required capability and will be reviewing its options prior to 2008 when the human centrifuge at Farnborough reaches its out of service date.

However, the centrifuge is currently owned and operated by QinetiQ. All questions regarding the current facility should be referred to:

The Chief Executive
QinetiQ Limited
Cody Technology Park
Al Building
Ively Road
Farnborough
Hampshire
GU14 0LX

Iraq

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* serious injuries and *(b)* fatalities have been sustained by members of the Iraq security forces since March 2003. [61846]

John Reid: This is a matter for the Iraqi Government.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the capacity of the Iraqi regime under Saddam Hussein to have produced a dirty bomb; and if he will make a statement. [65190]

John Reid: In 1987 the Iraqi regime carried out tests to assess the capability of disseminating radioactive material in bombs dropped from aircraft for use possibly as a radiological device (dirty bomb). The project was abandoned and there is no evidence of any subsequent attempts to develop radiological devices.

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether all British service personnel injured in Iraq are being screened for the possibility of a traumatic brain injury. [65915]

John Reid: All service patients who are injured in Iraq and who have symptoms and signs of brain injury are treated appropriately. However, personnel are not automatically screened for brain injury, as screening patients whose injury would have no impact on their brain function (e.g. a sprained ankle) would be clinically inappropriate.

Joint Strike Fighter

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he has had discussions with his US counterparts on software source code access in relation to the Joint Strike Fighter; and if he will make a statement. [65418]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 30 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1154W to my hon. Friend the Member for North Durham (Mr. Jones). Regular discussions take place at all levels with the US Administration on all aspects of the joint strike fighter programme. I can assure my hon. Friend that the UK has identified in detail the specific aspects of the Government-to-Government technology transfers that are necessary to ensure operational sovereignty of the

Joint Strike Fighter when operated by the RAF and RN. HMG has been similarly clear regarding the absolute necessity of receiving this information.

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the UK has the capability to develop a new weapon for the Joint Strike Fighter aircraft separately from the USA; and whether this would be possible without the software access code. [65420]

Mr. Ingram: The ability to upgrade our Joint Strike Fighters through life to meet the needs of our armed forces is an important part of ensuring operational sovereignty in their use. We have made it clear to the United States that to proceed with the purchase of the aircraft we require access to the information necessary for operational sovereignty, and we remain optimistic that this will be achieved.

Campaign Medals

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list campaigns since 1945 for which Naval General Service Medals and/or clasp have been awarded for which the qualifying period would be fulfilled by *(a)* an aggregated and *(b)* a continuous period of service in theatre. [65387]

Mr. Touhig: Since 1945 there have been a total of 12 campaigns for which the Naval General Service Medal and/or clasp have been awarded.

The following campaigns required aggregated service.

Campaign	*Number of qualifying days*	*From*	*To*
South East Asia	28	3 September 1945	30 November 1946
Minesweeping	180	3 September 1945	30 September 1951
Bomb and Mine Clearance	180	3 September 1945	30 September 1953
Cyprus	120	1 April 1955	18 April 1959
Bomb and Mine Clearance Mediterranean Clasp	180	1 January 1955	31 December 1960
Arabian Peninsula	30	1 January 1957	30 June 1960

The following campaigns required continuous service.

Campaign	*Number of qualifying days*	*From*	*To*
Palestine	28 afloat	27 September 1945	30 June 1948
Yangtze	1	20 April 1949	20 April 1949
HMS Consort		21 April 1949	21 April 1949
HMS London		21 April 1949	21 April 1949
HMS Black Swan		21 April 1949	31 July 1949
HMS Amethyst		16 June 1948	31 July 1960
Malaya	28 afloat, 1 ashore	16 October 1951	19 October 1954
Suez	30	31 October 1956	22 December 1956
Near East	1	8 December 1962	23 December 1962
Brunei	1		

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence for what reason no naval representative was included on Lord Guthrie's sub-committee on the award of service medals and clasps in respect of the Canal Zone. [65388]

Mr. Touhig: The range of expertise encompassed by the membership of the sub-Committee of the Committee on the Grant of Honours Decorations and Medals, which was established in November 2002 to discuss the case for a medal for service in the Suez Canal Zone between 1951 and 1954, was extensive and comprehensive. The Chairman was a former Chief of the Defence Staff and as such represented all three Services.

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether Lord Guthrie's sub-committee on the awarding of medals and clasps for service in the Canal Zone referred to a requirement that the qualifying 30-day period for naval personnel had to be continuous. [65390]

Mr. Touhig: The eligibility criteria for the awarding of medals and clasps for service in the Canal Zone reflect the discussions of Lord Guthrie's sub-committee of the Committee on the Grant of Honours Decorations and Medals, which deliberated the matter in November 2002. This includes the requirement that the qualifying 30-day period for the medal had to be continuous rather than aggregated service.

Mental Health Services

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what *(a)* charities and *(b)* other organisations receive funding from his Department for the treatment of veterans with mental health conditions; and how much each received in each of the past five years. [55582]

Mr. Touhig: In relation to income received by the Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society ("Combat Stress") by way of expenses defrayed under article 26 of the Naval, Military and Air Forces Etc. (Disablement and Death) Service Pensions Order 1983, I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 9 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1191W, to the hon. Member for Putney (Ms Greening). Costs may be defrayed under article 26 in respect of other veterans with mental health conditions and in relation to other providers of treatment, but such expenditure is not separately identifiable.

In addition the Ministry of Defence also provides grant-in-aid for the Royal Hospital Chelsea, which provides a range of services, including some mental

health care, to elderly veterans. However it is not possible to break this down to separate out costs for treatment.

Missile Defence

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 30 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1154W, on missile defence, what the conclusions were of the NATO Feasibility Study into options for Alliance missile defence. [65955]

John Reid: The NATO Missile Defence Feasibility Study is classified and the disclosure of its conclusions would, or would be likely to, prejudice the capability, effectiveness or security of UK armed forces or our Allies. A number of options are considered in the study, based on a range of assumptions and the expected performance of potential Alliance missile defence capabilities. NATO will now review those assumptions and decide how to take the work forward.

Nuclear Testing

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the risks associated with the use of DDT in nuclear testing conducted by his Department. [64797]

Mr. Touhig: The UK atmospheric nuclear tests took place in areas with high levels of tropical insect pests which presented a risk to health. To minimise this, aerial spraying of DDT was carried out. There is no reliable evidence that DDT causes adverse health effects in man and the Ministry of Defence has not undertaken any specific assessment of the risks associated with the use of DDT in nuclear testing.

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment has been made by his Department of the long-term effect on *(a)* servicemen and *(b)* their offspring of exposure to radiation in connection with nuclear testing on Christmas Island in 1958. [64605]

Mr. Touhig: In 1983, the Ministry of Defence commissioned from the National Radiological Protection Board and Imperial Cancer Research Fund an independent epidemiological study of participants of the UK atmospheric nuclear tests, including those present at the 1958 Christmas Island tests. The study compared a representative group of over 20,000 participants with a control group of men who did not take part in the tests but were otherwise similar. Analyses of mortality and cancer incidence in the groups have been published in the peer-reviewed mainstream medical literature in 1988, 1993 and 2003. These studies showed that overall mortality and cancer incidence was similar both in the participant and control groups and lower than the UK national rate, The 1988 study suggested a slightly raised level of multiple myeloma in participants compared with controls. However, this was not confirmed in the 1993 and 2003 reports and is likely to have been due to chance. There does appear, from all three studies, to be a small increased risk of leukaemias in test participants, apart from chronic lymphatic leukaemia, especially in the early years after the test. The MOD has not formally assessed the health of offspring of UK atmospheric nuclear test participants and is unaware of any such studies in the international published peer-reviewed medical or scientific literature.

Nuclear Weapons

Joan Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has to debate studies into the costs of replacement of Trident. [65319]

John Reid: The issue of the possible replacement of Trident has been raised on numerous occasions in the House of Commons, most recently during Defence questions on 27 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 15. I have also discussed this issue with the House of Commons Defence Committee on 1 November 2005.

This work is at an extremely early stage and Ministers have not yet engaged in the process in any detail, nor have they made any decisions. There will therefore be many further opportunities for Members of Parliament to debate this issue, but it is too early to speculate on the possible costs of any replacement programme.

Official Travel

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what percentage of flights out of RAF Northolt was accounted for by *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials in each of the last three years. [64966]

Mr. Touhig: In 2005, 11.7 per cent. of 32 (The Royal) Squadron flights out of RAF Northolt carried Ministers.

The number of 32 (The Royal) Squadron flights out of RAF Northolt that carried officials is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Pension Schemes

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list those companies to which his Department has given a Crown guarantee in relation to their pension schemes. [66540]

Mr. Touhig: I can advise that the Ministry of Defence has not given a Crown guarantee to any companies in relation to their pension schemes.

Queen's Flight

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what provision he makes for airport landing charges in the fees charged to other Government Departments for use of the Queen's Flight. [64791]

Mr. Ingram: Other Government Departments are charged an hourly rate for use of 32 (The Royal) Squadron aircraft. This hourly rate includes an element covering handling and landing charges.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what adjustment he has made to the price charged to other Government Departments for the use of the Queen's Flight as a result of recent increases in fuel costs. [64798]

Mr. Ingram: The charges to other Government Departments for use of 32 (The Royal) Squadron aircraft are kept under regular review. The review earlier this month confirmed that existing charges (introduced in August 2005) remain appropriate.

RAF Aircraft Servicing

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many times RAF *(a)* Harrier GR7 and *(b)* Jaguar aircraft were cannibalised during (i) 2003, (ii) 2004 and (iii) 2005. [65445]

Mr. Ingram: The removal of serviceable parts from one aircraft for use on another is a short term, temporary measure to ensure that the maximum number of aircraft are available to the front line.

The number of these instances over the last three years is given in the following table.

Number of cannibalisations

	Aircraft type	
	Harrier GR[1]	*Jaguar*
2003	1,119	592
2004	958	714
2005	530	400

[1] These figures include cannibalisations in respect of Harrier GR7 and G7a.

Shipbuilding

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the implications for his Department of possible mergers of UK shipbuilding firms; and if he will make a statement. [62042]

Mr. Ingram: As we recognised in the Defence Industrial Strategy (DIS), the maritime industry in the United Kingdom is currently fragmented and inefficient. Different organisations undertake submarine and surface ship build and support, even though skills and facilities cross over in some areas.

We further recognised that Industrial restructuring and consolidation is a priority and fundamental to creating a viable and sustainable maritime industrial base; one that retains in the UK those technologies, infrastructure, skills, Intellectual Property and capacity needed to ensure appropriate sovereignty. The aim is to encourage greater efficiency and profitability within the industry, while maximising the opportunities for exports, in order to meet the anticipated demand for ensuring in future that the UK's armed forces are provided with the equipment they need, on time, and at best value for money.

Having stated the case for streamlining the business, it is not for Government to micromanage the industrial restructuring. However we recognise that as the predominant client we must be confident that consolidation will be beneficial to Ministry of Defence and industry. We expect to be consulted early and are likely to express preferences as any approaches emerge.

Given the MOD's substantial Warship build programme over the next decade, now is the time to address these issues to position the industry for a strong future in times when orders will be fewer.

Side Arms

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the Army has plans to update the standard 9mm Browning side arm. [65380]

Mr. Ingram: There are currently no plans to update the 9mm pistol.

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has to re-allocate the Sig Sauer P220 side arms that were recently replaced by Glock 17s; and if he will make a statement. [65766]

Mr. Ingram: Neither the Sig Sauer P220 nor the Glock 17 is in current service with the Ministry of Defence.

Undercover Agents

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what provision has been made by his Department for the permanent protection of current and former undercover agents in the Irish republican movements who were service personnel when engaged in this role; and what discussions have been held between his Department and other relevant Departments about the duty of care for present or former such undercover agents in the republican movement, in the event of their role being exposed. [64903]

Mr. Ingram: We do not comment on matters relating to intelligence because to do so would be to the detriment of national security and the safety of individuals.

TREASURY

Gross Debt

Adam Price: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the Gross debt (Maastricht basis) shown in Table C23 of Budget 2006 (HC986) includes the capital debt component of private finance initiative and public-private partnership contracts. [65740]

Mr. Des Browne: General Government gross debt on a Maastricht basis (as forecast in Table C1 of Budget 2006) includes estimates for imputed liabilities for finance leases including those taken out under on balance sheet PFI contracts.

Business Rates

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many communication stations were registered for business rates by the Valuation Office Agency in England in each local authority area in 1998. [59126]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2836W, to the hon. Member for Meriden (Mrs. Spelman).

Community Shops

Angela Browning: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the impact on community shops of the abolition of 0 per cent. corporation tax on small businesses. [66399]

John Healey: The replacement of the starting and non-corporate distribution rates of corporation tax with a single banding for small companies set at the current small companies' rate will only impact on businesses and organisations within the charge to corporation tax

and will not impact those operating in the self-employed form or not making profits. A full regulatory impact assessment can be found at: http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/ria/ria-corporation-tax.pdf

Where community shops operating within the charge to corporation tax donate all or part of their profits to community or other charities under Gift Aid, there will be no tax paid on the profits donated.

Council Tax

John Bercow: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the effect on pensioner poverty of the decision not to continue the annual council tax rebate for pensioners. [65624]

Mr. Timms: I have been asked to reply.

The payment of £200 to help households with someone aged 65 or over not in receipt of the guarantee element of pension credit to help with council tax bills was for last year only. Available data do not allow for a precise assessment of the impact on pensioners on low income of not making a similar payment in 2006–07.

Departmental Websites

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list *(a)* the websites operated by his Department and *(b)* the reports placed on the internet in March 2006, indicating in each case whether paper copies were also made available. [65199]

John Healey: The information is as follows.

(a) The websites operated by the Department are as follows:

http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk
http://www.csren.gov.uk
http://www.euro.gov.uk
http://www.financialinclusion-taskforce.org.uk
http://www.isb.gov.uk
http://www.ges.gov.uk
http://www.gsr.gov.uk
http://www.[illegible]pg.gov.uk
http://www.policyhub.gov.uk
http://www.redbox.gov.uk
http://www.stakeholdersaving.gov.uk
http://thegas.treasury.gov.uk
http://www.wga.gov.uk

(b) Reports placed on the internet in March 2006

Title	*Hard copies available*
Central Government Supply Estimates 2004–2005: Statement of excesses	Yes
Budget 2006: Main Report	Yes
Budget 2006: Main Leaflet	Yes
Budget 2006: Data sources	Yes
Budget 2006: Regulatory Impact Assessments	Yes
Budget 2006: Operational Impact Assessments	Yes
Delivering sustainable development: HM Treasury Action Plan	No
The European Cooperative Society: A consultation document	Yes
PFI: Strengthening long-term partnerships	Yes
Independence for statistics: a consultation document	Yes
Productivity in the UK 6: Progress and new evidence	Yes
Devolving decision making: 3—Meeting the regional economic challenge: The importance of cities to regional growth	Yes
Financial services in London: Global opportunities and challenges	Yes
The climate change levy package	Yes
Employment opportunity for all: Analysing Labour market trends in London	Yes
Review of Government Offices	Yes
Science and innovation investment framework 2004–2014: next steps	Yes
Reducing reporting requirements: a consultation on reform of the 'controllers regime' in Part XII of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000	Yes
Extending employers' freedoms: A consultation on facilitating financial promotions in the workplace	Yes
Modernising tax relief for business expenditure on cars: a consultation document	Yes
Carbon capture and storage: a consultation on barriers to commercial deployment	Yes
New responses to new challenges: Reinforcing the Tackling Tobacco Smuggling Strategy	Yes
Debt and Reserves Management Report (DRMR) 2006–07	Yes
The economy: Supplementary charts and tables	Yes
Proposed changes to the eligibility rules for establishing a pension scheme: Government response to the consultation	Yes
The UK and the IMF 2005: Meeting the challenges of globalisation for all	Yes
Secondary legislation for the regulation of Home Reversion and Home Purchase Plans: A consultation	Yes
Risk: Good Practice in Government	Yes

Government Spending

Adam Price: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total capital expenditure was in England on *(a)* education and skills and *(b)* health in each year since 1999–2000. [65732]

Mr. Des Browne: As set out in Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses 2005 http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/172/47/pesa2005_complete.pdf the total capital expenditure in England on *(a)* education and skills and *(b)* health since 1999–2000 is presented in the following table.

Accruals, £ million

	Education and Training	*Health*
1999–2000	1,534	917
2000–01	1,992	1,255
2001–02	2,637	1,738
2002–03	3,128	2,091
2003–04	3,575	2,638
2004–05	4,321	3,575

The capital expenditure figure for 2005–06 will be published in Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses 2006 (for publication in May 2006).

Laundered Diesel (Northern Ireland)

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many motorists in Northern Ireland have been detected driving with laundered diesel fuel in each of the last five years. [65353]

John Healey: HM Revenue and Customs carry out tests to detect statutory markers in rebated fuel and, where these are detected in the running tank of a road vehicle, action is taken. Tests do not establish with any certainty whether or not fuel in a vehicle's engine is laundered.

Medical Staff (Pay)

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he expects to announce the pay increases to be awarded to *(a)* doctors and dentists and *(b)* nurses in the 2006–07 financial year; and whether he intends these pay increases to be phased over the course of the financial year. [62723]

Mr. Byrne: I have been asked to reply.

I refer the hon. Member to the written ministerial statement the Secretary of State for Health gave on 30 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 89WS.

Ministerial Meetings

Jo Swinson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer on what dates in the last year Ministers in his Department have held meetings with Ministers in the Scottish Executive. [66753]

Mr. Des Browne: Treasury Ministers meet Scottish Ministers from time-to-time to discuss matters of common interest.

Pension Liabilities

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the liabilities are of each company issued with Crown guarantees in respect of their pension fund deficits; and if he will make a statement. [66351]

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what contingent financial liabilities have been entered into by the Government in respect of employees pension funds of companies privatised since 1980; and what his Department's estimate is of its liabilities in relation to *(a)* British Telecom, *(b)* the former British Rail, *(c)* National Freight Corporation and *(d)* the former National Coal Board; [66357]

(2) what estimate he has made of the contingent public sector liabilities in respect of employee pensions of companies in which the Government retain a shareholding; and what the liabilities are for each company. [66358]

Mr. Des Browne: Where a Department retain a shareholding in a company or where a Department has provided a guarantee of any pension scheme, it is a matter for that Department to report any obligations created by the guarantee to Parliament in accordance with the requirements of Government accounting and in its departmental resource accounts in accordance with the Government's financial reporting manual, which complies with generally accepted accounting practice.

It is a matter for that Department to report any obligation created by that shareholding.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the public sector pension liabilities are in respect of *(a)* the Civil Service, *(b)* local government, *(c)* the NHS, *(d)* other government agencies, *(e)* companies in which the Government have a majority or minority shareholding and *(f)* privatised entities which were formerly state-owned. [66355]

Mr. Des Browne: The information is not available in the form requested. A technical note detailing the unfunded public service pension liability was placed in the House of Commons Library pursuant to my reply to the hon. Member for Ludlow (Mr. Dunne) of 2 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 388, and this covers the liability position of all the unfunded public service pension schemes including the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme and the NHS Pension Scheme. In addition the liabilities of the funded Local Government Pension Scheme at the last reporting date were estimated to be approximately £130 billion with assets of £100 billion.

Information on the pension liabilities of companies in which the Government has a minority or majority shareholding and those of private sector bodies which were formerly state owned is not held centrally but is publicly available in the relevant accounts.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what account is taken of the contingent public sector liabilities in respect of employee pension funds of privatised companies in his Department's estimate of public sector debt liabilities. [66356]

Mr. Des Browne: The UK Government are one of the few in the world who has a statutory obligation to report liabilities in the same way as private companies, and whose accounts are subject to independent audit.

Contingent liabilities are reported in government accounts and to Parliament. They are defined as being contingent on an event, or a set of events, whose likelihood of occurring has been judged as remote. They are not, by their definition, actual liabilities, and so it would not be right to include them in measures of Public Sector Net Debt.

Road Fuel Prices

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what assessment he *(a)* has made and *(b)* plans to make of the effect of an increase in the price of (i) petrol and (ii) diesel on the UK economy; and if he will make a statement; [65254]

(2) what assessment he *(a)* has made and *(b)* plans to make of the long-term consequences for (i) employment and (ii) the British economy of (A) continued increases in the price of petroleum and (B) a decrease in the output of oil; and if he will make a statement; [65256]

(3) what assessment he has made of the impact on the UK economy if the price of *(a)* petrol and *(b)* diesel were to be reduced by (i) five pence and (ii) 10 pence per litre; and if he will make a statement. [65257]

John Healey: The Government continually monitor developments in petroleum markets. The effects of higher oil and fuel prices on the UK economy were discussed on Box 2.5, p.26 of pre-Budget report 2005 (Cm 6701) and in Chapter B of Budget 2006 (HC 968).

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent representations he has made to Arab States about *(a)* an increase in the price of petroleum and *(b)* a decrease in the output of oil; what response he has received; and if he will make a statement. [65255]

John Healey: The Chancellor engages in dialogue with the representatives of Arab States—and other oil producers—on a regular basis, both bilaterally and through multilateral fora. These conversations cover a range of issues of common interest and therefore include oil market developments. The Chancellor has repeatedly encouraged major oil producers to increase their investment throughout the oil supply chain in order to ensure that supply growth keeps pace with the growth in demand.

Scottish Executive

Jo Swinson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what criteria are applied to requests from *(a)* the Scottish Executive to draw down money from the account held by the Treasury on its behalf and *(b)* Government Departments to draw down underspends; [66752]

(2) what the balance is on the account held by his Department on behalf of the Scottish Executive. [66754]

Mr. Des Browne: Details of the end-year flexibility scheme are set out in the Public Expenditure Out-turn White Paper 2005–06 (Cm 6639). Table 6 of that publication details the end-year flexibility entitlements for all Departments.

Jo Swinson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what funds were *(a)* requested to be drawn down and *(b)* drawn down from the savings account held by his Department on behalf of the Scottish Executive in each year from 2000–01 to 2005–06. [66757]

Mr. Des Browne: Details of the agreed draw-down of end-year flexibility are set out in the relevant supplementary estimates and accompanying ministerial written statements.

Self-invested Personal Pensions

Mr. Bone: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the *(a)* role and *(b)* regulation of independent trustees for self-invested personal pensions. [65422]

Mr. Des Browne: It is common for trustees to administer personal pension schemes. Under current legislation trustees are often exempt from requiring FSA authorisation. Many self-invested personal pensions (SIPP) providers use this route for exemption.

Self-Invested Personal Pensions (SIPP) operators will, from April 2007, need to be authorised by the FSA with all the protection for consumers that this entails. That includes any trustees who are operating the scheme unless they are not doing so by way of business or are just 'bare trustees'. The FSA is currently consulting industry on the detailed implementation of how this relates to trustees.

Smuggling (Northern Ireland)

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many Customs and Excise officers were assigned to tackling smuggling activities in Northern Ireland in the 2005–06 financial year; and how many man hours this represents. [65157]

John Healey: The staff employed by HM Revenue and Customs in Northern Ireland who contribute to anti-smuggling activities was 159 in 2004–05. They are deployed across a range of activities that contribute to, but are not solely allocated to, our anti-smuggling efforts; including investigation, detection and intelligence. As a consequence we are unable to attribute a single staffing figure to anti-smuggling work.

All staffing figures for 2005–06 are not yet available but will be published in the HMRC Annual Report 2005–06.

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many and what percentage of detections of smuggling in Northern Ireland were made by HM Revenue and Customs in the last period for which figures are available; [65158]

(2) how many and what percentage of detections of smuggling in Northern Ireland were made by the Police Service of Northern Ireland in the last period for which figures are available. [65148]

John Healey: HM Revenue and Customs work closely with many other agencies to tackle smuggling, including the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

The number of detections of smuggled goods in the financial year 2004–05 in Northern Ireland was 1,939 but it is not possible to distinguish what number, if any, were the result of working with any other agency, or referred to HMRC by that agency.

Stillbirths

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many babies have been stillborn in each of the regions of the UK in each of the last five years; and what percentage of the total number of births this represented in each case. [65413]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Jill Matheson, dated 27 April 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how many babies have been stillborn in each of the regions of the UK in each of the last five years; and what percentage of the total number of births this represented in each case. I am replying in her absence. (65413)

The table below shows the number of stillbirths, and stillbirths as a percentage of all births, in countries of the UK and Government Office Regions of England for the years 2000 to 2004.

Number of stillbirths, and stillbirths as a percentage of total births, in countries of the United Kingdom and Government office regions of England, 2000–2004

	2000		2001		2002	
	Number of stillbirths	*Stillbirths as percentage of total births*[1]	*Number of stillbirths*	*Stillbirths as percentage of total births*[1]	*Number of stillbirths*	*Stillbirths as percentage of total births*[1]
United Kingdom	3,594	0.53	3,572	0.53	3,772	0.56
England and Wales[2]	3,203	0.53	3,159	0.53	3,372	0.56
England[2,3]	3,029	0.53	2,991	0.53	3,201	0.56
Wales[2,3]	145	0.46	155	0.50	164	0.54
Scotland[4]	298	0.56	301	0.57	278	0.54
Northern Ireland[5]	93	0.43	112	0.51	122	0.57
Government Office Regions of England[2]						
North East	140	0.53	136	0.52	153	0.58
North West	418	0.54	459	0.61	424	0.56
Yorkshire and The Humber	338	0.60	287	0.51	334	0.60
East Midlands	218	0.47	241	0.54	254	0.56
West Midlands	348	0.56	337	0.55	383	0.62
East	296	0.48	291	0.48	318	0.53
London	663	0.63	620	0.59	691	0.65
South East	398	0.44	409	0.46	421	0.48
South West	210	0.42	211	0.43	223	0.45

	2003		2004	
	Number of stillbirths	*Stillbirths as percentage of total births*[1]	*Number of stillbirths*	*Stillbirths as percentage of total births*[1]
United Kingdom	3,989	0.57	3,962	0.55
England and Wales[2]	3,585	0.57	3,532	0.55
England[2,3]	3,405	0.57	3,338	0.55
Wales[2,3]	160	0.51	179	0.55
Scotland[4]	296	0.56	317	0.58
Northern Ireland[5]	108	0.50	113	0.50
Government Office Regions of England[2]				
North East	150	0.55	157	0.56
North West	468	0.60	449	0.55
Yorkshire and The Humber	347	0.60	347	0.57
East Midlands	289	0.61	265	0.55
West Midlands	387	0.60	367	0.55
East	309	0.49	339	0.52
London	752	0.68	710	0.62
South East	443	0.48	458	0.49
South West	260	0.50	246	0.47

[1] Stillbirths as a percentage of live births and stillbirths.
[2] Some stillbirths in 2004 are excluded from these and previously published figures, as the relevant registration details were not sent to ONS before the statistics were compiled. Revised figures for 2004 will be published as soon as possible to include the additional stillbirth registrations.
[3] Excludes non-residents of England and Wales.
[4] Includes non-residents of Scotland.
[5] Excludes non-residents of Northern Ireland.

Source:
ONS Series DH3 Mortality statistics—Childhood, infant and perinatal.
General Register Office—Scotland. The Registrar General's Annual Report.
General Register Office—Northern Ireland. The Registrar General's Annual Report.

Valuation Office Agency

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 25 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 222W, to the hon. Member for Meriden (Mrs. Spelman), on the Valuation Office Agency, whether Tenet software is used for council tax valuation purposes; and if he will list the products purchased from Tenet. [49738]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

Products purchased from Tenet IT Mapping Limited are (i) a digital mapping system, available to all Valuation Office Agency staff and (ii) a locality delineation tool, available to a limited number of VGA users.

The digital mapping system supports work on the current (1993) council tax lists as it allows staff to identify the location of individual properties (especially in rural locations).

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 7 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1308–9W, on the Valuation Office Agency, what the purpose is of the electronic image management application; and whether it stores images of domestic properties for council tax valuation purposes. [59172]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

The Valuation Office Agency (VOA) has a digital photography application, which links photographs of properties and land to addresses held in its property database. The photographs are of both domestic and non domestic properties as well as land. They are used to assist the VOA in carrying out its functions, including those for council tax and non domestic rating. Images, including those of domestic properties, are stored in a secure database.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what role the OASIS PC market applications plays in the Valuation Office Agency's council tax valuations. [60135]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

The OASIS PC market application plays no role in undertaking council tax valuations.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will place in the Library copies of the minutes of the Valuation Office Agency Programme Board that was preparing for the council tax revaluation in England. [60192]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

The minutes of the Valuation Office Agency's Programme Board for the (now postponed) council tax revaluation in England contain commercially sensitive information and information linked to the formulation and development of Government policy.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Child Support

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he will answer Question 52727 tabled on 14 February 2006 by the right hon. Member for Birkenhead on child maintenance. [62038]

Mr. Plaskitt: I replied to my right hon. Friend on 19 April 2006.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his estimate is of the real costs of running the Child Support Agency for each year from 1997–98 to 2007–08, using 2004–05 prices; and if he will make a statement. [62036]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Hilary Reynolds:

In reply to your Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive. As the Chief Executive is unavailable, I am responding on his behalf.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what his estimate is of the real costs of ruing the Child Support Agency for each year from 1997–98 to 2007–08 using 2004–05 prices; and if he will make a statement.

The costs of running the CSA for each year from 1997–98 to 2007–08, is shown I the attached tables.

A change in accounting policy within DWP means that from 2005–06 all costs associated with the modernisation programme will be charged to individual Agencies. The numbers in this response are based on a consistent application of this new accounting policy across all years.

The upward movement of costs in the 2006–07 and 2007–08 years is representative of a one off investment to clear current backlogs and reduce historic debt (in line with the Agency's Operational Improvement Plan), rather than an increase in recurrent cost.

I hope you find this helpful.

£ million

Column	*A*	*B*	*C*	*D*	*E*	*F*	*G*
	[1]*Agency spend*	[2,3]*Estimated agency spend including operational improvement plan*	[4]*Modernisation spend—CSR*	[5]*Estimated DWP costs incurred on agencies behalf*	[6]*Costs and estimated costs—in current year prices*	[7]*Gross domestic product—deflator 2004–05 = 100*	[8]*Costs and estimated costs in 2004–05 prices*
1997–98	225.9	—	—	—	225.9	1.17461	265.3
1998–99	231.2	—	—	—	231.2	1.1449	264.7
1999–2000	260.3	—	6.4	—	266.7	1.1229	299.3
2000–01	250.0	—	48.3	—	298.3	1.1083	330.6
2001–02	290.4	—	71.5	—	361.9	1.0816	391.4
2002–03	294.3	—	134.6	—	428.9	1.0483	449.6
2003–04	323.0	—	128.6	—	451.6	1.0212	461.2
2004–05	325.6	—	99.5	—	425.1	1.0000	425.1
2005–06[9]	—	403	—	58	461	0.9756	450
2006–07	—	534	—	58	592	0.9500	562
2007–08	—	491	—	58	549	0.9250	508

[1] Figures reported in the Agency's Annual Report and Accounts and include DWP costs apportioned to Child Support Agency.
[2] Estimated spend on Agency budgets for which the Chief Executive has responsibility as Agency accounting officer.
[3] The 2005–06 figures include Child Support Reform costs and Operational Improvement Plan costs.
[4] Modernisation spend on Child Support Reform was previously included in DWP headquarters accounts. Due to a change in financial policy endorsed by National Audit Office these costs will in future be shown in the Agency annual accounts. The 2004–05 accounts will be restated to reflect this changed policy and the restated comparatives included in the 2005–06 audited accounts.
[5] This figures is an estimate and relates to services provided by DWP on behalf of the Agency—principally IT charges, and charges for finance, personal, commercial management, postage and assurance. This estimate does not take into account any possible change in future years such as pay and prices (inflation), change in Estate/IT costs etc.
[6] This represents the sum of columns A to D.

[7] Gross domestic product deflator applied in line with Office for National Statistics advice for 2005–06 and beyond assumed deflator is 2.5 per cent.
[8] Column E multiplied by column F.
[9] All values are rounded to the nearest hundred thousand except figures from 2005–06 onwards, which are rounded to the nearest million, as they are estimated amounts. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he expects to answer the letter of 27 February 2006 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, about Mr. W Beckett. [63923]

Mr. Hutton: I replied to my right hon. Friend on 19 April 2006.

Councillors' Remuneration

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how the responsibility allowance allocated to leaders and cabinet members of local councils is treated for benefit purposes. [66332]

Mr. Plaskitt: Councillors with significant extra responsibilities, for example the leader of a council, can receive an additional allowance.

When assessing benefit entitlement this allowance is taken into account as earnings, subject to the appropriate disregards.

Departmental Documentation

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the Department's compliance with accessibility targets for its public documentation. [56334]

Mrs. McGuire: My Department takes the issue of accessibility very seriously—both as an employer and a provider of services to the public.

Internal guidance and standards are in place to ensure that there is a consistent approach to meeting the communication needs of members of the public. This includes the provision of material in alternative formats (such as audio tape, easy read, Braille and large print) and a commitment to the use of plain English. Information translated into other languages is also available (such as bilingual leaflets, audio and video tape). Our websites are working towards the highest standards of accessibility.

We will as a matter of course further review accessibility of documents as we develop our Disability Equality Scheme.

Departmental Estate (Parklands Building)

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what total liability arose through the reconstruction of his Department's Parklands building; and if he will make a statement. [52579]

Mrs. McGuire: Legal actions were raised in the Court of Session by the Department against the original builders of this estate and their design team in early 2001. These actions were settled out of court and the Department has been compensated. The Department's total liability is to rectify the defects on this estate as defined by the Building Investigation Corporation investigative reports, by 2008, to the satisfaction of our Facilities Management contractor. It is estimated that the total costs associated with any reconstruction works will be £2.9 million.

Financial Assistance Scheme

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much was paid in *(a)* bonus payments and *(b)* performance related pay to senior civil servants administering the Financial Assistance Scheme in the last 12 months. [66482]

Mr. Timms: The operational unit of the Financial Assistance Scheme was set up on 1 April 2005 and opened for business to the public on 1 September 2005. Any senior civil servant's performance related pay and bonus related to the work of the unit would be payable in the senior civil service pay round for 2006. Pay increases and bonuses in the Department for Work and Pensions for the year ending 31 March 2006 will be awarded in June 2006 and paid in July 2006.

Jobcentres

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many jobseeker's allowance and incapacity benefit claimants were dealt with in the Putney jobcentre in *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06; and if he will make a statement. [64398]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question asking how many Jobseeker's Allowance and Incapacity Benefit claimants were dealt with in the Putney Jobcentre in *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06. This is something which fall within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Information on the total number of claimants dealt with in Putney Jobcentre during 2004–05 and 2005–06 is not available. However, Putney Jobcentre had on average 1649 claimants to Jobseeker's Allowance during each day of 2004–05 and 1700 during each day of 2005–06.

Incapacity Benefit claimants could have used Wandsworth Social Security office (now the site of Wandsworth Jobcentre Plus) for any enquiries, or they could have contacted a processing centre by telephone. They would not have used the Putney office.

I hope this helpful.

Link Age Plus Scheme

Ed Balls: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) whether he plans to pilot the Link Age Plus Scheme in West Yorkshire; [66021]

(2) what progress has been made in the Link Age Plus Scheme and Steering Group; and if he will make a statement. [66022]

Mr. Timms: We announced in "Opportunity Age" our intention to pilot a LinkAge Plus service, providing a fully integrated service for older people. The Social Exclusion Unit Report 'A Sure Start to Later Life' also proposed a new approach to delivering services to and for older people, building on the principles of the Sure Start model for children and families, LinkAge Plus will deliver this service.

The programme will test ways of delivering fully integrated services for older people—from employment, health and benefits to leisure and learning. This will involve working with older people to identify effective models that meet their needs and aspirations and involving them in the design.

The whole programme is overseen by a steering group drawn from a range of central government, voluntary sector and local government organisations. In fact, the whole programme is based on partnership working—with older people, national key stakeholder organisations and agencies, local authorities and Government Departments, all playing a crucial role.

The programme plans to run up to eight pilots in England and a number of local authorities are currently helping to develop the 'LinkAge Plus' concept further and advise on how it can be delivered practically on the ground. One of these local authorities is Leeds City Council. Final announcements on the programme will be made shortly, including details of final pilot selection. We anticipate that the first pilot will start in July.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he will answer Question 47250 tabled by the hon. Member for Portsmouth South on 26 January on learning disability. [62666]

Mrs. McGuire: I answered question 47250 on 30 March 2006.

Winter Fuel Allowance

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what would the annual winter fuel allowance now be if it had changed in line with *(a)* the retail price index and *(b)* domestic fuel costs since 2000–01. [65974]

Mr. Timms: The annual winter fuel payment was £20 in winter 1997–98, rising to £200 from winter 2000–01. If the winter fuel payment had been increased in line with the retail price index from 2000–01, the value of the payment in 2005–06 would have been £225. If it had been increased in line with the increase in domestic fuel costs, the value of the payment would have been £258. From 2003–04, an extra £100 has been paid to households which include a person aged 80 or over.

Note:

For 'domestic fuel' we have used the ONS' Fuel and Light index which incorporates: coal and solid fuels, electricity, gas and oil, and other fuels.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Electoral Registration

Chris Ruane: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will give line performance indicators for electoral registration, at each stage of registration, for each local authority area in each of the last 10 years. [65899]

Bridget Prentice: Electoral services are delivered by local electoral registration officers and returning officers. No uniform line performance indicators have been required of local authorities in respect of these areas in the past and so the information sought is not available from central government but may be held by individual local authorities. The Electoral Administration Bill currently under consideration in Parliament contains provisions that will in future allow the independent Electoral Commission to set performance standards for elections in order to promote best practice and consistency in the delivery of electoral services.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the current guidelines are for staffing levels of local authority registration departments. [65901]

Bridget Prentice: Electoral services are delivered by local electoral registration officers and returning officers. No guidelines have been issued centrally to local authorities in the past on staffing levels in registration departments and so the information sought is not available from central Government. The Electoral Administration Bill currently under consideration in Parliament contains provisions that will in future allow the independent Electoral Commission to set performance standards for elections in order to promote best practice and consistency in the delivery of electoral services.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will consider introducing a carry forward policy for voter registration of one general election cycle. [65902]

Bridget Prentice: In Great Britain, the Representation of the People Regulations 2001 currently provide for entries on the register to be retained for one year where no form is returned relating to a particular property at an annual canvass.

Within the system of electoral registration in place in Great Britain, the Government believes that a carry-forward period of a General Election cycle would be likely to increase levels of inaccuracy in the register to unacceptable levels. However, we will keep this policy under review, particularly in the light of changes to the registration system in Northern Ireland which are proposed in the Northern Ireland (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill, currently before Parliament.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will list the local authorities electoral registration departments that *(a)* do and *(b)* do not use bar coding on their electoral registration forms. [65903]

Bridget Prentice: A number of local authorities print a barcode on electoral registration forms to aid with the administration of the annual canvass. A list of which local authorities do and do not operate this system is not held centrally.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs which local authorities have reduced their electoral budgets over the past 10 years. [65906]

Bridget Prentice: As electoral services are delivered and funded at local level this information would be held by individual local authorities, and is not something that is held centrally by Government. The Electoral Administration Bill currently under consideration in Parliament contains provisions that will in future allow the independent Electoral Commission to ask electoral officers for information about expenditure in connection with the performance of their functions, including registration. This will enable more detailed information to be made available on the funding of electoral registration.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Capita

Chris Grayling: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much business his Department has placed with *(a)* Capita Group plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries in each of the last five years; what the total value is of outstanding contracts placed with Capita Group plc and its subsidiaries by his Department; for which current tenders issued by his Department (i) Capita Group plc and (ii) its subsidiaries have been invited to bid; and whether (A) Capita Group plc and (B) its subsidiaries have seconded staff (1) temporarily and (2) on a longer-term basis to (X) his Department and (Y) its agencies. [61085]

Jim Fitzpatrick: I refer the hon. Member to my answers given on 27 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 97–98W, to the hon. Member for Hornchurch (James Brokenshire). In addition no staff from Capita Plc or any of its subsidiaries have been seconded either temporarily or on a longer term basis to the Department or any of its agencies.

Councillors' Expenses

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the responsibility allowance allocated to leaders and council members of councils in England and Wales is for *(a)* their personal use and *(b)* expenses. [66331]

Mr. Woolas: Special responsibility allowance is paid to members of local authorities as recognition of the time commitment likely to be incurred by those members in the discharge of their duties. The allowance is paid at a rate fixed by the local authority in relation to the responsibility held. It is for the members themselves to decide how they spend this money.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Weir: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 19 December 2005 to the hon. Member for Dundee, East, *Official Report*, column 2559W, on departmental staff, what the average additional payment to staff paid the London area pay rate was for 2005–06; how many and what proportion of staff are entitled to this rate; and if he will estimate the annual saving to his Department if London staff were paid at the national pay rate. [66054]

Jim Fitzpatrick: There are a number of grades of staff in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). Below the senior civil service, there are London and national pay rates for each grade. Pay rates are determined by negotiation with the trade unions, and take account of a number of factors including market rates. Differences between London and national pay rates are proportionately larger for more junior grades.

In 2005–06, the overall average salary difference for London and national staff in ODPM headquarters was around 11 per cent. Around 2,000 (92 per cent.) of staff were on London pay rates. If all staff had been on national pay rates, we estimate salary costs would have been some £5.5 million lower.

Corresponding figures for the Government offices were a 10 per cent. difference between London and national average salaries. Around 300 (11 per cent.) of staff were on London rates. If all staff had been on national pay rates, we estimate salary costs would have been some £1 million lower.

Disabled People

Tom Levitt: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on his Department's progress in meeting its statutory obligation as a public body to promote the rights of disabled people. [65814]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 placed new duties on public authorities to promote equality for disabled people, 'the Disability Equality Duty'. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) is working closely with the Disability Rights Commission as a pathfinder Government Department while it develops its disability equality scheme over the next few months. The partnership should help ODPM to develop a high quality disability equality scheme, develop best practice to share with other Government Departments, and provide experience for the Disability Rights Commission on implementing the duty.

In 2004 ODPM carried out a benchmarking exercise developed by the Employers Forum on Disability, to find out more about the problems faced by disabled people in the Department. As a result, a disability action plan was developed. Most of the actions from the plan are underway, and over half have already been completed, such as a major consultation with disabled staff, guidance on organising accessible events and improved building access. Other actions taken by ODPM to help it prepare for the Disability Equality Duty include:

The screening of ODPM policies and functions to ensure that they promote equality of opportunity for disabled people;

Engaging with ODPM stakeholders to help ensure compliance with the duty;

The delivery of a consultation implementation plan, following a major consultation of disabled staff in ODPM;

Organising of a series of seminars on making events accessible to disabled people;

The development of an evidence base to support implementation of the duty.

Implementing the Disability Equality Duty within local government is a matter for the local authorities. However ODPM has commissioned a study which examined the extent to which local authorities are implementing the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) in ways that promote and support the social inclusion of disabled people. The findings of this study should help local authorities fulfil their duties under the Act. My senior officials and I have also spoken at conferences held by the Disability Rights Commission on the importance of the duty to local authorities.

Other actions taken by my Department to help promote equality for disabled people include the following:

Removing the means test for families of disabled children who apply for Disabled Facilities Grant;

Incorporating disability accessibility standards into the new Code for Sustainable Buildings;

Together with the Department for Work and Pensions and the Department of Health, piloting individualised budgets for disabled people by bringing together sources of funding, services, equipment and adaptations;

Publishing reports on the experiences that certain vulnerable groups—including disabled people—have of accessing and using mainstream public services.

Through the Supporting People programme, enabling the provision of housing-related support services at local level to help vulnerable people (including disabled people) to maintain or improve their ability to live independently.

Fire and Rescue

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many people were *(a)* rescued alive from fires and *(b)* led to safety from fires by fire and rescue service personnel in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available. [65673]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The following table shows the number of people that were *(a)* rescued alive from fires, and *(b)* led or carried out from fires, by fire and rescue service personnel in England in each year from 1995 to 2004.

People rescued alive from fires by fire and rescue service personnel, England, 1995–2004

	Total[1]	Led/carried out	Other rescue method
1995	3,472	2,721	751
1996	3,464	2,774	690
1997	3,573	2,896	677
1998	3,504	2,820	684
1999	3,924	3,187	737
2000	4,883	3,917	966
2001	4,080	3,236	844
2002[2]	4,592	3,763	829
2003[2]	4,341	3,592	749
2004	3,833	3,195	638

[1] The total number of people rescued alive includes people who were injured, those who needed precautionary check-ups and those who were unharmed by the fire. The latter is based on a grossed up 20 per cent. sample of primary fires attended.

[2] Data include estimates for incidents not recorded during periods of national industrial action in 2002 and 2003.

Note:
Figures are based on primary fires attended by the fire and rescue service.
Source:
Fire and Rescue Service FDR1 returns to ODPM.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many water rescues the fire and rescue service were involved in in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available. [65672]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Hereditaments

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the Answer of 7 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1358W, on hereditaments, for what reason the number of composite hereditaments on the Council Tax List is different from the number on the Ratings List; and what assessment he has made of the reason for the decline in the number of composite hereditaments on the Ratings List since 2001. [60185]

Yvette Cooper: No assessment has been made of the reason for the decline in the number of composite hereditaments entered in the Rating List since 2001. There is no apparent reason for this. A composite hereditament comprises both non-domestic and domestic elements. Dwellings are listed in the Valuation List but a corresponding entry may not appear in the Rating List if the non-domestic part is exempt, for instance a farm or market garden. Numbers in the two lists will not therefore be identical.

Social Policy

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what measures the Government are taking *(a)* to promote social inclusion and *(b)* to reduce social exclusion among young people; and if he will make a statement. [65938]

Mr. Woolas: The Social Exclusion Unit continues to work across government to tackle social exclusion and is undertaking more strategic work to promote social inclusion.

Work on young people is carried out in a number of departments and we are all working closely together to ensure that young people achieve good outcomes in all areas of their lives. In 2004–05 there were 700,000 fewer children living in relative poverty (after housing costs) compared to 1998–99 and educational attainment has improved at all key stages since 1997, including improvements for all of the main ethnic groups and progress in schools in disadvantaged areas.

Around 400,000 young children and families in the most disadvantaged areas are benefiting from over 500 Sure Start programmes and there are further developments—such as integrated targeted support for young people—expected from Youth Matters: Next Steps which was published by the Department for Education and Skills in March this year.

Last year the Social Exclusion Unit published "Transitions: Young Adults with Complex Needs". The report contains new evidence and new action that will help 16 to 25-year-olds with severe or multiple problems become successful, independent adults.

HEALTH

Administration Spending

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was spent on *(a)* administration and *(b)* management costs by each primary care trust in England in the last year for which figures are available, expressed (i) as a percentage of their total budget and (ii) as the cost per head of population in areas they cover. [34206]

Mr. Byrne: Administration and management costs as a percentage of total net operating costs and as the cost per head of population for all primary care trusts in England for 2004–05 has been placed in the Library.

Agenda for Change

Angela Browning: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) when she expects to complete the Agenda for Change review process; [66454]

(2) how many staff have been recruited to oversee the Agenda for Change review of NHS staff pay and conditions since 2003; [66455]

(3) what the costs of the administration of the Agenda for Change review of NHS staff pay and conditions exercise were in each year since its inception. [66456]

Mr. Byrne: While the Department led the formal review of the early implementer process in 2003, the ongoing review of the national roll-out of agenda for change since October 2004 is the responsibility of NHS Employers through the NHS Staff Council process. Given this position, the Department does not hold centrally information on staff employed on these issues or administrative costs.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 2 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 724W, on NHS contracts, what follow-up work is being carried out on the cost of implementing agenda for change in each strategic health authority; when the results of this follow-up work will be reported to her Department; what plans she has to increase the funding envelope for agenda for change in *(a)* 2006–07 and *(b)* 2007–08; what her Department estimated the additional costs of implementing agenda for change to be for each financial year between 2004–05 and 2008–09; and whether her Department has estimated the difference between the cost of implementing agenda for change and her Department's estimates. [65061]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* Monitoring of the costs of agenda for change in 28 sample sites in 2005 suggested that in the first 12 months from October 2004 to September 2005 direct earnings costs exceeded those originally estimated by 0.5 per cent., of the agenda for change pay bill, or around £120 million a year in cash terms. In the same period, this data suggested that the indirect earnings costs of replacing additional hours and leave arising from agenda for change exceeded those originally estimated by at least £100 million a year. An exercise was subsequently carried out by strategic health authority (SHA) finance directors in late 2005 to validate these effects. This broadly confirmed the findings from the sample site monitoring in terms of the overall effect, although there were significant variations between SHAs.

The funding envelope for agenda for change is £1.4 billion in 2006–07 and £1.8 billion in 2007–08, an increase of £440 million and £830 million respectively over 2005–06. Actual costs for 2006–07, 2007–08 and 2008–09 will depend to a significant extent on experience of the operation of the new agenda for change pay progression arrangements and matters are being kept under review.

Asthma

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people aged *(a)* nought to six, *(b)* seven to 11, *(c)* 12 to 15, *(d)* 16 to 18, *(e)* 19 to 21 and *(f)* 22 to 25 years in (i) the north east, (ii) the Tees Valley and (iii) each parliamentary constituency in the north east have been diagnosed with asthma in each year since 1997. [62833]

Mr. Byrne: The Department does not collect data on the number of people diagnosed each year with asthma. However, the Health and Social Care Information Centre publishes data on the total number of people in each general practitioner (GP) practice and primary care trust (PCT) area recorded with asthma. Information relating to the County Durham and Tees Valley strategic health authority and the Northumberland, Tyne and Wear strategic health authority areas has been placed in the Library. This is also available on their website at www.ic.nhs.uk.

Bone Marrow Donors

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what mechanisms are in place to facilitate international bone marrow donations. [66632]

Caroline Flint: There are three bone marrow registries in the United Kingdom. These are linked to an international register known as Bone Marrow Donors Worldwide (BMDW). BMDW is an internet-based organisation, and allows registries to quickly identify potential donors anywhere in the world.

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to increase the number of registered bone marrow donors *(a)* in total and *(b)* from under-represented ethnic groups. [65698]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 25 April 2006]:* NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) is responsible for managing blood supplies in England and north Wales and for managing the British Bone Marrow Register (BBMR). It does this through its operating division—the National Blood Service (NBS). The NBS recruits blood donors from the general public and potential bone marrow donors from the active blood donor populations.

Over the last three years, the NBS has added over 100,000 people to the BBMR. The NBS's strategy over the coming year is to maintain the BBMR at its current size and focus their recruitment activity towards under represented ethnic groups.

In 2004 the NBS commissioned the Central Office of Information (COI) to lead on a long-term strategy to attract more people from ethnic communities to give blood and join the BBMR. A campaign called "One Blood" is addressing existing barriers by

raising awareness of the importance and relevance of blood donation;

encouraging individual and community ownership of the issue;

tackling religious objections and myths; and

encouraging blood donation.

The NBS has also developed an advertising campaign "Are you my Type?" which features black and minority ethnic celebrities.

Care Homes

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many care homes there are in *(a)* the West Midlands region and *(b)* Coventry. [65941]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I understand from the chair of the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) that there are there are 1,953 care homes in the West Midlands region, with 44,337 registered places. In Coventry, there are 87 care homes, with 1,902 registered places.

Carlisle Primary Care Trust

Mr. Martlew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of patients were offered a first appointment with a general practitioner within two working days in the Carlisle primary care trust area. [65751]

Mr. Byrne: Latest figures at December 2005 show that 100 per cent., of patients were offered an appointment with a general practitioner within two working days in the Carlisle primary care trust area.

"Choosing Health"

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much funding has been allocated to each primary care trust to implement Choosing Health. [62526]

Mr. Byrne: Data showing the allocations made to each primary care trust (PCT) in the years 2006–07 and 2007–08 to support implementation of the "Choosing Health" White Paper have been placed in the Library.

It is the PCTs' responsibility to decide how best to utilise these funds, depending on the needs of their local populations. However, the "Choosing Health" White Paper delivery plan sets out in more detail expectations of how this funding should be utilised.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether "Choosing Health" revenue allocations to primary care trusts are ring-fenced. [61149]

Mr. Byrne: The funding included in the 2006–08 revenue allocations, to support the "Choosing Health" White Paper was not ring-fenced. However, the revenue allocations do separately identify £211 million in 2006–07 and £342 million in 2007–08, over half of the £1 billion promised, to support implementation of the "Choosing Health" White Paper. This funding has been targeted to reach the most deprived areas, to allow primary care trusts (PCTs) to deliver the commitments in "Choosing Health".

It is PCTs' responsibility to decide how best to utilise these funds, depending on the needs of their local populations. The "Choosing Health" White Paper delivery plan sets out in more detail expectations of how this funding should be utilised.

ComMedica

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) why Connecting for Health has suspended its contract with ComMedica; [61685]

(2) which Minister approved the suspension of the contract with ComMedica; and if she will place in the Library the advice that Minister was acting upon; [61730]

(3) how much the suspension of the contract with ComMedica has cost since 10 January; [61731]

(4) what part of the National Programme for Information Technology ComMedica was delivering; how it was delivering that part of the programme; what alternative delivery system Connecting for Health requires; and what the bidding process will be to deliver that system; [61733]

(5) what assessment she has made of the impact of the suspension of the contract with ComMedica on the costs and the delivery of the part of the National Programme for Information Technology for which the company was responsible; [61734]

(6) what assessment she has made of the costs to date of the decision of Connecting for Health to suspend its contract with ComMedica; and what estimate she has made of the likely consequential costs in the next two financial years. [61870]

Mr. Byrne: NHS Connecting for Health has never had a contract with ComMedica.

ComMedica was selected as a sub-contractor to provide picture archiving and communications services (PACS) for the national programme for information technology's North West and West Midlands regional cluster area, under contract to the CSC consortium, in September 2004. CSC is one of four supplier organisations that have contracts as local service providers (LSPs) with NHS Connecting for Health under the national programme.

The role of the LSPs is to integrate existing local systems, and where necessary implement new systems, to ensure that the programme's national applications can be delivered locally in each of the five cluster areas. They do this largely through contracts with sub-contractor companies such as ComMedica providing, for example, hardware, software and consultancy support. NHS Connecting for Health's contractual relationship is with the LSPs.

CSC is negotiating with another company for the supply of a PACS solution in the North West and West Midlands cluster area as a result of repeated failure by ComMedica to deliver its solution to agreed deadlines. This company will deploy its PACS product within the

next three months. NHS Connecting for Health has not incurred, and will not in future incur, any additional financial costs as a result of this change of provider.

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment her Department has made of potential security risks associated with the NHS Connecting for Health computer system; and if she will make a statement. [65964]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 25 April 2006]:* Systems and services delivered through the national programme for information technology incorporate stringent security controls and safeguards to prevent unrestricted or uncontrolled access to personal information. Access is controlled via a unique user identity, involving a passcode and smartcard, which can be obtained only on verification of identity and through a formal user registration process. Only those National health service staff having a legitimate relationship with the patient will be able to see a patient's health record, and under arrangements known as role based access control, access to a patient's care record is limited to only as much information as is needed for the purpose of the care or other job role being performed in relation to the patient.

In addition, up-to-the-minute security protection has been designed in, across the system, and international security standards are applied across all system implementations. These include the use of encryption to communication links between systems, and to user interfaces with systems. The quality of both the logical and physical security of data centres is assured using both international and British standards, and all suppliers to the national programme are contractually bound to auditing their adherence to these.

Over and above these implemented safeguards, the NHS maintains an effective liaison with the United Kingdom's information security authorities and others for the sharing of relevant advice and guidance on known information security threats and vulnerabilities.

Complementary Medicine

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she intends to bring forward legislation providing for the regulation of practitioners of complementary and alternative medicines and therapies. [66004]

Jane Kennedy: A working group which will actively prepare for statutory regulation of these groups is currently being set up. We have appointed a chair for a new working group and are currently seeking nominations for its members. The group will hold its first meeting in June 2006.

Contracts (Voluntary Sector)

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many contracts are let by her Department to voluntary sector organisations; how many of those are let on an annual basis; and how many of those had received finalised contracts for 2006–07 by 31 March. [63207]

Mr. Byrne: The Department does not collect the information of its contracts with voluntary sector organisations that would allow specifically for the analysis requested without incurring disproportionate costs.

Correspondence

Mr. Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she will reply to the letter of 6 March 2006 from the hon. Member for Walsall, North regarding funding of residential homes. [64739]

Mr. Byrne: *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* This letter was replied to on Tuesday 25 April 2006.

Dentistry

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of dentists have signed the new NHS contract in each primary care trust in *(a)* Lincolnshire, *(b)* Doncaster, *(c)* Hull, *(d)* East Yorkshire, *(e)* Wakefield, *(f)* Rotherham, *(g)* Sheffield and *(h)* Leeds. [64997]

Mr. Byrne: Figures are not yet available at a primary care trust level. The following information shows the number of dental contracts that have been signed in the three strategic health authority (SHA) areas covering Yorkshire.

SHA	*Contracts signed*	*NHS service levels*[1] *(Percentage)*	*Contracts rejected*
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	211	93.8	63
South Yorkshire	198	99.0	6
West Yorkshire	297	95.7	41

[1] Compared with rejected contract.

Disabled People

Tom Levitt: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on her Department's progress in fulfilling its statutory obligation as a public body to promote the rights of disabled people. [65816]

Mr. Byrne: The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 placed new duties on public authorities to promote equality for disabled people, the disability equality duty.

The Department has agreed a comprehensive joint programme of work with the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) that is—among other things—designed to deliver compliance with the new statutory duty, both within the Department and across health and social care.

In addition, the Department and the DRC have jointly produced leaflets for front-line staff in both primary and secondary care. These leaflets are aimed at

improving services for disabled people by giving practical examples of ways in which front-line staff can meet the access requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. First published in 2004, over 130,000 have so far been ordered, and they have recently been reprinted. To further ensure that all health and social care staff are properly aware of the needs of disabled people, the Department and DRC are producing a comprehensive education and learning programme for national health service and social care staff that will be available later this year.

Tom Levitt: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress her Department has made towards achieving its 2005 aim that each social services locality should be complemented by a local user-led organisation of disabled people modelled on existing centres for *(a)* independent and *(b)* inclusive living by 2010. [66007]

Mr. Byrne: The Department is currently considering how to take forward the recommendation in "Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People" about user-led organisations.

Elderly Care Costs

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2701W, on elderly care costs, whether the estimated cost of £1.7 billion for free personal care for 2005–06 excludes the saving in means-tested assistance with personal care costs. [64074]

Mr. Byrne: Making personal care free for everyone carries a very substantial and increasing cost, but would not raise the standard or range of services available. The cost for 2005–06, estimated by the Department, is £1.7 billion. This represents the increase in net expenditure on adult social services needed to deliver free personal care in all settings. The estimate covers implications for net social services expenditure. Savings on the Department for Work and Pensions disability benefits, however, that would result from making free personal care available are not subtracted.

Embryo Experimentation/Stem Cell Research

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what treatments for *(a)* children and *(b)* adults with disabling conditions have been developed by use of (i) human embryo experimentation and (ii) stem cell research; and if she will make a statement. [65484]

Jane Kennedy: I refer the hon. Member to the replies given on 29 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 404W, and 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2173W respectively.

General Practitioners

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what increase in salary general practitioners have received in the last year. [63935]

Mr. Byrne: This information is currently not available centrally.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many pounds per point general practitioners earned from the quality and outcomes framework in *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06; and how many pounds per point GPs can expect to earn from the framework in 2006–07. [66001]

Mr. Byrne: The Department does not collect centrally the pounds per point earned from the quality and outcomes framework by individual general practitioners. The pounds per point earned by the average practice, subject to adjustment by prevalence and practice list size, are:

	£ per point
2004–05	77.50
2005–06	124.60
2006–07	124.60

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what average hours general practitioners worked per week in England in *(a)* 1995, *(b)* 2000 and *(c)* 2005. [62495]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not held centrally. General practitioners are self-employed contractors and therefore have direct control themselves of the number of hours a week they work. Regulations determine the hours during which services are available to patients, but individual working hours are a matter for each practice.

Health Professionals

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate her Department has made of the requirement for education and training places for *(a)* nurses, *(b)* midwives, *(c)* physiotherapists, *(d)* podiatrists, *(e)* radiographers and *(f)* professions complementary to dentistry over the period 2006 to 2010. [60390]

Mr. Byrne: Workforce planning is a matter for local national health service organisations to deal with. They are best placed to assess the health needs of their local health community and will commission the required number of education and training places to meet those needs.

Hospitals

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what *(a)* advice and *(b)* instructions she has issued to primary care trusts on the closure of community and cottage hospitals. [64900]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 25 April 2006]:* I refer the right hon. and learned Member to the reply given on 29 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1064W.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many primary care trusts in England are proposing to close community or cottage hospitals within their jurisdiction; and if she will list them; [64902]

(2) if she will list the hospitals which are proposed for closure; and what the reason for closure is in each case; [64923]

(3) what estimate she has made of the number of *(a)* cottage and *(b)* community hospitals in England which will close in 2006–07; and what proportion this number represents of the total number of community and cottage hospitals in England. [64924]

Mr. Byrne: Making decisions on local healthcare provision, including the closure of community or cottage hospitals, is a matter for primary care trusts (PCTs) and strategic health authorities (SHAs) in consultation with the local population.

The White Paper, "Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services", makes clear that any current proposals on the future of community hospitals in an area should follow the principles that it sets out. The Department wrote to SHAs on 16 February outlining how SHAs should test PCT community hospital proposals against these principles. A copy of this letter has been placed in the Library.

The Department has not made any recent assessment of the number of *(a)* cottage and *(b)* community hospitals in England which will close in 2006–07; and what proportion this number represents of the total number of community and cottage hospitals in England.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* hospital doctors, *(b)* hospital doctors on training programmes and *(c)* other hospital staff work for free; and of these how many are non-British nationals. [65822]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 25 April 2006]:* All staff employed by the national health service are done so under a contract of employment and therefore receive a salary. Some international medical graduates have arranged clinical attachments in NHS United Kingdom hospitals in order to observe medicine. There is no information collected centrally regarding the number of these clinical attachments.

Infant Pain

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list neonatal units in England which regularly use a pain tool to assess chronic pain in infants; and if she will make a statement. [64656]

Mr. Byrne: This information is not collected centrally. It is for individual national health service hospital trusts to consider the use of pain tools to assess chronic pain in infants in their neonatal units.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what research her Department has conducted into experience of pain in premature babies; and if she will make a statement; [64658]

(2) what research her Department has *(a)* undertaken and *(b)* assessed on the capability of newborn infants to display (i) behavioural, (ii) physiological and (iii) metabolic signs of pain and distress; and if she will make a statement. [64659]

Jane Kennedy: The main agency through which the Government support medical and clinical research is the Medical Research Council (MRC). The MRC is an independent body funded by the Department of Trade and Industry via the Office of Science and Innovation.

The MRC has provided long-term grant support to Professor Maria Fitzgerald of University College, London for her work on infant and paediatric pain. Her current, £1 million award, is for research into infant pain mechanisms that aims to provide the fundamental knowledge required to understand and prevent paediatric pain.

Further details are available on the WellChild Pain Research Centre website at: www.wprc.ucl.ac.uk/

Local Improvement Finance Trusts

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many local improvement finance trust schemes *(a)* have been completed, *(b)* have been commissioned and *(c)* are being constructed and established, broken down by (i) area served, (ii) value and (iii) year of completion; [61752]

(2) what estimate has been made of the number of local improvement finance trust schemes to be built or established in each of the next three financial years, broken down by *(a)* area served, *(b)* estimated value and *(c)* estimated year of completion; and how many are delayed or postponed. [61759]

Mr. Byrne: The information has been placed in the Library.

Up to the end of 2005–06, this information is for buildings that are open to patients.

For the years 2006–07 and 2007–08, this information is estimated on the basis of financial closes achieved to date. There are no schemes beyond the end of 2007–08 that have yet reached financial close. The Department does not centrally hold information on schemes prior to them reaching financial close.

In summary there are 68 new buildings open to patients with another 74 under construction supported by £812 million investment.

The Department does not hold information centrally on how many schemes are delayed or postponed. This is a local issue for the strategic partnering board of each local improvement finance trust company.

Low Birth Weight Babies

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what definition of a low birth-weight baby the Department uses; and if she will make a statement. [64657]

Mr. Byrne: The Department defines low birth-weight as babies weighing less than 2,500 grams. This is in line with the Office for National Statistics definition.

Malnutrition (Older People)

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she plans to take following the living well in later life initiative to identify and implement action to address malnutrition among older people. [64177]

Mr. Byrne: One of the aims in the report "Next Steps in Implementing the National Service Framework for Older People" due to be published shortly is to continue

to improve and upgrade the patient environment in hospitals and care homes, ensuring that the environment of care more closely meets the needs of older people and they receive the assistance they require with eating and drinking.

This will be supplemented by work to improve skills and competencies across the workforce and developing identifiable or named practice based leaders in nursing, who will be accountable for ensuring older people are treated with respect for their dignity.

In March, the Commission for Social Care Inspection published a bulletin, "Highlight of the Day?", designed to assist care staff to improve the delivery of meals to older people, and to improve their experiences of mealtimes.

Newham University Hospital NHS Trust

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the Newham University Hospital NHS Trust referred to in her written ministerial statement on NHS deficits of 1 December 2005 is the same as the Newham Healthcare NHS Trust of the answer of 12 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 989W; and what the projected six months deficit was of the latter as of the end of 2005. [63928]

Jane Kennedy: I can confirm that the trust referred to in both these written answers is one and the same. The trust changed its name by statutory instrument from Newham Healthcare National Health Service Trust to Newham University Hospital NHS Trust in July 2004. The forecast deficit at six months is therefore the figure given for Newham University Hospital NHS Trust in the table published on 1 December 2005.

NHS Practice Schemes

Ann Keen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many qualified *(a)* nurses, *(b)* midwives and *(c)* health visitors have (i) entered and (ii) completed return to practice schemes in the NHS in England since May 2004. [64328]

Mr. Byrne: Between February 1999 and April 2004, over 18,500 former nurses, midwives and health visitors returned to work in the national health service. The Department has ceased to collect this information since then.

NHS Finance

Mr. Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations she has received on NHS trust financial deficits in South East London. [65688]

Jane Kennedy: There has been one letter from a Member of Parliament received by the Department on this issue.

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the effect of withdrawing the purchaser's parity adjustment over two years on the finances of NHS trusts with deficits. [60749]

Mr. Byrne: We do not expect the withdrawal of the purchaser parity adjustment for primary care trusts over a two-year period to prevent the great majority of national health service trusts in deficit to return to financial balance in that period.

Non-slip Floors

Dr. Vis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS patients were recorded as *(a)* being injured and *(b)* dying as a result of slipping and falling on shiny non-slip floors in each of the last five years. [64087]

Jane Kennedy: The Department does not specifically collect data on the number of patients injured and dying as a result of slipping and falling on shiny non-slip floors.

The National Patient Safety Agency administers the national reporting and learning system (NRLS) which collects reports of patient safety incidents across all care settings. The current NRLS was developed during 2002 and by December 2004, all national health service organisations in England and Wales were able to report into the system.

A search of NRLS data was conducted using the term slips on non-slip surfaces. No incidents involving slips on non-slip surfaces were identified prior to January 2004. During the period 1 January 2004 to 1 January 2006, four such incidents were identified. The degree of harm reported was either low or no harm. No incidents of serious harm or deaths were reported. The figures do not include patient falls where matting or other surfaces were involved.

Total Purchasing Pilots

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the written answer of 16 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 2323W, on total purchasing pilots, whether her Department has made an assessment of the effectiveness of total purchasing pilots. [57441]

Mr. Byrne: Total Purchasing: "A Profile of National Pilot Projects", was published in January 1997 and provided a preliminary assessment of how total purchasing was implemented in the 53 first wave projects in England and Scotland. Although the study was funded by the Department and the then Scottish Office, the views expressed in the report were those of the King's Fund who conducted the research and not necessarily those of the Department. A copy has been placed in the Library.

Waiting Times

Susan Kramer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people are waiting for operations in the boroughs of *(a)* Richmond upon Thames and *(b)* Kingston upon Thames; and if she will make a statement. [65068]

Jane Kennedy: Waiting list data are collected at national health service trust and primary care trust (PCT) level. At the end of February 2006, Kingston PCT had 2,687 patients waiting for elective admission and Richmond and Twickenham PCT had 2,337 patients waiting.

Working Time Directive

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the effect of the EU Working time directive on doctors' *(a)* overtime and *(b)* hours of work. [65940]

Mr. Byrne: The Government agreed to implement the European working time directive (WTD) as United Kingdom legislation to improve the health and safety and working lives of all employees in this country. The vast majority of staff groups have been covered by the 48-hour week since 1998. The Government negotiated an extension to the WTD for doctors in training to enable phased implementation from August 2004. There have been significant increases in staffing levels across all professional groups, grades and disciplines in recent years which has contributed to supporting implementation.

While implementation of the WTD is the responsibility of local national health service trusts the Department of Health in England worked with the health professions and NHS employers to provide joint guidance and invested an extra £46 million to support implementation, including 20 national pilots and the hospital at night project.

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday 2 May 2006

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Climate Change

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the impact of climate change on UK agriculture. [65750]

Mr. Morley: The UK climate impacts programme is conducting ongoing work to provide scenarios to show how our climate might change and co-ordinating research on dealing with our future climate. This includes work on climate change impacts on the agriculture sector.

Research suggests that climate change impacts do not appear to threaten the viability of the agriculture industry as a whole in the UK due to the adaptability of UK systems., However, individual agricultural businesses and land managers will need to be alive to the need to adapt.

The UK national adaptation policy framework is currently being developed. It will help to provide a more strategic approach to adaptation, identifying key risks and opportunities common across a number of policy areas and to coordinate approaches where possible. The first phase of the framework will be structured on a sectoral basis, and these sectors will include agriculture, horticulture and forestry as well as water resources, biodiversity and nature conservation.

The new UK climate change programme 2006 has also assessed the role of agriculture in addressing climate change and seeks to raise awareness of the issues across the sector and develop measures to allow the sector to play a full part in tackling climate change.

We have an ongoing programme of research to provide a robust evidence base to support our policy development on climate change impacts and adaptation in agriculture. A project of particular relevance is CC0366: "Publication of outputs arising from Defra research on impacts and adaptation in the agricultural sector", which can be found at: http://www2.defra.gov.uk/research/project_data/More.asp?I=CC0366&M=K WS&V=cc03&SUBMIT1=Search&SCOPE=0.

Our report "Climate change and agriculture in the United Kingdom" also provides information on the new climatic and market conditions that may be experienced and enables farmers to consider strategies that will maintain or enhance their ability to anticipate climate change in their decision-making and take steps to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases. The report can be found on Defra's website at: http://www.defra.gov.uk/environ/climate/climatechange/index.htm.

Air Quality (Bexley)

Mr. Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent assessment she has made of air quality in the London borough of Bexley. [65681]

Mr. Bradshaw: Local authorities have a duty under Part IV of the Environment Act 1995 to review and assess the current, and likely future, air quality in their areas. Where local authorities consider that one or more of the nationally prescribed air quality objectives for each of the seven pollutants is unlikely to be met by the relevant deadline, they must declare an air quality management area (AQMA), covering the area where the problem is expected. These local authorities must then take action, along with other agencies and organisations, to work towards meeting the air quality objectives. The Mayor has responsibility for ensuring the local air quality management regime is undertaken appropriately by London boroughs.

Following the first round of reviews and assessments, the London borough of Bexley declared an air quality management area in respect of Particulate (PM10), in the Manor road area, in August 2001. In fulfilment of its obligations under Part IV of the Environmental Protection Act, Bexley carried out a further assessment of existing, and likely future, air quality within the AQMA in the borough, and submitted a report to my Department in May 2003 and the Mayor of London in March 2003. The report concluded that the air quality management area as declared was still justified.

The council consulted my Department on its draft plan in July 2003, and the Mayor of London in June 2003. The Greater London Authority has asked Bexley to provide an update on its action plan.

The last round of reviews and assessments started in 2003 and London boroughs had to submit their updating and screening assessments (USA) by December 2003. They were expected to submit either a detailed assessment, where further investigation was required, or a progress report by December 2004. The London borough of Bexley submitted its USA to my Department in September 2004, and the Mayor of London in October 2004. The conclusion was that further investigation (detailed assessment) was needed at Manor road in respect of the likely exceedences of nitrogen dioxide and PM10 objectives. The Department is still awaiting a report on its detailed assessment of air quality.

The next round of review and assessments has now started and local authorities are asked to submit a new updating and screening assessment by the end of April 2006, which will be considered by my officials. My Department will be assessing the London borough of Bexley's report as part of this exercise.

Badger Body Snares

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) whether her Department has begun field trials of badger body snares. [64938]

(2) when her Department's study of badger body snares is scheduled to end; and when its conclusions will be made available to the public. [64941]

Mr. Bradshaw: Field trials of badger body snares have not yet begun.

If the body snares are found to be humane in pen trials currently being undertaken, a licence will be sought to conduct field trials to determine the effectiveness, utility, non-target risk and humaneness of the body snare under normal operating conditions.

The pen trials are expected to finish by May this year and, subject to the results of those trials and the securing of an appropriate licence, field trials should be completed before the end of June. The results of the field trials will be made public, after peer review, shortly after.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what frequency of inspections will be studied in her Department's study of badger body snares; [64939]

(2) what behavioural and physical data will be collected in her Department's study of badger body snares. [64940]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department is currently undertaking an assessment of the humaneness, efficacy and non-target risks of a body snare specifically designed to restrain badgers.

The trials are initially being undertaken in captivity—pen trials—under Home Office licence with continuous observation by researchers. This ensures that if any animal is injured during capture immediate assessment and, if necessary, intervention can occur. In the absence of such signs the animals are restrained for a maximum of eight hours. At the end of the restraint period the badgers are examined for injuries by a veterinary surgeon. They are then held for a further four days and re-examined by a veterinary surgeon for signs of any sub-dermal damage—necrosis—before release back to the wild. The available evidence is reviewed after each trial to determine whether further studies should proceed.

The aim is to release all animals back to the wild unharmed within a maximum period of 10 days following initial capture. Advice from veterinary surgeons and badger experts is that removing the badger from its home territory for this length of time should not affect the social structure of the family group.

If the humaneness of the body snare is found to be acceptable in these pen trials, then field trials will be conducted to confirm its humaneness and to assess effectiveness, utility and non-target risks. It is anticipated that body snares will be inspected approximately every four hours during such trials.

Bovine Tuberculosis

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what response her Department has had from veterinary surgeons on their willingness to undertake pre-movement checking of cattle for bovine TB. [66413]

Mr. Bradshaw: An independent review of veterinary capacity and preparedness was carried out prior to the implementation of pre-movement testing in England. The review surveyed local veterinary inspectors' (LVI) in high incidence areas in England. The review found that most LVIs had a good general awareness of the new requirements and felt they would be able to respond to and meet the expected demand for testing. The full report can be found on the DEFRA website at: www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/tb/premovement/report.pdf

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the forecast annual cost is arising from the decision by her Department to pay for one pre-movement bovine tuberculosis test. [66626]

Mr. Bradshaw: Based on 2005 monthly cattle movement data and assuming cattle are tested in groups of 20, the maximum cost to Government of paying for all pre-movement testing to the end of June is estimated at £714,000.

However, as Government support is limited to one test per herd owner, and as the figure does not take account of herd owners who use their routine herd test, the actual costs to Government will be lower. These transitional support arrangements end on 30 June 2006.

Michael Jabez Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will put the evidence accumulated from Government sponsored cattle post-mortems in cases of suspected bovine tuberculosis in the public domain to facilitate the tracing of the source of the infection. [64928]

Mr. Bradshaw: Each month Defra publishes provisional cumulative data on the total number of TB cases identified at slaughterhouses and reported to the State Veterinary Service (SVS), along with the number of slaughterhouse cases that have been confirmed by visible lesion or laboratory culture. The data form part of Defra's regular TB statistics report, which is available on the Defra website at: http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/tb/stats/latest.htm.

All slaughterhouse cases notified by the Meat Hygiene Service are subject to traceback investigations by the SVS, and have samples taken that are fast-tracked to the Veterinary Laboratories Agency for histology and culture. Where Mycobacterium bovis infection is confirmed, the molecular typing data derived from those tests are used by the SVS to identify the origin of the infection.

A summary of the culture results from individual slaughterhouse cases identified in 2005 will be included in the Chief Veterinary Officer's annual report, which will be published later this year.

BSE/Scrapie

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many cases of *(a)* BSE and *(b)* scrapie there were in 2005. [66622]

Mr. Bradshaw: In 2005, there were 225 confirmed cases of BSE and 299 confirmed cases of scrapie for sheep and goats in the UK. The figure for confirmed scrapie cases includes 28 atypical results.

Cemetries

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what *(a)* regulatory and *(b)* statutory quality guidelines local authorities are required to comply with in their management of cemeteries and burial grounds relating to (i) avoidance of land pollution from decontaminated land and (ii) flooding of ground. [65761]

Mr. Morley: The principal means of control to protect the water environment are the Environment Agency's powers and duties under the Water Resources Act 1991, the Environment Act 1995 and the Groundwater Regulations 1998. The Environment Agency's booklet "Assessing the Groundwater Pollution Potential of Cemetery Development" gives advice to operators on assessing the risk to groundwater from existing and planned cemeteries. The booklet also addresses such factors as the soil nature and type, and the depth to the water table.

In the case of a new cemetery, or a change of use of an existing cemetery, planning permission would be required from the Local Planning Authority under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Planning and Compensation Act 1991. The Local Planning Authority would consult with the Environment Agency before giving permission and would use refusal refuse permission, or impose conditions in a Decision Notice, to control a cemetery development and ensure that human health and the environment are protected.

There are no statutory water quality guidelines relating to burial grounds. A site specific approach would apply based on any risks to human health or the environment at any particular location. Good practice requires that cemeteries are, where possible, located in well drained areas with a reasonable depth of unsaturated ground between the base of the grave and the water table so that flooding of the ground should not normally be an issue.

Where redevelopment is taking place on any land which may be affected by contamination due to the presence of substances in, on, or under the land, decontamination may be required. This should be carried out in line with the guidance in the publication "Contaminated Land Report 11: Model procedures for the management of land contamination" (DEFRA and Environment Agency, 2004).

Cetaceans

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to meet *(a)* the European Commission, *(b)* France and *(c)* other EU member states regarding actions necessary to reduce cetacean by-catch. [67149]

Mr. Bradshaw: The UK has always recognised that a solution to the problem of cetacean by-catch can be achieved only on an European scale, because of the nature of the fisheries.

We have significantly raised the profile of cetacean deaths within the Commission, such that Commissioner Borg wrote to all Fisheries Ministers back in September 2005 on the subject of dolphin by-catch in fisheries and expressing his view on the importance of this issue. We will continue to build on this and take every opportunity to urge a European solution to this problem.

Chewing Gum

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the quantity of illegal littering of public areas by chewing gum. [63995]

Mr. Bradshaw: The latest results from the Local Environmental Quality Survey of England showed that chewing gum staining affected 91 per cent. of town and city centres surveyed.

Correspondence

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when the Minister of State will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for West Worcestershire of 3 March 2006. [67132]

Mr. Bradshaw: I apologise for the delay in replying to the hon. Member's letter. My officials are currently liaising with the Environment Agency in order to draft a response, which we will issue shortly.

Fisheries

Robert Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) if she will make a statement on the bass management plan; [66601]

(2) whether it is her policy under the bass management plan to provide protection for the 2002 year class in the growing season commencing in April 2006; [66602]

(3) on what criteria she will base her decision as to whether to increase the minimum landing size for bass. [66604]

Mr. Bradshaw: The bass management plan is a proposal for revised management measures for the species, compiled by the Bass Anglers Sportfishing Society and presented to DEFRA.

DEFRA's consultation on measures to increase the number and size of bass available to commercial and recreational fishermen closed on 8 February 2006.

The regulatory impact assessment (RIA) will set out the available evidence and our assessment of the costs and benefits of the proposed measures, on which my decision will be based. Once this analysis has been completed I will make an announcement on next steps, at which stage the RIA will also be published.

Scientific advice suggests that the state of the stock and levels of exploitation are such that there is no pressing reason to introduce urgently measures to protect the 2002 year class in particular.

Robert Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will place in the Library a copy of the responses to her consultation on proposals to increase the minimum landing size for bass. [66603]

Mr. Bradshaw: DEFRA's consultation on measures to increase the number and size of bass available to commercial and recreational fishermen closed on 8 February 2006.

The letter accompanying the consultation documents outlined my intention to make publicly available a copy of the responses to the consultation, provided the respondent had not asked for their response to be treated confidentially. In line with normal practice a copy of the responses will be placed in DEFRA's information resource centre when our analysis is complete. A summary will be available on the DEFRA website.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether her definition of the local population of Western Sahara for the purposes of the EU-Morocco Fisheries Partnership Agreement includes illegal Moroccan settlers. [66494]

Mr. Bradshaw: Western Sahara is defined by the United Nations as a non-self governing territory. Morocco is the de facto administering power. For all purposes, including revenue from the EU/Morocco fisheries agreement, Morocco is obliged under international law to ensure that economic activities under their administration do not adversely affect the interests of the people of the Western Sahara.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the views of the local Saharawi population on the EU-Morocco fisheries partnership agreement; and if she will make a statement. [66495]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Frente Polisario, recognised in United Nations resolutions as the representatives of the Saharawi people, have written to the Government setting out their opposition to the EU/Morocco fisheries partnership agreement. In deciding the UK's position on the agreement, we have taken their position into account. Morocco is obliged under international law to ensure that economic activities under their administration do not adversely affect the interests of the people of the Western Sahara.

Fly-tipping (Lancashire)

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many incidents of fly-tipping have *(a)* been reported and *(b)* led to prosecution in (i) Ribble Valley and (ii) Lancashire in each year since 1997. [65300]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* Defra has worked with the Environment Agency to establish Flycapture, the national database on fly-tipping incidents, which has been operational since April 2004. No national data were previously available on illegal waste disposal or fly-tipping. Flycapture collects data at local authority level only.

The data are probably an underestimate and will increase as authorities get better at collecting and reporting the data.

Ribble Valley borough council reported 506 incidents of fly-tipping between April 2004 and March 2005 (an average of 46 per month) and 490 between April 2005 and February 2006 (an average 44.5 per month). During the same time periods all Lancashire waste collection authorities reported 32,724 incidents (an average of 2,878.6 per month) and 40,705 incidents (an average of 3,728.2 per month) respectively.

During the same time periods, the Environment Agency investigated three and one incidents respectively in Ribble Valley, and 157 and 46 respectively in Lancashire.

Prosecution data are only available from April 2005 to February 2006. During this period no prosecutions were reported by Ribble Valley borough council or the Environment Agency. The local authorities of Lancashire took forward 79 prosecutions, the Environment Agency took forward no prosecutions within Lancashire.

Hazardous Waste

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the Government's policy is on the EU Commission's plan to merge the Waste Framework Directive with the Hazardous Waste Directive. [66412]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government's views on the proposed revision of the Waste Framework Directive (WFD) were set out in an explanatory memorandum submitted to Parliament on 18 January 2006 and in a supplementary memorandum submitted on 5 April 2006. Paragraph 11 of the former confirms that the Government welcomes the simplification of EU legislation proposed in the repeal of the Waste Oils Directive and the repeal and integration of the Hazardous Waste Directive into the revised WFD.

Light Pollution

Mr. Carswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether local authorities have a statutory obligation to deal with light pollution; and if she will make a statement. [68052]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 amended section 79 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to introduce artificial light emitted from premises so as to be prejudicial to health or a nuisance as capable of constituting a statutory nuisance. Local authorities have a statutory duty to check their areas periodically for existing and potential statutory nuisances from artificial light, and to take reasonably practicable steps to investigate complaints of nuisance from artificial light. If satisfied that a statutory nuisance exists or is about to occur or recur, the local authority must serve an abatement notice under section 80 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 requiring that the nuisance is ceased or abated within a specified timescale.

It is an offence to breach or fail to comply with an abatement notice, which upon summary conviction carries a fine of up to £5,000 for domestic premises and £20,000 for industrial, trade and business premises.

The statutory nuisance regime offers a legislative framework to address cases of artificial light nuisance emitted from one premises and affecting another in specific ways. It is not an appropriate tool with which to address light pollution per se. A statutory nuisance from

artificial light may also be a source of light pollution. It does not follow that all light pollution constitutes a statutory nuisance.

Nappies

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the environmental impact of the use of *(a)* reusable and *(b)* disposable nappies; and if she will make a statement. [66623]

Mr. Bradshaw: In May 2005, the Environment Agency published a report entitled "A Life Cycle Assessment of disposable and reusable nappies in the UK". The report concluded that there was no significant difference between any of the environmental impacts of the disposable, home use reusable and commercial laundry systems that were assessed. None of the systems studied was more or less environmentally preferable.

The Environment Agency has commissioned a modest amount of further work to test the validity of some of the assumptions on which these conclusions were based.

Noise Pollution

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps the Government is taking to decrease noise pollution in the UK. [67089]

Mr. Bradshaw: Tackling noise is a key Government concern. Local authorities now have more power to deal with neighbourhood noise under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005.

In order to provide a more strategic approach to the management of the noise environment, Defra is currently developing a Noise Strategy; the intention being to publish the Strategy by the end of 2007.

The Environmental Noise Directive requires member states to produce strategic noise maps for roads, railways, airports and agglomerations by June 2007 and action plans to manage noise issues and effects by July 2008. Noise mapping in London has already been completed. Work is underway on other areas.

The Department also sponsors Noise Action Week, run annually in May by the National Society for Clean Air, to raise awareness of noise issues and solutions through local authority engagement with their local communities.

Organic Products

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether it is Government policy that consumers buying organic products should be enabled to select UK-sourced organic products when these are available. [65778]

Mr. Bradshaw: A key objective of the action plan to develop organic food and farming in England is for the UK produced share of the market for organic foods that can be grown here to increase to at least 70 per cent. similar to the level for conventional produce. Good progress is being made towards achieving this target.

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the effect of a compulsory logo on all UK-sourced organic products sold in the UK on consumers who wish to buy products produced in the UK. [65779]

Mr. Bradshaw: No such assessment has been made.

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the effects of the current proposals from the European Commission to replace Council Regulation 2092/91 on Organic Production for the roles and responsibilities of member states in this issue. [65780]

Mr. Bradshaw: Our view is that the European Commission should be assisted by a Regulatory Committee rather than a Management Committee as proposed in COM (2005) 671.

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her Department's policy is on revisions to Council Regulation 2092/91 on Organic Production in relation to organic farmers delivering positive environmental outcomes; and what representations she has received from *(a)* conservation organisations and *(b)* English Nature on achieving environmental outcomes in any revision of Council Regulation 2092/91 on Organic Production. [65782]

Mr. Bradshaw: We have proposed that it should be an objective of the proposed regulation that it contributes to environmental sustainability. We do not have records of representations from specific conservation organisations, but comments from organic bodies referred to this issue.

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to consult with *(a)* the Organic Action Plan Group, *(b)* small and medium-sized organic businesses and *(c)* other interested parties before proposals to (i) amend or (ii) replace Council Regulation 2092/91 are taken forward by the European Commission. [65783]

Mr. Bradshaw: The proposal is on the agenda for the meeting of the Action Plan Group on 27 April. The Advisory Committee on Organic Standards discussed the proposal at its meetings on 9 February and 30 March. Other stakeholders were consulted by letter in January and received reports on the negotiations on the proposal as they proceed.

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment her Department has made of the European Commission's proposal to replace Council Regulation 2092/91. [65784]

Mr. Bradshaw: Our initial assessment was set out in the Explanatory Memorandum submitted to the House on 19 January 2006.

Railways (Litter)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what powers *(a)* local authorities and *(b)* parish and town councils have to compel the rail authorities to keep stations and tracks free of litter. [66349]

Mr. Bradshaw: Under section 89 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, railway undertakers and operators have a duty to keep their "relevant land" clear of litter and refuse. This includes station areas to which the public have access, tracks that are within 100 metres of platforms (provided that the public have access to the platforms) and tracks in urban areas. Where this duty is not complied with, local authorities may issue a litter abatement notice on the railway undertaker or operator, requiring the clearance of the litter and refuse and prohibiting further defacement of the land. A parish or community council can take action via the magistrates' court, seeking a litter abatement order to get the litter cleared.

There is no duty on rail undertakers or operators to keep other track areas clean. However, where such land becomes defaced by litter and refuse and this is detrimental to the amenity of the area, local authorities can issue a litter clearing notice on the occupier or owner (if unoccupied), requiring the clearance of the litter and, if necessary, reasonable steps to be taken to prevent future defacement.

It is an offence to fail to comply with a litter abatement notice, a litter abatement order or a litter clearing notice.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what guidance she issues on whether the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 applies to railway stations and track. [66350]

Mr. Bradshaw: DEFRA has issued detailed guidance on legislation dealing with litter and refuse in Part 4 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, as amended by the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005. This includes guidance on the extent to which railway stations, track and other areas of railway land are affected. The revised code of practice on litter and refuse provides practical guidance on the extent of the litter duty, and includes standards and practicability issues to assist rail undertakers and operators in managing litter and refuse on their land. Both the guidance and code of practice are available on DEFRA's website: http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/localenv/legislation/cnea/index.htm.

Recycling/Composting

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how she plans to prevent commercial waste from being transferred into domestic waste streams; and when she plans to set recycling targets for local authorities for commercial waste. [64603]

Mr. Bradshaw: The waste duty of care is set out in section 34 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and associated regulations. It applies to anyone who is the holder of controlled waste—which includes commercial, industrial and household waste.

Persons concerned with controlled waste must ensure that the waste is managed properly, recovered or disposed of safely, does not cause harm to human health or pollution of the environment and is only transferred to someone who is authorised to receive it.

Breach of the duty of care is an offence, with a penalty of up to £5,000 on summary conviction or an unlimited fine on conviction on indictment.

We will shortly announce statutory targets for recycling household waste for 2007–08. For beyond 2008, we are undertaking a review of the recycling and composting targets as part of the review of the Government's Waste Strategy for England.

Waste collection authorities have a duty under Section 45(1) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to arrange for the collection of commercial waste where requested to do so. We are consulting on whether local authorities should have a wider role with regards to commercial waste, including strategic planning for all waste and the provision of recycling services for business waste. In light of this we will be considering whether there is a need to place further requirements on local authorities, including setting local authority targets aimed at improving the management of commercial waste. The deadline for responses to the consultation is 9 May.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether the provision and use of municipal domestic garden waste shredding services count towards best value performance indicators for recycling or composting. [66245]

Mr. Bradshaw: The relevant best value performance indicators (BVPI) are 82 a & b. These measure, respectively, household waste sent by the authority for recycling, or composting or treatment by anaerobic digestion. Household garden waste that has not been home composted can count towards the indicators, provided it is collected from a source and processed or treated to a standard according to the appropriate guidance.

The guidance for both indicators can be accessed via the ODPM's website at:

http://www.odpm.gov.uk/pub/119/BestValuePerformanceIndicators200506GuidanceDocumentAmended010405PDF6386Kb_id1136119.pdf (See P131–139).

Rural Payments Agency

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many farms have received the correct payment in full from the Rural Payments Agency; and by what date all farmers will have received full payment. [56013]

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she expects the payments due to *(a)* Mr. Andrew Ramply and *(b)* other farmers who received their statement of entitlement for the single farm payment on 1 March to be validated. [57077]

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what proportion of entitlement statements for the single farm payment being sent to farmers were unvalidated; and what steps she is taking to ensure that these farmers receive their payments before the end of March; [57896]

(2) what plans she has to assist those farmers who will not receive single farm payments before 31 March; [57985]

(3) what estimate she has made of the number of farmers who will not have received their single farm payments by 31 March. [57986]

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many farms have received the correct single farm payment in full from the Rural Payments Agency; and by which date she expects all farmers to have received full payment. [60483]

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she expects to complete the single farm payments for financial year 2005–06; and if she will make a statement. [62395]

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps her Department is taking to improve the level of efficiency in processing single farm payment payments and receipts; and if she will make a statement. [63055]

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what percentage of eligible farmers in England had received their full entitlement to single farm payment as at 31 March 2006; [62110]

(2) how many eligible farmers in England are awaiting payment of outstanding single farm monies due to them. [62111]

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the progress towards making outstanding payments under the single payment scheme since 16 March; and if she will make a statement. [63881]

Jim Knight: In total, 120,367 applications were received for the single payment scheme (SPS). By the end of Friday 21 April 51,003 claims (42.5 per cent.) had been paid.

The remaining claims will be paid as soon as legally possible following the positive action set out in my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State's written statement on 16 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 104WS, the response to the hon. Member for South-East Cambridgeshire (Mr. Paice) on 27 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 543), and the written statement on 19 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 13WS.

Waste

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations her Department has received on the definition of waste. [64049]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department has received a range of representations about the definition of waste and its interpretation. These representations are wide-ranging in nature and, as a consequence, it would not be possible to provide a comprehensive list without incurring disproportionate cost.

A significant number of the representations have been made in the context of the Waste Incineration Directive coming fully into force on 28 December 2005 and have concerned issues such as the burning as fuel of (i) waste oil and (ii) tallow in compliance with the EU Animal By-Products Regulation. Summaries of our responses to these representations are available on the Department's website at http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/airquality/lapc/aqnotes/pdf/aq04–06.pdf and http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/ppc/pdf/tallow-wid.pdf.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many farmers and landowners have obtained a waste management licence or pollution prevention and control permit for use on their holdings in advance of the implementation of new regulations on 15 May. [66080]

Mr. Bradshaw: None. The effect of regulation 13 of the Waste Management (England and Wales) Regulations 2006 is to provide a 12-month transitional period from 15 May 2006 in which any farmer or landowner wishing to do so may apply for a waste management licence for the recovery or disposal of agricultural waste.

Because of the engineering requirements and the costs involved, it is unlikely to be a viable option for most farmers and landowners to obtain a pollution and control permit to continue to operate an existing "farm dump". However, the effect of regulation 9 of the 2006 regulations is to provide that, if the operator of a farm dump proposes to continue to use it for the disposal of agricultural waste on or after 15 May 2006, he or she must prepare and submit a conditioning plan to the Environment Agency by 15 June 2006.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures she has put in place to assist rural constituencies in meeting waste management targets. [64602]

Mr. Bradshaw: Defra recognise the challenge that all local authorities in England face in meeting their statutory performance standards in recycling and composting and their obligations under the landfill allowance trading scheme. Accordingly, we are providing increased levels of support and funding to all types of authorities.

Rural areas benefit, in common with all other local authorities, from the wide range of support available through the Waste Implementation Programme and the Waste Resources Action Programme.

We recognise that different types of local authorities face different challenges in waste management. It is for this reason that Defra-funded pilot projects aim to cover as diverse a range of local authorities as possible, including those in rural areas. Examples include Defra's household incentives pilot scheme, aimed at encouraging recycling, and trials of kerbside collection of waste batteries, funded by the Waste and Resources Action Programme.

WALES

Council Tax

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how much the average council tax payment per dwelling for band D dwellings was, broken down by local authority in Wales in each year since 1997–98. [66432]

Mr. Hain: The information is published annually by the National Assembly for Wales in "Welsh Local Government Financial Statistics", and is attached in the following table:

Average band D council tax (inc community council and police precept)

	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02
Isle of Anglesey	424	477	534	621	647
Gwynedd	515	571	618	673	695
Conwy	403	460	488	551	600
Denbighshire	528	599	647	733	774
Flintshire	511	563	592	654	702
Wrexham	520	575	633	701	729
Powys	426	501	552	628	673
Ceredigion	562	623	670	723	761
Pembrokeshire	451	507	542	603	609
Carmarthenshire	557	613	666	724	747
Swansea	478	548	596	681	710
Neath Port Talbot	619	692	750	837	884
Bridgend	539	601	647	702	768
Vale of Glamorgan	443	495	532	600	655
Rhondda Cynon Taff	558	611	686	772	810
Merthyr Tydfil	569	639	712	799	870
Caerphilly	518	583	633	670	697
Blaenau Gwent	492	563	640	727	796
Torfaen	483	532	564	624	654
Monmouthshire	403	452	485	597	674
Newport	413	464	531	567	576
Cardiff	486	546	573	633	691
Wales	496	555	602	669	710

	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07
Isle of Anglesey	711	798	843	876	911
Gwynedd	761	837	890	961	1,008
Conwy	655	730	111	827	868
Denbighshire	843	945	1,007	1,051	1,078
Flintshire	752	820	881	921	965
Wrexham	784	850	911	931	962
Powys	713	787	868	901	946
Ceredigion	802	847	883	901	932
Pembrokeshire	628	674	707	734	764
Carmarthenshire	801	867	907	941	988
Swansea	755	832	880	910	956
Neath Port Talbot	960	1,030	1,087	1,128	1,165
Bridgend	829	910	949	995	1,035
Vale of Glamorgan	709	783	829	866	913
Rhondda Cynon Taff	853	903	955	1,002	1,053
Merthyr Tydfil	939	1,004	1,049	1,090	1,130
Caerphilly	756	825	862	902	946
Blaenau Gwent	879	976	1,038	1,101	1,157
Torfaen	716	824	892	940	986
Monmouthshire	730	841	917	954	991
Newport	597	671	732	772	814
Cardiff	748	841	872	872	910
Wales	762	837	887	921	962

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many people in his Department have been *(a)* disciplined and *(b)* dismissed for (i) inappropriate use of the internet while at work and (ii) using work telephones to access premium rate telephone numbers in each of the last five years. [67993]

Mr. Hain: None.

Ministerial Meetings

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales on what occasions since May 2005 *(a)* he and *(b)* the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State has met the Welsh Assembly Minister for Health and Social Services. [66919]

Mr. Hain: My ministerial colleague regularly meets the Minister for Health and Social Services in the National Assembly for Wales. He has done so on five occasions since May 2005: May, July, October and November 2005, and April 2006.

I have regular meetings with the First Minister, where we discuss a range of issues including health. I have also had periodic meetings with the Minister at various formal and informal occasions.

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales pursuant to the answer of 30 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 250, on what date the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State discussed the future of Withybush hospital with the Welsh Assembly Minister for Health and Social Services; and what views on the downgrading of the hospital the Minister expressed. [66901]

Nick Ainger: I discussed the future of Withybush hospital with the Assembly Minister for Health and Social Services in November 2005. I subsequently wrote to the hon. Gentlemen in December, setting out the latest position at that time and my views. I am placing a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Missing Children

Helen Southworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children on the Child Protection Register were reported missing to the police in each local authority area in each of the last three years. [67604]

Maria Eagle: The Department for Education and Skills does not collect this information centrally.

Helen Southworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in local authority care were reported missing from care to the police in Warrington in each year since 1995. [67606]

Maria Eagle: This information is not collected centrally.

Pupil Numbers

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children are forecast to be aged *(a)* up to four years, *(b)* primary school age, *(c)* secondary school age and *(d)* 16 to 18 years in each of the next 25 years for which figures are available. [65991]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated 2 May 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your question about how many children are forecast to be aged *(a)* up to four years, *(b)* primary school age, *(c)* secondary school age and *(d)* 16 to 18 years in each of the next 25 years for which figures are available. I am replying in her absence. (65991)

The attached table shows the projected number of children in the United Kingdom aged 0 to 4, 5 to 11, 12 to 15 and 16 to 18 for the years 2004 to 2029 inclusive.

The 2004-based national population projections are based on assumptions about future migration, fertility and mortality. Future experience may well differ from these assumptions. More information, including alternative high and low variant assumptions, can be found on the GAD website at: http://www.gad.gov.uk/Population/index.asp?dp=Current+projections&subYear=Proceed.

Projected number of children in the United Kingdom, 2004–29

Thousand

Year[2]	*Age group*[1] *0 to 4*	*5 to 11*	*12 to 15*	*16 to 18*	*Total aged 0 to 18*
2004	3,389	5,116	3,141	2,353	13,999
2005	3,427	5,045	3,124	2,375	13,970
2006	3,471	4,965	3,092	2,384	13,913
2007	3,511	4,901	3,029	2,389	13,830
2008	3,530	4,857	2,976	2,395	13,757
2009	3,521	4,832	2,953	2,372	13,677
2010	3,501	4,836	2,921	2,326	13,585
2011	3,493	4,844	2,894	2,275	13,506
2012	3,492	4,865	2,851	2,246	13,454
2013	3,498	4,900	2,784	2,233	13,415
2014	3,509	4,934	2,734	2,219	13,396
2015	3,524	4,951	2,714	2,194	13,383
2016	3,540	4,945	2,739	2,144	13,368
2017	3,556	4,930	2,792	2,096	13,373
2018	3,571	4,927	2,837	2,058	13,394
2019	3,585	4,933	2,859	2,058	13,435
2020	3,595	4,946	2,852	2,100	13,493
2021	3,603	4,964	2,833	2,154	13,553
2022	3,606	4,985	2,822	2,181	13,594
2023	3,606	5,006	2,819	2,178	13,609
2024	3,603	5,026	2,822	2,160	13,611
2025	3,597	5,043	2,830	2,149	13,620
2026	3,589	5,057	2,841	2,145	13,631
2027	3,578	5,067	2,853	2,145	13,643
2028	3,564	5,073	2,867	2,150	13,653
2029	3,550	5,073	2,880	2,157	13,660

[1] Age relates to completed years as at June 30 of the year shown. Age 11 has been used as the upper bound for primary school age as the majority of children will be aged 11 at 30 June of their final year in primary school.

[2] Figures are for the population at June 30 of the year shown.

Source:

2004-based national population projections, GAD

Service Children's Education

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of *(a)* A-level and *(b)* GCSE pupils from service children's education schools achieved each grade of examination qualification during the academic year 2004/05. [65440]

Mr. Touhig: I have been asked to reply.

The following results were achieved by pupils attending schools operated by Service Children's Education during academic year 2004/05:

(a) A-level achievement during academic year 2004/05 by SCE pupils as a percentage by grade

	Percentage
Grade A	14.4
Grade B	22.1
Grade C	27
Grade D	23.4
Grade E	11.3

Note:
Other (includes ungraded, no award): 1.8 per cent.

(b) GCSE achievement by SCE pupils during academic year 2004–05 as a percentage by grade

	Percentage
Grade A*	3.1
Grade A	10.8
Grade B	21.2
Grade C	29.3
Grade D	19.5
Grade E	10.7
Grade F	3.6
Grade G	1

Note:
Other (includes ungraded, no award): 0.8 per cent.

Teachers

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps are being taken to address the shortage of qualified school teachers in key subjects. [67306]

Jacqui Smith: In January 2006 the vacancy rate for teachers of most subjects, including mathematics, science, ICT and English, was lower than in 2005.

Since 2000, we have provided bursaries to PGCE trainee teachers in a range of priority subjects. We have also provided them with a "Golden Hello" after their first year teaching. From September 2005 the bursary for mathematics and science trainees rose to £7,000, with a £5,000 "Golden Hello". From September 2006, financial support will increase to £9,000 for all priority subject trainees. Mathematics and science teachers will also be provided with a "Golden Hello" of £5,000 (£2,500 for other priority subjects).

Courses to enhance subject knowledge for those planning to train to teach mathematics and physics began in January this year, and chemistry courses will start next January. Financial incentives are offered to training providers who recruit extra trainees to teach maths and science.

The Budget announced additional funding to encourage more undergraduates to pursue teaching as a career, and to provide additional training to prepare a wider range of graduates to become teachers of priority subjects. It also said that the School Teachers Pay Review Body would be remitted to advise both on improving current pay flexibilities to improve the recruitment, retention and quality of science and mathematics teachers and also on whether sciences teachers should receive an incentive to complete training to enhance their ability to teach physics and chemistry.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Palestinian Territories (Funding)

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether the terms and mechanism put in place by the Reform Trust Fund to protect against the diversion of EU funding to the Palestinian territories into terrorist activities are currently being reviewed; and if he will make a statement. [66235]

Hilary Benn: The Hamas-led Government have not yet met the principles for aid partnership as set out by the Quartet on 30 January. These are recognition of Israel, renunciation of violence and acceptance of previous peace agreements and obligations. The EU is a member of the Quartet, and EU member states and the European Commission are currently reviewing their programmes of support to the Palestinians.

While we will continue to do everything we can to reduce the suffering of the Palestinian people we will not be funding any organisations that we believe might divert funds to terrorist activities. In line with our standard practice, we will continue to monitor all programmes carefully to ensure that aid is used only for poverty reduction.

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will define development support as put in place for the Palestinian people since the recent Palestinian legislative elections; and if he will make a statement. [66236]

Hilary Benn: DFID's programme of development support to the Palestinian Territories is focused on helping to meet the basic needs of the Palestinian people. This means finding ways to prevent an increase in poverty, including funding for essential services such as health, water and electricity. We believe the best way to do this would be to continue providing direct budget support to the Palestinian Authority; but we cannot do this unless the Hamas-led PA government complies with the Quartet principles. These are: the recognition of Israel; the renunciation of violence; and the acceptance of previous agreements and obligations.

DFID is in close contact with the UN and international partners to identify alternative means of supporting the basic needs of the Palestinian people.

DFID has made £30 million available to the Palestinian programme for 2006–07. This includes a £15 million contribution announced on 25 April to the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) which provides direct assistance to Palestinian refugees.

Asian Tsunami

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent discussions he has had with his counterparts in *(a)* the United States, *(b)* France and *(c)* Germany on the payment of funds pledged in aid to assist those affected by the tsunami. [65717]

Hilary Benn: In the immediate aftermath of the tsunami, the UK held discussions with the United States, France, Germany and other donors about meeting the relief and reconstruction needs of the affected countries. According to United Nations' figures, the United States pledged some $351 million to the relief effort, of which it has committed over $134 million, France pledged $61 million of which $26 million has been committed and Germany pledged $129 million and has committed the whole pledge.

The relief phase was very well funded, and many government pledges were made before the full extent of the world's generous and unprecedented response was known. Private commitments alone exceeded $4 billion. Funds that were not committed in the relief phase may have been made available for reconstruction support.

The UK has continued to discuss the ongoing response with other donors. Sufficient funds are, however, only one of the constraints to meeting the needs of those most affected by the tsunami.

Corruption

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what use his Department makes of Transparency International's evaluation of the level of corruption in particular countries. [65888]

Hilary Benn: Tackling corruption is a priority for DFID. We are working closely with Transparency International and other development partners to gain a better understanding of the true scale and impact of corruption in developing countries.

Transparency International is an important advocate in the fight against corruption, having helped to raise public awareness and create pressure for action. The Transparency International Corruption Perception Index is widely credited for putting the issue of corruption on the international agenda and its global corruption barometer is a useful tool for assessing the perceptions of the public in the sixty countries where it has undertaken research. It also publishes valuable information in its annual global corruption report.

The comparative indices produced by Transparency International, which aggregate perception-based information, cannot be used in isolation to evaluate the level of corruption in particular countries. These indices are therefore only one element of the information gathered by DFID to analyse the nature and impact of corruption.

DFID supports Transparency International's work and since 2001 has contributed over £1 million to its International Secretariat and to 11 of its national chapters (in country offices).

Democratic Republic of the Congo

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps are being taken by his Department to work with international child protection agencies to improve awareness of child protection issues in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. [65658]

Hilary Benn: The UK has been involved in discussions with the Democratic Republic of the Congo's (DRC) Ministry of Justice, the UN and NGOs on the subject of child protection issues in the DRC. We continue to remind the DRC Government of its responsibility to protect all its citizens, particularly vulnerable groups such as children.

DFID has funded the non-governmental organisation "RCN—Justice and Democracy" to train magistrates, prosecutors, other court officials, judicial police and customary chiefs in four provinces in the DRC on a range of justice and human rights issues, including child protection and the appropriate treatment of children within the justice system. This project is being implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Justice in the DRC.

DFID has also given £3 million to the International Committee of the Red Cross for their 2006 appeal. Their programme includes tackling child protection issues in the DRC, and supporting children in vulnerable circumstances, such as those in detention, or children associated with fighting forces.

We are giving £30 million to the 2006 UN Humanitarian Action Plan for the DRC, which includes aims to address humanitarian needs throughout the DRC and includes programmes on child protection and promoting the rights of children.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what discussions he has had with the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo on *(a)* protecting street children during the electoral period, *(b)* ensuring that law enforcement personnel respect the right to peaceful protest, *(c)* educating police officers about issues affecting street children and *(d)* ending the practice of arbitrary arrest and roundups of street children; [65659]

(2) what steps are being taken by his Department to provide support for street children living in Kinshasa. [65661]

Hilary Benn: The UK frequently reminds the authorities in DRC of the need to protect the rights of all vulnerable groups, including street children. We maintain close and regular contact with the DRC President's Ambassador for Children, and will continue to work with civil society groups, established churches and the Congolese Government to address this problem, push for further action to protect the DRC's vulnerable children, and bring those who abuse children to justice.

The UK is giving £30 million to the 2006 UN Humanitarian Action Plan for the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), which includes programmes on protecting and providing for vulnerable children, including street children. We also contribute to programmes through UNICEF, Save the Children and other NGOs which aim to protect children.

DFID has supported the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to design a programme to train and equip the police to provide security during the elections. DFID has now given £9 million to support the implementation of this programme through the UN and the police service of South Africa. It includes training for the police on respecting the right to peaceful protest and how to deal with vulnerable groups, such as children. The programme also incorporates a public information campaign to ensure the Congolese people know their rights and how they should expect police officers to behave.

DFID has also funded the non-governmental organisation "RCN—Justice and Democracy" to train magistrates, prosecutors, other court officials, judicial police and customary chiefs in four provinces of the DRC on a range of justice and human rights issues, including child protection and the appropriate treatment of children within the justice system. This project is being implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Justice in the DRC.

DFID has also contributed £3 million to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) 2006 Emergency Appeal. Part of the ICRC's work is to follow up vulnerable people in detention, particularly children formerly associated with armed groups, minors in general and women, and to encourage the detaining and judicial authorities to uphold the rights of detainees who are particularly at risk.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps are being taken by his Department to *(a)* support children's rights and *(b)* improve access to education in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. [65660]

Hilary Benn: The human rights situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) remains poor. The UK frequently reminds the DRC's authorities of the need to protect the rights of all vulnerable groups, including children.

DFID is funding a non-governmental organisation, "RCN—Justice and Democracy" to train magistrates, prosecutors, other court officials, judicial police and customary chiefs in four provinces in the DRC on a range of justice and human rights issues, including child protection and the appropriate treatment of children within the justice system. This project is being implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Justice in the DRC.

DFID is contributing £30 million to the 2006 UN Humanitarian Action Plan for the DRC, which includes programmes for the protection of vulnerable children, to rebuild schools destroyed by conflict and to continue basic education of children in communities ravaged by war.

DFID has also contributed £3 million to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) 2006 Emergency Appeal. Part of the ICRC's work is to follow up vulnerable people in detention, particularly children formerly associated with armed groups, minors in general and women, and to encourage the detaining and judicial authorities to uphold the rights of detainees who are particularly at risk.

The Government of the DRC is at a very early stage in its planning of service delivery in the social sectors, but we are working with them, as part of the international community, to support the development and implementation of a long-term plan for the provision of education and health services to the Congolese population. In the meantime DFID is providing £641,000 to the Catholic Relief Service for school equipment and teacher training in the North Sankuru district of Eastern Kasai.

Education

Mr. Andrew Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will set out the Government's proposals to increase capacity funding to help African and other developing countries develop their 10 year plans for providing education under his delivering education for all initiative. [65187]

Hilary Benn: We anticipate that the fast track initiative's education programme development fund, to which we are doubling our contribution from £2.5 million to £5 million, will be used to help provide technical support to countries with weak capacity to develop or implement sound 10-year education sector plans. This will be the main channel for identifying where technical help is needed, in consultation with other donors who are supporting the education sector. We are also increasing our support to the fast track initiative's catalytic fund from £50 million to £150 million over two years.

Equal Pay

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps are undertaken within his Department to ensure that women are obtaining equal pay to men doing work of equal value. [65848]

Hilary Benn: The Cabinet Office undertook an equal pay review for the senior civil service (SCS) in 2002 which has been re-examined each year since then as part of the Government's evidence to the Senior Salaries Review Body.

DFID carries out a full diversity review, including an equal pay analysis, prior to the implementation of its annual senior civil service (SCS) pay award.

In response to "Just Pay", the Equal Pay Task Force report published in January 2001, the Government committed Departments and agencies to review their pay systems for all staff below the SCS, and to address any equal pay gaps by April 2003.

DFID carried out a fundamental equal pay audit and produced a detailed action plan in April 2003. All aspects of pay and reward are audited for diversity purposes, including equal pay, on an annual basis.

Eritrea

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what discussions he has had with the Government of Eritrea about its decision to expel three international aid charities. [65728]

Hilary Benn: The British ambassador and DFID staff have raised this issue, in the wider context of the constraints placed on the humanitarian operations by the Government of Eritrea with the Minister for National Development, the Minister for Labour and Human Welfare, the Director General Europe (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and the Director of the Office of the President, during a DFID visit to Eritrea earlier this month. The Government of Eritrea said they were concerned about the amount of assistance that they have received, with little impact.

The British ambassador and DFID officials also met with the three international NGOs concerned.

I also spoke with the UN Secretary-General's Special Humanitarian Envoy for the horn of Africa, Mr. Kjell Bondevik, before he departed for Eritrea this week and also with the UN Emergency Relief Co-ordinator, Mr. Jan Egeland. I highlighted my concern about this issue and the lack of reliable information on the humanitarian situation in Eritrea, and encouraged Mr. Bondevik to raise these issues during his visit.

Ethiopia

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what development assistance *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the EU has provided to Ethiopia in each of the last five years. [66487]

Hilary Benn: DFID's development assistance to Ethiopia (in the last five complete financial years) is as follows:

£ million

	Amount
2000–01	16.2
2001–02	11.8
2002–03	42.7
2003–04	43.3
2004–05	62.4

Assistance from the EU (in calendar years) is as follows, with DFID's share of this funding shown in brackets:

£ million

	Amount
2000	45.6 (10.2)
2001	69.4 (11.8)
2002	77.7 (9.3)
2003	91.3 (10.3)
2004	61.5 (11.3)

Gurkha Welfare Scheme

Sir John Stanley: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what financial support his Department made available to the Gurkha welfare scheme in 2005–06; what such support is planned for 2006–07; and what the reasons are for the change in the level of support. [66364]

Mr. Thomas: In 2005–06, DFID provided £1.25 million through the Gurkha welfare scheme (GWS) for improvements to water and sanitation facilities in rural Nepal.

For 2006–07, DFID has allocated £900,000 to the GWS. Other competing demands within declining DFID allocations for the Nepal programme meant that it was not possible to maintain or increase the previous levels of support.

Logging

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the *(a)* scale of illegal logging transfers from Burma to China and *(b)* impact illegal logging has on each country. [65723]

Hilary Benn: In April 2005, DFID funded the NGO Forest Trends, in co-operation with the World Agroforestry Centre (formerly ICRAF), to produce a report: 'Navigating the Border: An Analysis of the China-Myanmar Timber Trade'. In addition, Her Majesty's Government officials were consulted on the October 2005 Global Witness Report: "A Choice for China: Ending the destruction of Burma's frontier forests". We believe that the analysis of the trade and its impact contained in these reports is broadly accurate. They report that:

China imported 1.3 million m^3 of timber from Burma in 2003, almost 60 per cent. of total world imports of Burmese timber. In financial terms this equates to illegal timber exports worth $250 million to $300 million annually across the border from northern Burma to China's Yunnan province. Global Witness estimate that two-thirds of Burma's total revenue from timber exports came from illegal trade, mostly with China, and that more than 100 Chinese timber companies and 20,000 Chinese loggers are involved in the trade inside Burma.

In Burma, logging is having an adverse effect on both the local population and the environment. Deforestation has caused localised flooding, drought and resulting crop failure, the disappearance of wild animals and birdlife associated with the forests. Local people in Burma derive little direct financial benefit from the logging industry and are frequently worse off as a result of the presence of Chinese logging companies.

In China, the increased concentration of logging firms and workers along the Yunnan-Burma border has meant that the timber buyers on China's eastern seaboard largely bypass inland Yunnan and procure materials directly on the border. The recent wave of migration to the Yunnan-Burma border has, in some areas, led to a visible increase in gambling, drugs and commercial sex work.

In March 2006, in response to these reports, the Chinese Foreign Affairs Ministry took the unusual step of admitting that some of its companies and individual citizens are involved in illegal logging in Burma, and said the Government were "paying high attention" to the problem and "requests the Chinese companies and individuals to abide by local laws and regulations."

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office have funded follow-up work by Global Witness to identify 'Opportunities for Action' with recommendations for the Burmese Government, Burmese civil society and international community, which should also be considered in the framework of the EU's commitment to fight against illegal logging worldwide as part of the FLEGT (Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade) process. The Commission have made a proposal for 'voluntary partnerships' with producer countries to identify legal logs for import into the EU.

Middle East

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to his answer of 29 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 979–80W, to the hon. Friend Member for Teignbridge, (Richard Younger-Ross), and of 18 April 2006 to Question 63655, on the Middle East, what is meant by programmes aimed at meeting Palestinians' basic needs; what the budget for such funds is; and how such funds will be administered. [65954]

Hilary Benn: Meeting Palestinians' basic needs is about finding other ways to stop poverty getting worse including funding for essential services such as health, water and electricity.

DFID has made £30 million available to the Palestinian programme for 2006–07. This includes a £15 million contribution announced on 25 April to the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) which provides direct assistance to Palestinian refugees.

We are in close contact with the UN and international partners on identifying other mechanisms for supporting basic needs. We will not be funding organisations where there is a risk of resources being used for anything other than poverty reduction.

Mount Merapi (Eruption)

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment his Department has made of the potential humanitarian impact of *(a)* the predicted eruption of Mount Merapi in Indonesia and *(b)* the refusal of villagers in the vicinity of Mount Merapi to evacuate; what plans his Department has drawn up to assist in the event of an eruption; and if he will make a statement. [66505]

Mr. Thomas: DFID takes very seriously the potential humanitarian impact of an eruption of Mount Merapi in Indonesia. We are monitoring the situation closely through daily situation reports from the UN Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and other sources. These include updates on the latest efforts to evacuate the region. Thousands of villagers have already been evacuated to safe areas, but we are aware that some are reluctant to leave their homes until the alert level is raised to level IV (eruption could be within 24 hours). The UN Resident Co-ordinator's Office has deployed an emergency officer to the area to review co-ordination and preparedness mechanisms and identify gaps. We will continue to monitor the situation closely and stand ready to assist in the event of an eruption.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment his Department has made of official efforts to evacuate the region surrounding Mount Merapi in Indonesia; what assistance has *(a)* sought from and *(b)* provided by his Department; and if he will make a statement. [66506]

Mr. Thomas: DFID is closely monitoring the situation in the Mount Merapi region, through daily situation reports from the UN Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and other sources. These include latest assessments of official efforts to evacuate the region and information on numbers and condition of those evacuated. The UN Resident Co-ordinator's Office has deployed an emergency officer to the region to review co-ordination and preparedness mechanisms and identify any gaps. Evacuation sites and routes have been identified and logistics are in place.

Central and local government agencies, as well as the World Health Organisation, Indonesian Red Cross, International Federation of the Red Cross, and other non-governmental organisations are involved in efforts to evacuate the region and meet displaced people's needs. No assistance has yet been formally requested from DFID. We will continue to monitor the situation closely and stand ready to contribute emergency humanitarian assistance should such a response become necessary.

Somalia

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps are being taken by his Department to avoid famine in Somalia. [65721]

Hilary Benn: The UK recognises the severity of the current humanitarian situation in Somalia and the risks of further deterioration. The most pessimistic predictions, however, including famine, are only likely if the 2006 long rains fail. Fortunately these have now started and are continuing well. So far we see malnutrition and mortality rates that are high but not yet catastrophic, and some of the predicted drought enforced migrations that had been envisaged have not taken place. This is likely to be, at least in part, due to the efforts of the relief agencies.

The UK is one of the leading donors to humanitarian response in Somalia and provided one of the first contributions to the World Food Programme (WFP) food aid operation in December 2005. Since then, we have contributed over £12 million to the WFP, the International Committee of the Red Cross, to other UN agencies and non- governmental organisations to deal with the humanitarian crisis there.

We continue to follow developments closely. It will be some time, however, before the rains result in better conditions and prospects for people in the worst effected areas. Indeed, the immediate effect on weakened human and livestock populations may be increased risks for example from water-borne disease and flooding, and interruptions to the supply of relief.

Sub-Saharan Africa

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps are being taken by his Department to improve the business and investment climate in sub-Saharan Africa. [65707]

Hilary Benn: Helping African Governments get their business and investment climates right is a priority for DFID. We support a wide range of programmes in Africa to address this. These include improving business regulation (such as registration and licensing of companies), infrastructure development, financial sector reform, customs administration, promoting fair competition, and stimulating public-private dialogue about investment climate reform.

In response to the Commission for Africa and G8 Gleneagles' commitments, the UK Government have committed US$30 million to the Investment Climate Facility (ICF) for Africa over the next three years. Three private sector companies have also committed support and other donors are showing positive interest with both the World bank and the Republic of Ireland planning to make contributions. The ICF will address many issues related to the investment climate—helping to develop improved policies, laws, regulations and procedures that impact on business. The ICF trustees (drawn mainly from Africa) are planning to launch the ICF around the middle of this year.

DFID has also committed US$20 million to a complementary initiative—the Africa Enterprise Challenge Fund (AECF). It is in the design stage and should be launched this autumn. The AECF will provide grants to private sector enterprises, on a competitive basis, which will allow them to test innovative business models and higher-risk ventures.

Sudan

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what discussions he has had with the Government of Sudan on attitudes towards women with particular reference to *(a)* assaults on women, *(b)* rape and *(c)* female genital mutilation. [64930]

Hilary Benn: I deplore the continuing crimes of rape and sexual violence in Darfur. Such attacks are abhorrent and totally unacceptable. We have made, and continue to make clear to the Government of Sudan that more must be done to provide security for the citizens of Darfur, and that perpetrators of such crimes must be brought to justice. The UK Government oppose female genital mutilation and we support local initiatives to discourage it. Tackling rape and gender-based violence has been a key point at the regular meetings between the international community and the Government of Sudan. The Government of Sudan have formulated an action plan to eliminate violence against women, but we continue to press the Government of Sudan to implement the plan.

The Gambia

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps he has taken to support the economic development of The Gambia. [66164]

Hilary Benn: DFID is working in partnership with the Gambian Government, international partner and civil society groups to support the national Poverty Reduction Strategy, which aims to create an enabling environment for economic and social development, poverty reduction, enhancement of productive capacity, and social protection for the poorest.

In this context, DFID is working to strengthen governance performance and combat social exclusion of the poorest, particularly in the education sector. Our support is focused on the following main areas:

Basic Education Support for Poverty Reduction (2005–08) to enhance the capacity of the Department of Education to deliver quality education and support the development of national education policy.

Legal Capacity Building (2004–07) to improve the accessibility, impartiality and efficiency of the judicial system for the rural poor majority; includes training for professional and administrative staff in the Judiciary and Department of State for Justice.

Financial governance (2005–2008) will help strengthen public financial management and ensure best use of financial resources in implementing the Poverty Reduction Strategy. Training for the National Assembly Public Accounts Committee and capacity building in the Department of State for Finance are included.

Civil society capacity building (2004–06) supporting civil society's role in monitoring and tracking planned and actual budgetary expenditure against Government policies.

Debt management (2004–06) assisting the Government with the design and implementation of a domestic debt management strategy.

Foreign private capital capacity building (2004–2006) aiming to build capacity at national level and raise awareness for monitoring private capital flows.

DFID has a bilateral development programme allocation of £3 million for 2006–07, and also provides support through contributions to multilateral organisations, such as the European Union, the World Bank and United Nations Agencies. Our estimated share of this assistance was £1.4 million in 2004.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Crown Prosecution Service

Mr. Amess: To ask the Solicitor-General what action can be taken against officials in the Crown Prosecution Service *(a)* who make (i) a negligent and (ii) an unintentional mistake during the course of their work and *(b)* who deliberately fail to implement the prosecutor's code; and if he will make a statement. [66853]

The Solicitor-General: The Code for Crown Prosecutors gives guidance on the general principles to be applied when making decisions about prosecutions. In addition, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) has a code of conduct, job descriptions and person specifications so that managers and staff know what is expected of them. The CPS is also in the process of rolling-out a professional skills and valued behaviour framework, which will further underline and specify the performance standards required of staff. In the event of an apparent failure to deliver to the necessary standard, it is for line management to identify the causes and to take action, whether on grounds of capability or conduct, using the appropriate employment procedures.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Solicitor-General if he will list the occasions when action has been taken against officials employed by the Crown Prosecution Service for negligence in each month since 1997. [66854]

The Solicitor-General: It is for line management to identify whether the acts and/or omissions of staff could constitute negligence and to take action, as appropriate, in accordance with the Crown Prosecution Service's capability and conduct procedures. Management actions would not ordinarily be captured centrally unless disciplinary action for serious or gross misconduct was involved. No such cases are recorded for the period in question.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Solicitor-General how many staff were dismissed from the Crown Prosecution Service in each month since 1997, broken down by grade; and what the reason was in each case. [66855]

The Solicitor-General: Data setting out the reasons for leaving are not available for staff who left the CPS prior to 1 April 2001. This date coincides with the change of the human resources database. Details of dismissals can be provided with effect from April 2001 and these are shown by month and pay band below.

The reasons for dismissal are either on inefficiency or disciplinary grounds. The details of the inefficiency cases are as follows:

Month	*Pay band*							
	A1	*A2*	*B1*	*B2*	*C1*	*C2*	*D*	*E*
2001								
April	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
May	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
June	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
July	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
August	2	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
September	2	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
October	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
November	3	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
December	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
2002								
January	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
February	—	2	—	—	3	—	—	—
March	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
April	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
May	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
June	2	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
July	1	2	—	—	1	—	—	—
August	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
September	3	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
October	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
November	—	2	—	—	2	—	—	—
December	1	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
2003								
January	1	2	—	—	1	1	—	—
February	2	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
March	2	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
April	3	1	—	—	2	1	—	—
May	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
June	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
July	1	1	—	—	1	—	—	—
August	3	1	1	—	—	—	—	—
September	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
October	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
November	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
December	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
2004								
January	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
February	1	1	—	2	—	—	—	—
March	1	1	—	2	—	—	—	—
April	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
May	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
June	1	3	1	—	—	—	—	—
July	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
August	1	1	—	—	1	—	—	—
September	1	1	—	—	1	—	—	—
October	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
November	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
December	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	—
2005								
January	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
February	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Month	Pay band							
	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	D	E
March	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
April	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
May	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
June	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
July	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
August	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
September	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
October	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
November	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
December	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—
2006								
January	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
February	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
March	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
April	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

The details of the cases involving dismissal on disciplinary grounds are as follows:

Month	Pay band							
	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	D	E
2001								
April	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
May	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
June	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
July	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
August	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
September	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
October	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
November	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
December	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2002								
January	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
February	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
March	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
April	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
May	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
June	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
July	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
August	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
September	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
October	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
November	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
December	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
2003								
January	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
February	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
March	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
April	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
May	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
June	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
July	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
August	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
September	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
October	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
November	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
December	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2004								
January	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
February	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
March	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
April	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
May	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
June	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
July	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
August	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
September	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1

Month	Pay band A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	D	E
October	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
November	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
December	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
2005								
January	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
February	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
March	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
April	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
May	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
June	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
July	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
August	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
September	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
October	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
November	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
December	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2006								
January	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
February	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
March	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
April	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Mr. Amess: To ask the Solicitor-General (1) if he will make a statement on progress in improving public *(a)* awareness of and *(b)* confidence in the Crown Prosecution Service; [66856]

(2) who in the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) is responsible for improving public *(a)* awareness of and *(b)* confidence in the CPS; to whom that person reports; and if he will make a statement. [66857]

The Solicitor-General: The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) is making good progress in improving public awareness and public confidence in its work. A communication strategy has been developed to improve public awareness of the CPS's role in prosecuting crime. The strategy includes proactively engaging with the media; working with other criminal justice system agencies on communication initiatives; improving stakeholder engagement; and promoting the CPS's vision of becoming a world-class prosecution authority. Greater awareness is important in raising public confidence in the CPS. The latest British Crime Survey report on policing and confidence, published on 30 March 2006, suggests that public satisfaction with the CPS's work has increased.

Chief Crown Prosecutors (CCPs), in charge of each of the CPS's 42 areas, are locally responsible for improving public awareness and confidence in the CPS. CCPs report to the Director of Public Prosecutions and to the Chief Executive. Progress is also assessed by the independent CPS Inspectorate.

At a national level the Director of Business Development has responsibility for improving public awareness of the CPS and the Director of Finance, has responsibility for improving public confidence in the Service. Both report to the Chief Executive.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Solicitor-General when the Prosecutor's Code was last updated; who was consulted; if he will place in the Library responses received; how *(a)* hon. Members, *(b)* Members of the House of Lords and *(c)* members of the public can obtain copies; at what cost; and if he will make a statement. [66860]

The Solicitor-General: The Code for Crown Prosecutors is reviewed and reissued from time-to-time, the latest edition being published on 16 November 2004.

The Attorney-General announced the review of the Code on 18 March 2004, *Official Report*, column WS25, indicating that the review would be limited in scope to take account of recent developments and that there would be appropriate consultation. The completion of the review was announced by the Attorney-General on 16 November 2004, *Official Report*, column WS50, stating that copies of the revised Code had been printed and placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Consultation on the latest edition of the Code included prosecutors from other prosecuting agencies and departments; criminal justice system partners; interest groups; the senior judiciary; academics; and Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) staff. It would not be appropriate to publish their responses since they were not informed that this would happen at the time.

The Code is a public document, which is available free of charge on the CPS's website www.cps.gov.uk. Copies are also available free of charge on request from the CPS publications branch.

Insurance Fraud

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Solicitor-General what steps the Crown Prosecution Service is taking to prosecute insurance fraud. [67203]

The Solicitor-General: The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) prosecutes all cases of dishonesty, including insurance fraud, vigorously. When a case is received from the police it is reviewed in accordance with the Code for Crown Prosecutors. If there is sufficient evidence to provide a realistic prospect of conviction and it is in the public interest to prosecute, the CPS will do so.

The CPS is participating in the Attorney-General's Review of Fraud which was announced in Parliament on 27 October 2005, *Official Report*, columns 16–17WS. The Review is an interdepartmental review of the arrangements for tackling fraud with the aim of reducing the amount of fraud and minimising the harm it causes to the economy and wider society. The Review is expected to report to Ministers by the early summer of 2006.

DEFENCE

Afghanistan

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the *(a)* number and *(b)* scale of insurgent attacks which have taken place in Helmand province in Afghanistan in each of the last six months. [65957]

John Reid: We continually assess the number of insurgents believed to be operating in Helmand province and our understanding will develop further as the number of United Kingdom forces and Afghan security presence increase in the area.

For reasons of operational security we would not wish to elaborate upon our assessment of the numbers of insurgents or our assessments of their capability.

Annington Homes

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what ongoing involvement his Department has with *(a)* individual domestic dwellings and *(b)* communal areas of former military housing which Annington Homes has sold to private owners; and if he will make a statement. [66918]

Mr. Touhig: The Ministry of Defence (MOD) has no ongoing involvement with either individual domestic dwellings or communal areas of former military housing, which Annington Homes Ltd. (AHL) has sold to private owners.

However, in a few cases, some properties continue to be supplied with water and or sewerage treatment from military bases and MOD raises the relevant charges for these services.

The communal areas are generally operated by management companies formed and owned by committees of housing estate residents to whom the areas were sold.

Armed Forces Recruits

Jim Dowd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the *(a)* nationality and *(b)* residential qualifications required by recruits to HM armed forces are. [67024]

Mr. Touhig: To be accepted for employment in the armed forces an applicant must satisfy the following conditions:

That at all times since birth he/she has been a British or Commonwealth citizen, or a Republic of Ireland national, and

That he/she was born in a country which is (or then was) within the Commonwealth or in the Republic of Ireland.

A waiver of these requirements may be granted, in exceptional circumstances, to applicants who are British or Commonwealth citizens, or Republic of Ireland nationals, at the time of their application. This would also cover those applicants who had been granted British citizenship.

With regard to residential qualifications, all applicants for the armed forces are normally required to spend a minimum five years residency in the UK immediately prior to application before being accepted into the services. Waivers to this rule are granted: they are based on an individual's circumstances and are dependent on the country in which the applicant has been living and the ease with which background security checks can be made.

Atomic Weapons Establishment

Mr. Crausby: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what research has been undertaken at the Atomic Weapons Establishment into the development of a new nuclear warhead for *(a)* Trident and *(b)* a replacement deterrent. [66283]

John Reid: I have nothing to add to the answer I gave on 21 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 364W, to the hon. Member for New Forest, East (Dr. Lewis).

Correspondence

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the Minister for Veterans will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for West Worcestershire of 13 March, reference 01611/2006. [67131]

Mr. Touhig: I wrote to the hon. Member on 28 April.

Defence Munitions Centre Crombie

Willie Rennie: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his written statement of 28 February 2006, *Official Report*, columns 9–10WS, on Defence Munitions Centre Crombie, what assessment his Department has made of the likely impact on levels of road freight on routes to and from Defence Munitions Centre Crombie following its proposed downgrading. [65090]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 5W.

Defence White Paper

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects to publish the next Defence White Paper; and what plans he has to revise the Defence Planning Assumptions. [67001]

John Reid: The Government are committed to producing a Defence White Paper within the life of the Parliament.

Defence Planning Assumptions are normally subject to routine review as part of the Department's planning cycle. On current plans this would lead to revised assumptions being issued in 2008.

Defensive Aids Suite

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the IRCM ALQ-157 as a defensive aids suite; and if he will make a statement. [64828]

Mr. Ingram: The Air Warfare Centre undertakes regular assessments to gauge the effectiveness of defensive aids against current and emerging threats. Details of these assessments cannot be released as this would be likely to prejudice the capability, effectiveness and security of our armed forces.

Departmental Websites

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list *(a)* the websites operated by his Department and *(b)* the reports placed on the internet in March 2006, indicating in each case whether paper copies were also made available. [65204]

Mr. Touhig: The Ministry of Defence and armed forces collectively maintain four corporate websites:

Organisation	*Website address*
Ministry of Defence	www.mod.uk
Royal Navy	www.royalnavy.mod.uk
British Army	www.army.mod.uk
Royal Air Force	www.raf.mod.uk

In addition there are two corporate service recruiting sites (Royal Navy recruiting is embedded in the main RN site):

Organisation	*Website address*
British Army	www.armyjobs.mod.uk/
RAF Careers	www.rafcareers.com

The following websites are maintained by business units within MOD. This list does not include sites created and maintained by individual units, regiments etc.

	Website address
UK Defence Standardization	www.dstan.mod.uk
SaBRE (Supporting Britain's Reservists and Employers)	www.sabre.mod.uk
Chief Scientific Advisor	www.science.mod.uk
Veterans Agency	www.veteransagency.mod.uk
Ministry of Defence Art Collection	www.art.mod.uk
Acquisition Management System	www.ams.mod.uk
Acquisition Safety and Environmental Management System	www.asems.mod.uk
Central Data Management Authority	www.cdma.mod.uk
Defence Analytical Services Agency	www.dasa.mod.uk
Defence Estates	www.defence-estates.mod.uk
Defence Medical Services Department	www.dmsd.mod.uk
Joint Air Transport Evaluation Unit	www.jateu.mod.uk
UK National Codification Bureau	www.ncb.mod.uk
Permanent Joint Headquarters	www.northwood.mod.uk
UK Military Flying Training Website	www.ukmfts.mod.uk
Defence Schools Presentation Team	www.schools.mod.uk
The 'We Were There Exhibition' Website	www.wewerethere.mod.uk
Defence Image Database	www.defenceimagedatabase.mod.uk
Defence Export Services Organisation	www.deso.mod.uk
Royal Navy Community Website	www.rncom.mod.uk
RAF 4 U website for young people	www.raf4u.com
RAF Community Website	www.rafcom.co.uk/
RAF Reserves	www.rafreserves.com
Defence Storage and Distribution Agency	www.dsda.org.uk/index.htm
MOD Procurement Portal	www.contracts.mod.uk
Defence Academy	www.da.mod.uk/DefenceAcademy
Defence Aviation Safety Centre	www.dasc.mod.uk/
Defence Bills Agency	www.defencebills.gov.uk/
Defence Diversification Agency	www.dda.gov.uk/
Defence Science and Technology Laboratory	www.dstl.gov.uk/
Disposal Services Agency	www.disposalservices.agency.mod.uk/
Army Base Repair Organization	www.abro.mod.uk/
Meteorological Office	http://www.metoffice.com/
UK Hydrographic Office	http://www.ukho.gov.uk/
Defence Aviation Repair Agency	www.daranet.co.uk

The reports in the following table were placed on the www.mod.uk. RAF and Navy corporate websites between 1 March 2006 and 31 March 2006.

The complexity of the www.army.mod.uk domain means that a list of reports placed on the Army corporate internet site could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Title	*Paper copy available*
Military Aircraft Accident Summary ZA491	No
AFPAA Corporate Plan 2005/2010	Yes
MOD Personnel Manual Volume 12: Employee Relations	Yes
MOD Smoking Policy	No
PPPA Framework Document	Yes
PPPA Corporate Plan	Yes
PPPA Charter	Yes
Defence Estates Strategy 2006—In Trust On Trust	Yes
Defence Estates Strategy 2006—A Guide	Yes
Surface Warship Support—Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA)	No
DBA Annual Report and Accounts 2004/05	Yes
DSA Annual Report and Accounts 2004/05 PDF	Yes
MOD Public Service Agreement: Quarterly Reports to HM Treasury (April 03-March 06)	Yes
Historical Accounting for UK Defence Highly Enriched Uranium	No
AFPAA Corporate Plan 2005/2010	Yes
Reconvened Board of Inquiry Report into the Death of Fusilier G C Gentle Royal Highland Fusiliers	No
Board of Inquiry Report into the Death of the Late 25035018 Lance Corporal of Horse Matthew Richard Hull	No
Annual Report on Safety, Health and Environmental Protection in MOD 2004–05	No
Defence Estates Stewardship Report 2005	Yes

Hercules Aircraft

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what representations he has received in the last five years on fitting reticulated foam devices to all Mk1 Hercules aircraft. [57108]

Mr. Ingram: Any such representations would not be recorded centrally. We are aware of working level correspondence in 2000 about the possible fitting of 'self-sealing' fuel tanks to C-130s, but nothing further between them and the publication of the Board of Inquiry report into the crash of XV179. However, a comprehensive trawl of records could be undertaken only at disproportionate cost.

Information Requests

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his timetable is for responding to Mr. D. Laybourne's request for an Internal Review of Request for Information (departmental reference 27-01-2005-154135-006); and what the reasons are for the delay in responding to this request beyond the deadline given by his Department on 1 February 2006. [64782]

Mr. Touhig: The internal review of the handling of Mr. Laybourne's request for information will be conducted when the request has been substantively answered. As my right hon. Friend the Minister of State for the Armed Forces explained to him in a letter (reference D/MSU/2/5/1) dated 7 April 2005, the request cannot be answered until a departmental review of the Board of Inquiry report and associated papers relating to the sinking of HMS Sheffield is complete. Work on that review is well advanced, and we expect to be able to make the outcome known before the summer recess. Release of information should follow shortly afterwards.

Iraq

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many military *(a)* fatalities and *(b)* casualties were sustained by personnel deployed to Iraq on Operation Telic in each month since March 2003; what the date was of each incident; and how many (i) deaths and (ii) casualties had been sustained in respect of each incident one week after the event. [60537]

John Reid *[holding answer 22 March 2006]:* The best information centrally available for Operation Telic fatalities and casualty statistics is published on the MOD website at: http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/FactSheets/OperationsInIraqBritishFatalities.htm.

With one exception, all of the UK personnel listed died within one week of the incident occurring; the exception concerned an individual who was injured in a road traffic accident and subsequently died of his wounds in hospital in the UK three weeks later. We do not hold information on the status of casualties one week after the incident occurred.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the degree of ethnic and religious balance in Iraqi *(a)* police and *(b)* security forces of the (i) Ministry of Defence and (ii) Ministry of the Interior. [61850]

John Reid: In the Iraqi police service, which is provincial in structure, there is no formal system with which to track demographics. In the army, which recruits nationally, we estimate that six of the 10 divisions are overwhelmingly Arab, reflecting the ethnic mix in the areas from which they recruit, and of the remaining four, three are majority Kurdish. In the Iraqi Ministry of Defence, as at 1 April 2006, the distribution of senior posts is as follows:

	Number	*Percentage*
Sunni Arab	15	26
Shia Arab	38	66
Kurdish	4	7
Turkoman	1	1
Total	58	100

Comparable information is not held for the Iraqi Ministry of the Interior.

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 2 February 2006, *Official Report*, columns 704–05W, on Iraq, how many soldiers treated following service in Iraq had *(a)* physical injuries and *(b)* a mental illness. [64653]

John Reid: Between January 2003 and December 2005 inclusive, 1,551 UK service personnel who had served in Iraq on Operation Telic were subsequently assessed by the Defence medical services as suffering from a mental health disorder. This represents around 1.5 per cent. of total UK service personnel deployed to the region during the same period. Of those 1,551 personnel, 208 were assessed as suffering from post traumatic stress disorder. A further 696 personnel were diagnosed with an adjustment disorder, which will include some who have post traumatic symptoms not amounting to full PTSD but with some symptoms of post traumatic stress. Other personnel were diagnosed with a range of other mental health conditions, including mood and neurotic disorders, and psychoactive substance misuse.

Figures on the total number of personnel treated following service in Iraq for physical injuries sustained in theatre are not collated centrally. Nor is it possible, for example, to break down the medical evacuation figure given in my previous answer of 2 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 704–05W, because the database which records the data does not contain information on treatment received after evacuation. Complete information on medical treatment could only be compiled from personal medical records which are held by individual unit commands. These can only be viewed for non-clinical reasons with the express consent of the individual concerned, to protect patient confidentiality. I cannot therefore give a figure for the total number of personnel treated following service in Iraq for physical injuries sustained in theatre.

You may wish to note that an update of the figures I provided in my answer of 2 February 2006 has been published on the MOD website at: http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/FactSheets/OperationsInIraqBritishCasualties.htm.

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what provision is being made for the long-term care of British soldiers returning from Iraq with a traumatic brain injury. [65914]

John Reid: The Defence Medical Services (DMS) has a range of referral options depending upon the nature of the medical treatment required. The DMS refers Service personnel with complex musculoskeletal or neurological

needs requiring hospital care to one of the six Ministry of Defence Hospital Units (MDHUs) embedded within National Health Service (NHS) Trusts, or to a suitable non-MDHU NHS facility if the location and availability of clinical service is more socially convenient and clinically appropriate for the patient than MDHU care.

If a traumatic brain injury is detected, the individual will be given appropriate medical treatment, including physical rehabilitation or psychiatric treatment, with the aim of returning them to duty. In serious cases where it becomes apparent that the individual will be unable to remain within the armed forces, personnel will be medically discharged (or demobilized in the case of reservists) and managed through the transition from military to NHS care.

Kieran Heggarty

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence who led the investigation into the death of Kieran Heggarty at Moscow army barracks on 19 February. [66929]

Mr. Touhig: The investigation into the death of Kieran Heggarty at Moscow Camp, Belfast on 19 February 2006 is being carried out by the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

RAF

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Eurofighters the UK plans to purchase; and how many will be used by the RAF. [66606]

Mr. Ingram: The United Kingdom has, to date, contracted for 144 Eurofighter-Typhoon aircraft for use by the Royal Air Force. A decision by the Eurofighter Partner Nations on the third production buy of the aircraft (known as Tranche 3) is not required until at least 2007.

Military Appointments

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many appointments of one to five star general rank are *(a)* command and *(b)* staff appointments, broken down by service; [64610]

(2) how many appointments of one to five star general rank there are in his Department, broken down by service; and how many are *(a)* gapped and *(b)* unfilled, broken down by service. [64609]

Mr. Touhig: Please note that the following figures include tri-service posts that the single services fill on a rotational basis and are therefore a 'snap shot' of the manning situation at the end of April 2006.

Royal Navy

Rank	Officers	Appointments held that are designated as Command	Gapped posts	Number Unfilled posts
1 star	64	19	0	0
2 star	30	9	0	0
3 star	9	2	0	0
4 star	3	2	0	0
5 star	0	0	0	0

Army

Rank	Officers	Appointments held that are designated as Command	Gapped posts	Number Unfilled posts
1 star	170	[1]58	0	0
2 star	43	17	0	0
3 star	9	8	0	0
4 star	6	6	0	0
5 star	0	0	0	0

[1] There are no gapped posts and no unfilled posts, although three of the appointments at 1* level are being filled by Colonels pending the correct Brigadier for the post.

RAF

Rank	Officers	Appointments held that are designated as Command	Gapped posts	Number Unfilled posts
1 star	82	15	1	0
2 star	25	6	0	0
3 star	7	3	0	0
4 star	3	3	0	0
5 star	0	0	0	0

Notes:
1. A gapped post is defined as one where the post is currently vacant but there is a nominated future incumbent and an unfilled as a post where there is no officer yet nominated to take up the position.
2. Please note that in line with MOD policy all figures over 100 have been rounded to the nearest 10.

Nevada Nuclear Test Site

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment his Department has made of the contribution of the Vito and Krakatau subcritical tests to the US programme to sustain and improve the readiness to resume nuclear testing at the Nevada test site; and if he will make a statement. [66676]

John Reid: None. The purpose of tests such as Vito and Krakatau is solely to provide information to help maintain the safety and reliability of the existing nuclear weapon stockpile without the need to conduct underground nuclear tests.

Queen's Flight

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the total cost was of the Queen's Flight in each of the last four financial years; how much of these costs were *(a)* fixed and *(b)* variable; and how many miles were flown by the Queen's Flight in each year. [64790]

Mr. Touhig: The total cost of the 32 (The Royal) Squadron in each of the last four financial years and the breakdown of these costs into *(a)* fixed and *(b)* variable costs are shown in the following table:

Fixed and variable costs for 32 (The Royal) Squadron

£ million

Financial year	Fixed costs	Variable costs	Total
2002–03	20.2	5.0	25.2
2003–04	14.5	4.8	19.3
2004–05	11.7	4.6	16.3
2005–06	11.4	5.8	17.2

We are not able to provide a figure on how many miles are flown by 32 (The Royal) Squadron as this information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

US Missiles Projects

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions his Department has had with its counterparts in the US concerning *(a)* the W76–2 nuclear warhead design, *(b)* the Mk4A Reentry Body and *(c)* the Reliable Replacement Warhead project; and if he will make a statement. [66677]

John Reid: Officials from the Ministry of Defence regularly discuss a range of nuclear matters with their US counterparts under the auspices of the 1958 Mutual Defence Agreement.

Warrant Officer Michael White

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the result was of the coroner's inquest into the death of Warrant Officer Michael White held on 22 January. [66930]

Mr. Touhig: Inquest verdicts in Northern Ireland take the form of a statement of facts surrounding the death. I shall send a copy of the coroner's findings in relation to the death of Warrant Officer Michael White to the hon. Member and place a copy in the Library of the House.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Art Collection (Security)

Mr. Mark Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what financial losses have been suffered in each of the last five years from items having been stolen from the Government's art collection. [66826]

Mr. Lammy: Within the last five years, financial losses of £240,000 occurred in 2001 as a result of the theft of five works of art in the Government art collection. These were stolen from the British ambassador's temporary residence in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Mr. Mark Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list items from the Government's art collection which have been recovered after having been stolen in the last five years. [66827]

Mr. Lammy: The works of art which have been reported stolen from the Government art collection in the last five years have not been recovered.

Capita Group

James Brokenshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many tenders *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries have submitted to her Department in each of the last three years; and how many tenders were successful. [61472]

Mr. Lammy: DCMS has not awarded any contracts to Capita plc or its subsidiaries in the last three years. Information on the numbers of tenders submitted could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

James Brokenshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many contracts her Department holds with *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries which still have a potential duration of five years or more. [61473]

Mr. Lammy: DCMS has no contracts with Capita plc or its subsidiaries for this period of time.

Charitable Fund

Dr. Tony Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) what the eligibility criteria will be of the charitable fund announced in the Budget to support British citizens affected by terrorist acts; and how the fund will operate; [66169]

(2) whether the charitable fund announced in the Budget to support British citizens affected by terrorist acts abroad will include financial help to the spouses of British soldiers killed in Iraq. [66168]

Tessa Jowell: I am replying as Minister responsible for humanitarian assistance of those affected by major emergencies. There is more work to be done on exactly how the fund will operate, and I continue to work in consultation with the voluntary sector, partners in Government and victims' groups to finalise the details. We hope to be able to make a further announcement in the summer.

Digital Television

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pursuant to her answer of 11 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 63W, on digital television, which organisation supplies a television licensable content service licence; what its criteria are for so doing; what criteria Ofcom uses for deciding on an

application for a digital programme service licence; if she will list the platform operators for carriage of a channel; whether the Government has a role in respect of the criteria for the contract; what procedures are in place to control the power of a platform operator over price for carrying a channel; whether there is an appeal process if *(a)* the licence applications are turned down and *(b)* the platform operator refuses to carry the channel; and if she will make a statement. [66780]

James Purnell: Under the Communications Act 2003, Ofcom is responsible for the licensing of television licensable content services and section 235(3) of the Act sets out the criteria for doing so. Section 18 of the Broadcasting Act 1996 (as amended by paragraph 90 of Part 2 of Schedule 15 to the 2003 Act), sets out the criteria for Ofcom's licensing of digital programme services. Essentially, Ofcom can refuse the application only if precluded from granting it because they consider that the applicant is not a fit and proper person to hold a licence; by the rules on media ownership; or (in the case of a television licensable content service) if they are satisfied that the service would involve a breach of the programme standards or fairness and privacy codes under the Act.

Having obtained a licence for the service, the licence holder then has to enter into a contractual agreement with a platform operator. Current platform operators are:

Digital Terrestrial Television Multiplexes: Digital 3 and 4 Ltd; SDN Ltd; BBC Free to View Ltd.; and National Grid Wireless plc

Cable Television: Telewest; ntl; and Wight Cable

Satellite Television: BSkyB plc

The price and conditions for carriage on a digital platform are based on contractual negotiations and subject to Ofcom regulation on certain aspects of the terms on which platform operators give access to programme service providers (in particular, to prevent discrimination). Further details are available from Ofcom. There is no right of appeal under broadcasting legislation if an application for a licence is refused, but there is the possibility of judicial review. Ofcom can consider a complaint if an operator refuses to carry channels on a platform if, for example, that is a breach of the operator's licence in the case of a multiplex, or if it raises an issue under competition law or the EU laws regulating access to platforms.

The Government does not have a role to play in the licensing of broadcast services. Nor does it have a role in relation to the contractual agreements between service providers and platform operators, except in the limited case of "must-carry" arrangements on cable TV services under section 64 of the Communications Act 2003, but no must-carry obligations are currently in force.

Diversity/Social Inclusion

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what targets her Department has set for public libraries to promote *(a)* diversity and *(b)* social inclusion. [66290]

Mr. Lammy: There are no DCMS set targets for public libraries in these areas. However, by their very nature, public libraries are institutions that are safe, neutral and welcoming to all and most of the services they provide are free. Provisional DCMS adult participation data showed, for example, that adults from black and ethnic minority backgrounds had higher rates of attendance at public libraries than those from white ethnic backgrounds.

In addition, the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA), one of DCMS's sponsored bodies, is leading on work to develop impact measures to encourage improved provision to whole communities including, for example, those who rely on home library services. This is in addition to the MLA's advice to library staff on matters such as addressing access and equal opportunities for people with disabilities.

East Midlands (Tourism Deficit)

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the estimated regional tourism deficit was for the East Midlands area in *(a)* money and *(b)* numbers of visitors in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [67036]

James Purnell: The estimated expenditure and visits from inbound, outbound and domestic tourism in the East Midlands are shown in the following tables. Figures are provided for 2000 to 2004, the latest year for which data are available.

Expenditure

Inbound and outbound tourism

£ million

	Overseas residents' spending in the East Midlands	*East Midlands residents' spending abroad*	*Difference*
2000	250	1,475	-1,225
2001	265	1,653	-1,388
2002	285	1,688	-1,403
2003	301	1,854	-1,553
2004	448	2,027	-1,579

Source:
International Passenger Survey (East Midlands = Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire)

Domestic tourism

£ million

	UK residents' spending in the East Midlands	*East Midlands residents' spending in the UK (excluding East Midlands)*	*Difference*
2000	1,169	1,621	-452
2001	1,182	1,635	-453
2002	1,385	1,694	-309
2003	1,352	1,775	-423
2004	1,201	1,514	-313

Source:
United Kingdom Tourism Survey (East Midlands = East Midlands Development Agency Area)

Visits

Inbound and outbound tourism

Thousands

	Overseas residents' visits to the East Midlands	*East Midlands residents' visits abroad*	*Difference*
2000	820	3,485	-2,665
2001	788	3,880	-3,092
2002	865	3,868	-3,003
2003	984	4,129	-3,145
2004	1,061	4,469	-3,408

Source:
International Passenger Survey (East Midlands = Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire)

Domestic tourism

Thousands

	UK residents' visits to the East Midlands	*East Midlands residents' visits in the UK (excluding East Midlands)*	*Difference*
2000	10,499	9,758	741
2001	9,577	10,268	-691
2002	10,914	10,451	463
2003	9,613	8,993	620
2004	8,032	7,220	812

Source:
United Kingdom Tourism Survey (East Midlands = East Midlands Development Agency Area)

These tables exclude expenditure and visits by domestic leisure day visitors as these figures are not available over the required time period. Please note the latter two tables refer to number of visits not visitors.

Sample sizes at regional levels will be small and so estimates will be subject to a high margin of error. Caution should therefore be exercised when interpreting the data.

United Kingdom Tourism Survey data for 2004 should be treated with particular caution owing to concerns about the methodology used to produce these figures. An extensive review of this survey has since taken place and a new methodology has been adopted.

Due to the level of non-response to the question of area of residence on the International Passenger Survey, figures for expenditure and visits by East Midlands residents abroad are likely to be slightly under-estimated.

Gambling

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps the Gambling Commission will take to ensure that the findings of the prevalence study are sufficiently robust to allow Parliament fully to consider the causes of problem gambling by gambling type. [66833]

Mr. Caborn: No gambling prevalence study, on its own, can identify the causes of problem gambling. However, a series of studies, carried out with regularity and consistency, such as those planned by the Gambling Commission, can provide data to assist in the identification of factors which are associated with an enhanced risk of problem gambling.

High Definition Television

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what percentage of new television sets being sold are estimated to be high definition ready. [65874]

James Purnell: According to Ofcom, around 40 per cent. of 'high-end' TV sales (plasma, LCD, rear projection) are now estimated to be high definition ready. We do not have a figure for the percentage of total TV sales, but it would be lower.

Licensing

Mr. Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what representations she has received on the impact of the Licensing Act 2003 in South East London; and if she will make a statement. [65679]

James Purnell: The Department has received a number of representations concerning the impact of the Licensing Act 2003 in South East London, Last year I received a representation about the Act from the hon. Member, enclosing correspondence from a constituent about carol singing under the Licensing Act 2003, to which I replied on 6 March 2006.

We are currently monitoring and evaluating the impact of the Licensing Act 2003 nationally, but it is too early as yet to draw firm conclusions.

Ed Balls: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether an assessment has been made of the impact of the change in licensing hours on the *(a)* Wakefield district and *(b)* Normanton constituency; and if she will make a statement. [66023]

James Purnell: The Department has made no specific assessment of the impact of the change in licensing hours on the Wakefield district or the Normanton constituency. We are currently monitoring and evaluating the impact of the Licensing Act 2003 nationally, but it is too early as yet to draw firm conclusions.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the impact of the change in licensing hours in *(a)* Coventry South and *(b)* the West Midlands region as a whole. [66497]

James Purnell: The Department has made no specific assessment of the impact of the change in licensing hours in Coventry South and the West Midlands region. We are currently monitoring and evaluating the impact of the Licensing Act 2003 nationally, but it is too early as yet to draw firm conclusions.

Millennium Projects

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list the millennium projects with a capital cost in excess of £25 million; and what the *(a)* deficit and *(b)* surplus was of each project for each financial year since 2000. [64943]

Mr. Caborn: Millennium Commission funded projects with a total capital cost of over £25 million are set out in the table.

The Commission monitors projects to satisfy itself that capital assets funded by lottery grant remain in use, and requires projects to provide it with their annual reports and to notify it if they cease operating or become insolvent. To date, three projects out of 223 supported by the Commission have ceased to operate. However, information about the individual performance of each project is not held centrally.

Project name	Total project grant £	Project cost £
The New Millennium Experience	602,673,592	789,000,000
The Eden Project	56,374,862	116,720,971
Tate Modern	51,357,700	136,288,768
Millennium Point	50,499,058	112,857,055
At-Bristol	47,666,774	104,409,948
Millennium Stadium, Cardiff	46,360,000	141,000,000
The Odyssey Project	45,681,575	92,815,477
National Cycle Network	44,127,202	208,433,110
The Renaissance of Portsmouth Harbour	40,016,693	97,561,291
The Glasgow Science Centre	37,303,983	76,933,109
UHI Millennium Institute	35,869,000	99,732,265
The Millennium Link	33,814,810	84,541,876
International Centre for Life	33,408,137	67,060,771
The Forum	32,476,600	67,978,065
National Space Centre	32,375,123	84,892,973
Wales Millennium Centre	31,700,000	108,173,704
The British Museum Great Court	30,000,000	62,755,913
The Millennium Seed Bank	27,399,401	83,410,000
The Deep	24,256,803	52,536,365
Hampden—Scotland's 'Field of Dreams'	24,200,000	60,000,000
Magna	23,108,558	45,837,456
Changing Places	22,911,339	58,267,855
Sheffield—Remaking the Heart of the City	22,700,279	45,221,155
National Botanic Garden of Wales	22,243,375	43,110,000
The Lowdry	20,951,000	106,310,000
Manchester Millennium Quarter	20,090,000	43,901,562
Our Dynamic Earth	18,070,933	39,147,902
The Huddersfield Narrow Canal	14,851,241	32,836,000
Mile End Park	14,722,009	33,166,075
Millennium Coastal Park	13,750,000	29,900,000
Durham Millennium City	13,334,713	28,689,063
Rochdale Canal Restoration	11,923,000	25,703,400
Millennium Forest for Scotland	11,532,003	29,198,917
The Phoenix Initiative	10,614,500	28,211,042
21st Century Halls for England	10,543,728	26,392,551
Golden Jubilee Bridges	8,684,000	52,022,885
Reviving Spa Culture	7,853,984	28,607,100
Trans Pennine Trail	6,370,368	25,618,269
Rich Mix Centre	5,050,000	25,850,000

NDPBs/Agencies

Mr. Love: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport which *(a)* non-departmental public bodies and *(b)* executive agencies for which she is responsible have been subject to a peer review in 2005–06; what the (i) purpose, (ii) terms of reference and (iii) outcome was of each review; and what reference to the outcome of the review has been made when making funding decisions for those organisations. [65093]

Tessa Jowell: During 2005–06 one full peer review was undertaken, of Arts Council England (ACE), plus a one-day follow-up review of the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA). The purpose of peer review is to take an independent, strategic view of an organisation's effectiveness and capacity, in order to help that organisation improve its performance.

The terms of reference and the report of the ACE peer review can be found on the ACE website www.artscouncil.org.uk/peerreview. The conclusions of the review will be taken into account in drawing up the funding agreement between DCMS and Arts Council England for the 2006–08 period.

The MLA follow-up review concluded that the MLA had made considerable progress towards implementing the recommendations of the original peer review, but that MLA and DCMS would have to work together closely to deliver the full, challenging agenda. The peer review conclusions underpin the current funding agreement between DCMS and MLA.

Shooting Training

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what representations her Department has made to the Home Office concerning a possible relaxation of the handgun legislation to enable Olympic target shooters to train in the country. [67141]

Mr. Caborn: The Department is committed to supporting its very best athletes, and looks carefully at reducing any barriers that may restrict the development of talent.

In the case of the sport of shooting, the Firearms Amendment Act (1997) has limited the practice of three of the 15 shooting disciplines defined as an Olympic sport.

In light of representations from the sport, this matter has been brought to the attention of the Home Secretary. He has been asked to consider ways in which our Olympic hopefuls in those three disciplines affected under the current legislation may be able to train in Britain, while respecting the very important issue of public safety.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what proportion of the money recently awarded by UK Sport to shooting will be used to fund the costs of training outside the UK. [67142]

Mr. Caborn: UK Sport's total allocation of £4.817 million to the sport of shooting between 2006–9, announced in April, is based on its investment model which calculates how many athletes should be supported at each stage of the performance pathway in order to deliver a potential number of medals in that sport.

The allocation per athlete is calculated according to a number of criteria, including the cost of training in the UK and the cost of training and competing abroad.

These costs have been averaged across all the sports, which means that each national governing body has some flexibility about how it allocates the funding to its athletes, while being required to deliver against a set of agreed milestones.

Great Britain Target Shooting Federation, the national governing body, in discussion with UK Sport, is in the process of planning precisely how it will spend its allocation across the world class talent, development and podium programmes. It is estimated that this process will take approximately three months.

However, for those high performance athletes on UK sport's world class performance programme over the course of the Athens cycle (2001–05), we understand that target shooting spent approximately £375,000 on funding the cost of training and competing abroad. UK Sport estimate that the cost of overseas training alone was in the region of £155,000.

Sports Funding (Coventry)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what central Government funding has been allocated to sport in Coventry in each of the last eight years. [66498]

Mr. Caborn: Financial support for sport from public sources is primarily channelled through Sport England and UK Sport, the two DCMS sponsored bodies which award Lottery grants and dispense Exchequer funds for sport from DCMS.

Sport England

The table shows the Exchequer and Lottery funding which Sport England has awarded to Coventry between 1997 and 2005.

£

	Lottery[1] awards	Exchequer awards	Total for year
1997	1,781,993	—	1,781,993
1998	552,787	—	552,787
1999	181,954	—	181,954
2000	—	58,000	58,000
2001	741,908	40,000	781,908
2002	339,477	12,000	352,477
2003	1,120,355	—	1,120,355
2004	383,125	—	383,125
2005	2,732,678	—	2,732,678

[1] The figures provided include Lottery awards made through programmes such as: Community Capital, Community Investment Fund, Active Communities Development Fund, Active Sports, Active England, Community Athletics Refurbishment Programme, Sport Action Zones and Green Spaces. They also include mixed Lottery and Exchequer awards made through programmes such as: School Sports Partnerships and Space for Sport and Arts.

UK Sport

It is not possible for UK Sport to determine an amount of Lottery or Exchequer funding allocated to Coventry as its funding is not directed to specific regions.

Sports Infrastructure (Northamptonshire)

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions her officials have had with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister on the provision of appropriate sports infrastructure in Northamptonshire in connection with growth area housing expansion. [67308]

Mr. Caborn: My officials are in regular contact with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister about the development of all four housing growth areas including Milton Keynes South Midlands.

On the provision of appropriate sports provision for the area, Sport England, my Department's lead delivery agency, is working closely with regional and local government. In 2005 the Government launched "Living Spaces"; guidance for Local Delivery Vehicles on culture and sustainable communities in the MKSM Growth which was developed by a number of DCMS's NDPBs including Sport England.

A copy of the guide can be downloaded from the Culture South East website at:

http://www.culturesoutheast.org.uk/media/uploads/18/final%20april05living%20spaces.pdf

Telephone Advice Lines

Mr. Love: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many telephone advice lines her Department and its non-departmental public bodies support; how many telephone advisers each employs; and how much funding is provided to each by *(a)* her Department and its non-departmental public bodies, *(b)* other Government departments, *(c)* the private sector and *(d)* the voluntary sector. [66590]

Mr. Lammy: My Department does not hold the information requested. The question could be answered only at disproportionate cost.

Television Companies (Financial Returns)

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) whether Ofcom has received and reviewed financial returns from all relevant television companies over the last five years; [66971]

(2) if she will make a statement on the approach Ofcom takes where *(a)* a television company fails to provide required returns and *(b)* issues are found with the returns provided; [66972]

(3) if she will make a statement on Ofcom's system for receiving and reviewing financial returns from relevant television companies. [66973]

James Purnell: The matter raised is the responsibility of the Office of Communications (Ofcom), as independent regulator for the communications sector. Accordingly, I have asked the chief executive of Ofcom to reply directly to the hon. Member. Copies of the chief executive's letter will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Television Licences

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pursuant to her answer to the hon. Member for Maldon and East Chelmsford (Mr. Whittingdale) of 27 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 221W, on television licences, when her Department will publish the expert analysis it has commissioned from PKF; and if she will make a statement. [64598]

James Purnell: The independent report by PKF "Review of the BBC value for money and efficiency programmes" was published by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport on 26 April 2006.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the television licence fee crude evasion rates were for *(a)* England, Scotland and Wales and *(b)* Northern Ireland at the end of February (i) 2005 and (ii) 2006. [67543]

James Purnell: The Department for Culture, Media and Support does not collect so-called crude evasion estimates. I have therefore asked the BBC's head of revenue management to consider the questions raised by the hon. Member and to write to him direct. Copies of the reply will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Alternative Energy

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he is taking to promote the use of alternative, permanent sources of energy; and if he will make a statement. [65481]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government main mechanism to support renewable generation is the renewables obligation (RO). The RO is simply a way of making all electricity suppliers obtain an increasing amount of their electricity from renewable sources of electricity.

In addition to the RO, renewables are also supported by around £500 million of investment between 2002–08 to help develop renewables and other low carbon technologies. This will take the form of spending on RD&D and funding for capital grants and includes: grants of £117 million for offshore wind; over £60 million for energy crops and biomass; £31 million for solar PV and £12.5 million for community/domestic schemes; £50 million for the Marine Renewables Deployment Fund—£42 million of which has been earmarked to kick-start construction of large-scale demonstration farms that will for the first time see wave and tidal power feeding into the national grid.

British Airports Authority

James Duddridge: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made in relation to competition policy of the tax treatment of goodwill in Spain; what assessment he has made of the implications of the tax treatment for *(a)* British companies, *(b)* (i) EU and (ii) domestic policy on mergers and acquisitions and *(c)* the recent bid by Spanish consortium group Ferrarial for the British Airports Authority. [66360]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 27 April 2006]:* We have noted that the Commission found this scheme to be an illegal state aid. We naturally give very careful consideration to the state aid implications when formulating UK tax measures.

Mergers are a matter for the appropriate competition authority.

Cold Calling

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps his Department has taken to tackle cold-calling from countries outside the European Union in the past five years. [66120]

Alun Michael: The Department introduced the Telephone Preference Service (TPS) scheme in 1999, under the Telecommunications (Data Protection and Privacy) Regulations, which were updated by Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations in 2003. The TPS scheme provides protection to consumers from cold calling if they have previously notified the caller that they do not wish to receive such calls or have been registered with the TPS for at least 28 days. Those making cold calls from within the UK or on behalf of UK companies from outside the European Union are legally required not to call a number that has registered on the TPS list. However, cold calls from non-UK companies marketing a service or product are not covered by the TSP scheme, as the companies and products have no link with the UK. The Information Commissioner has responsibility for the enforcement of the TPS scheme and considers complaints about breaches.

Commission for Equality and Human Rights

Mr. Malik: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what *(a)* powers and *(b)* duties the Commission for Equality and Human Rights will have to deal with tackling (i) basic community relations, (ii) extremism, (iii) terrorism and (iv) race relations at a local level. [65979]

Meg Munn: The Government are committed to ensuring that the new commission is able to serve all the communities it will work with. A focus on basic community relations will be at the heart of the commissions work and a key priority for Government.

New powers will be introduced to allow the commission greater flexibility in the enforcement of public duties.

The Equality Act (S.10) confers a duty on the CEHR to encourage good practice and promote understanding of the importance of good relations between members of different groups and between members of groups and others. The CEHR will have a responsibility to work towards the elimination of prejudice against, hatred of and hostility towards members of groups, enabling all individuals to participate in society. While there are six 'equality strands': race, faith, sexual orientation, gender, disability and age, the Act allows for the number of 'groups' to be extended.

To carry this out the CEHR (S.19 of the Act) will have new powers to monitor, as well as to make, co-operate with or assist in any arrangements designed to reduce hate crimes. We would expect the Commission to undertake activities to involve members of community groups.

Extremism while not directly within the remit of the CEHR may be a by-product of poor relations between communities and associated with hate crime. Consequently work to strengthen the bonds between different groups will contribute to our efforts in combating it.

Terrorism is outside of the CEHR's scope.

The CEHR will have particular regard to the importance of its work with different groups. This reflects the historical origins of the "good relations" duty, which the Commission for Racial Equality is required to promote. The CEHR is uniquely placed to build bridges between different communities—this work will build on the CRE's local race equality work, undertaken through the network of race equality councils and others.

Company Registration

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many registered companies have issued stock. [66738]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 27 April 2006]:* Section 121*(c)* of the Companies Act 1985 permits a company to convert any or all of its paid up shares into stock, and reconvert that stock into paid-up shares of any denomination. There are no available figures on the number of existing registered companies that have used this procedure. However, the ability to convert shares into stock is believed to be obsolete.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what proportion of medium-sized companies registered in the UK are *(a)* public companies and *(b)* public listed companies. [66739]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 27 April 2006]:* The information requested is not available. The only authoritative source we would have for information of this sort is through the number of filings of accounts made by medium-sized companies with the Registrar of Companies. A medium-sized company is defined for the purposes of special accounting provisions of the Companies Act 1985 as a company that satisfies at least two of three requirements: turnover of not more than £22.8 million, balance sheet total of not more than £11.4 million, and number of employees totalling not more than 250. Such companies can take advantage of certain accounting and reporting exemptions in the accounts and reports they prepare for members and file with the Registrar of Companies. However, public (including public listed) companies are excluded from these special provisions, and, so, cannot qualify to file as medium-sized. Since no public companies can file medium-sized accounts with the Registrar, it is not possible to estimate the proportion of medium-sized companies that are public companies.

Departmental Websites

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list *(a)* the websites operated by his Department and *(b)* the reports placed on the internet in March 2006, indicating in each case whether paper copies were also made available. [65210]

Alan Johnson: We operate one core DTI website, www.dti.gov.uk, and within that there are links to a wider community of websites managed by partner agencies and other arms-length bodies. There are 42 DTI websites hosted by other domains and a list of these has been placed in the Libraries of the House.

There were 67 departmental publications notified to the Publications Team and placed on the DTI website in March 2006; of these 21 were made available as paper copies.

A list has been placed in the Libraries of the House.

EU Commissioner for External Trade

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he last met the EU Commissioner for External Trade; how many times in the last 12 months he has met him; when he next expects to meet him; and if he will make a statement. [64676]

Ian Pearson: My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State has met Peter Mandelson, the European Trade Commissioner, on several occasions over the last 12 months, to discuss current trade policy issues, including ways to secure an ambitious, pro-development outcome to the Doha Development Agenda.

EU Committees

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the UK members of the *(a)* EU anti-dumping and anti-subsidy committee, *(b)* Article 133 committee and *(c)* Customs Union committee. [66409]

Ian Pearson: The UK member of the EU anti-dumping and anti-subsidy committee is Eugene MacAleese, of the Europe and World Trade Directorate's Trade Defence Unit.

For information on UK membership of the Article 133 committee I refer the right hon. Member to my answer of 28 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 93W.

Attendance at the Customs Union committee is the responsibility of HM Revenue and Customs.

EU Directives/Regulations

Peter Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 27 March 2006 to the hon. Member for Salisbury (Mr. Key), *Official Report*, column 640W, on EU directives/regulations, if he will seek an exemption from the Restriction of Hazardous Substances directive for lead used in the pipes of pipe organs which rely on electricity to operate. [63828]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department of Trade and Industry has sought clarification from the European Commission as to whether pipe organs fall under the scope of the directive. If the Commission concludes that they do, the Department stands ready to work with the industry to build a suitable exemption request.

Peter Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made in the context of regulations under the EU Restrictions of Hazardous Substances Directive of the environmental effects of the use of lead in organ pipes; what estimate he has made of the proportion of such pipes which *(a)* are disposed of by landfill and *(b)* are recycled by organ builders; and what estimate he has made of the value to the economy of the pipe organ industry. [63829]

Malcolm Wicks: No estimates have been undertaken in relation to the pipe organ industry.

Mr. Andrew Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what response he has received from the pipe organ industry following his Department's offer of assistance with a formal application under article 5.1b for the exemption of new pipe organs from the Restriction of Hazardous Substances Directive. [64861]

Malcolm Wicks: The UK pipe organ industry has yet to submit a formal exemption application. We stand ready to help them if they choose to do so.

Robert Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) if he will establish a review of the EU waste electrical and electronic equipment directive in respect of

the use of lead in *(a)* the maintenance, restoration and upgrading of existing pipe organs and *(b)* the construction and building of new pipe organs; [65164]

(2) whether the EU waste electrical and electronic equipment directive will be reviewed in 2008 in respect of its application to traditional pipe organs. [65165]

Malcolm Wicks: The waste electrical and electronic equipment directive is due to be reviewed by the European Commission in 2008. The Restriction of Hazardous Substances directive draws its scope from the WEEE directive.

The Department of Trade and Industry has sought clarification from the European Commission as to whether pipe organs fall under the scope of the directives. If the Commission concludes that they do, the Department stands ready to work with the industry to build a suitable exemption request.

Robert Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) how many *(a)* public officials and *(b)* contractors will be employed on the enforcement of the EU waste electrical and electronic equipment directive in respect of (i) existing and (ii) new-build traditional pipe organs from 1 July 2006; [65166]

(2) what enforcement machinery is *(a)* in place and *(b)* in preparation in respect of the EU waste electrical and electronic equipment directive as it applies to (i) existing and (ii) new build traditional pipe organs from 1 July 2006 [65167]

Malcolm Wicks: The UK has not yet transposed the WEEE directive into national law, whilst the UK Restriction of Hazardous Substances Regulations come into force on 1 July 2006 and will be enforced by the National Weights & Measures Laboratory.

Existing pipe organs are not covered by the Restriction of Hazardous Substances directive and the Department of Trade and Industry has sought clarification from the European Commission as to whether new pipe organs fall under the scope of the directives. If the Commission concludes that they do, the Department stands ready to work with the industry to build a suitable exemption request.

Robert Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what research his Department and its agencies are funding into alternative materials to lead in the construction and maintenance of traditional pipe organs; [65168]

(2) if he will commission research into the use of alternative materials to lead in the construction and maintenance of traditional pipe organs and the building of new pipe organs. [65169]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department has no plans to commission research into alternative materials to lead in the construction and maintenance of traditional pipe organs.

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 30 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1139W, to the hon. Member for Stroud (Mr. Drew) on lead organ pipes, what progress has been made in assisting the organ building and repair industry to apply to the European Commission for a total exemption for the manufacture of new pipe organs from the provisions of the restriction of hazardous substances directive. [65397]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department of Trade and Industry has sought clarification from the European Commission as to whether pipe organs fall under the scope of the directive. If the Commission concludes that they do, the Department stands ready to work with the industry to build a suitable exemption request.

Export Credits Guarantee Department

Helen Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the *(a)* banks and *(b)* companies which have been involved in Export Credits Guarantee Department supported projects since 2000, stating in each case the project concerned. [64054]

Ian Pearson: This information could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. Since 2000, ECGD's Annual Review and Resource Accounts have listed guarantees issued in each financial year.

Financial Advice Initiatives

Mr. Love: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what initiatives his Department and its non-departmental bodies support to promote *(a)* financial education, *(b)* financial advice, *(c)* financial inclusion and *(d)* financial capability; which organisations are involved in delivering each initiative; and how much funding is provided to each by (i) his Department and its non-departmental public bodies, (ii) other Government departments, (iii) the private sector and (iv) the voluntary sector. [66577]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Department recognises the importance of tackling financial exclusion in the areas mentioned and provides support to the following:

National Debtline

The DTI provides £1m p.a. to this free telephone advice line. This is alongside £500,000 in 2005–06 increasing to £800,000 in 2006–07 from the DCA, and £100,000 per annum from the Scottish Executive. The private sector has pledged £1.7 million p.a. to fund National Debtline.

Business Debtline

The Small Business Service contributes £100,000 per annum to Business Debtline with the private sector contributing £180,000 per annum. Business Debtline is now under the same roof as National Debtline and is benefiting from shared infrastructure and economies of scale. Both services are run by the Money Advice Trust.

Face-to-Face Debt Advice Project

The DTI is running this project, to increase substantially debt advice, with £45 million from the Treasury's Financial Inclusion Fund over the two Financial Years 2006–08. There are 14 projects being delivered by a mixture of Citizens Advice Bureaux (CABx) and other independent advice agencies.

National Consumer Council

Last year the DTI provided approximately £3.9 million funding for the NCC, including the Scottish and Welsh Consumer Councils. The NCC has a particular remit to represent disadvantaged consumers which runs through

all their work. In addition, one of their corporate objectives is to make markets work for vulnerable and disadvantaged consumers. Within the current work stream the NCC has three projects relating specifically to financial inclusion—improvements to basic bank accounts; increasing choice and appropriateness in payment methods for essential services; and extending access to affordable credit. The NCC also keeps a watching brief on issues such as financial capability, financial education and financial advice.

Citizens Advice/Citizens Advice Scotland

Last year the DTI provided approximately £26 million but funding this year is still to be settled. This grant in aid is provided by DTI on behalf of the whole of Government (around 15 Departments). These are both independent charities providing HQ support services for the network of locally funded CABx.

Hearing Loss Compensation

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the number of cases where payments by his Department to representatives of successful claimants for noise-induced hearing loss compensation have not been *(a)* notified and *(b)* paid to the claimant. [65159]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department, as defendant in hearing loss cases, has no information on dealings between claimants and their representatives.

Home Information Packs

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what research the Office of Fair Trading has *(a)* undertaken and *(b)* plans to undertake into (i) home information packs and (ii) the electronic provision of property information. [66252]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I have asked the Chief Executive of the Office of Fair Trading, John Fingleton, to reply to the hon. Member.

Late Accounts

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the proposed timetable is for the Department to consult on the civil penalties for companies which file accounts and reports late. [66737]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 27 April 2006]:* Clause 431 of the Company Law Reform Bill (which is currently being considered in another place) provides for the Secretary of State to make regulations determining

(a) the amount of civil penalties for late filing of accounts and reports with the Registrar of Companies, and

(b) the periods by reference to which those penalties are to be determined.

The Department intends to consult on draft regulations under the clause as soon as possible after the Bill receives Royal Assent.

Martin Centre for Architectural and Urban Studies

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what funding the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council has provided to the Cambridge University Martin Centre for Architectural and Urban Studies on research into suburban development issues; and what research has been published. [66661]

Barry Gardiner: The Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) has provided £1.91 million to the Cambridge Martin Centre for Architectural and Urban Studies (the "Martin Centre") for research broadly in support of 'suburban development'. This comprises a travel grant for £5,000 in 2002 and a scoping study for £154,000 in 2003, which led to a major programme grant for £1.75 million awarded in 2004. This grant, funded as part of EPSRC's "Towards a Sustainable Urban Environment" programme, will support research by a large consortium, led by the Martin Centre, which aims to investigate Sustainability Of Land Use and Transport In Outer Neighbourhoods—SOLUTIONS, by considering how far, and by what means, towns and cities can be planned so that they are socially inclusive, economically efficient and environmentally sustainable.

It is the responsibility of academic researchers to publicise the outcomes of their research through appropriate channels. EPSRC has not yet been provided with publications information on this current project.

Migrant Workers

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will establish a migrant workers helpline for the reporting of *(a)* poor working conditions and *(b)* worker intimidation in west Lancashire. [66835]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Legal migrant workers are entitled to the same employment rights as other UK workers. The ACAS Helpline (08457 47 47 47) can provide free, impartial, practical advice to any worker who has concerns about their treatment in the workplace. We have also sought to work with new European member states to provide their workers with bi-lingual leaflets giving guidance aimed at helping workers before they leave home and information on sources of assistance should they have difficulties once in the UK. To date we have prepared leaflets in partnership with Poland and Lithuania.

The Department is currently reviewing the total current provision of Government-funded helplines for workers and employees. We are looking at how well this provision meets customer needs, especially the needs of the most vulnerable, and we will consider options for improvement. The first phase of this review will be completed this summer.

We have also recently launched new web pages at www.direct.gov.uk/employees to provide a central, easy to understand resource for individuals seeking information about their employment rights.

Within the north west, the Transport and General Workers' Union has led the creation of the North West Migrant Workers' Institute that brings together employers, public agencies, voluntary organisations and unions in the north west. The Institute's aims include collating and promoting best practice in the employment of migrant workers, providing a region-wide reference point for support and services for

migrant workers and their communities, and identifying specific training needs among migrant workers and upskilling opportunities.

Miners' Compensation

Joan Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry for what reasons there is a six month wait for home medical visits by Atos Origin for miners claiming compensation. [65298]

Malcolm Wicks: Generally, around 90 per cent. of home visits are arranged within six months.

Before a home visit is arranged, the Medical, British Coal and Department of Work and Pensions records are obtained. This is generally completed within three months. However delays may occur where record holders do not respond quickly or where records cannot be traced or obtained. Once the records are obtained or there is evidence that they are no longer in existence, contact is made with the claimant to book a visit. In cases where there are no problems obtaining the records or obtaining a GP certificate it would be expected that an appointment would normally be completed within six months of being requested.

Procedures are in place to monitor performance and to ensure requests progress through the record collection and booking process. Claimants with short life expectancy (less than two years) are given priority and this process is monitored for compliance.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many claims for noise induced hearing loss have been submitted to his Department; how many have been paid out; and in how many costs are in dispute. [66746]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 27 April 2006]:* 38,788 hearing loss claims have been registered of which 29,959 have been settled by payment. It is not possible to state precisely in how many claims costs are disputed though it is in the region of 500.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the 50 firms of solicitors which have received the most in fees for cases of claims for *(a)* chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, *(b)* vibration white finger and *(c)* noise induced hearing loss. [66747]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 27 April 2006]:* The 50 solicitors who have received the most in costs for each of the listed claim types are set out in the following tables:

Solicitor	*Total solicitors costs paid (£)*
COPD	
Thompsons	85,830,628
Beresfords Solicitors	70,751,898
Hugh James Ford Simey	65,255,244
Raleys Solicitors	50,752,140
Mark Gilbert Morse	42,735,727
Browell Smith and Co.	36,363,343
Watson Burton	22,724,256
Union of Democratic Mineworkers / Vendside	21,810,230
Graysons	20,830,700
Avalon	17,204,860
Randell Lloyd Jenkins and Martin	13,804,372
The Legal Warehouse	12,385,897
Barber and Co.	12,200,678
Corries	11,632,263
Ingrams Solicitors	11,474,807
Towells Solicitors	11,155,952
Irwin Mitchell	10,443,086
Moss Solicitors	9,737,567
AMS Law	9,682,353
German Hamilton Solicitors	7,481,733
Kidd and Spoor Harper Solicitors	7,456,424
Wake Smith	7,250,689
Birchall Blackburn	6,498,933
O. H. Parsons	5,987,502
BRM Solicitors	5,699,904
Atteys	5,682,298
Delta Legal	5,077,799
Shaw and Co. Solicitors	3,852,586
Simpson Millar Solicitors	3,394,614
Furley Page	3,391,111
Hilary Meredith Solicitors	3,387,546
Thompson and Co. Solicitors	2,933,588
T. S. Edwards and Son Solicitors	2,860,145
Mortons Solicitors	2,806,607
Morisons Solicitors	2,642,435
Proddow and Mackay Solicitors	2,635,724
Latham and Co. Solicitors	2,617,402
Marrons Solicitors	2,558,428
Capital Law	2,515,352
Hopkins	2,480,882
Meloy Whittle Robinson	2,477,294
Onyems and Partners	2,381,516
Hickmotts Solicitors	2,147,313
Keeble Hawson Moorhouse	2,054,150
Oxley and Coward Solicitors	1,948,969
Saffmans Solicitors	1,942,545
Blackett Hart and Pratt Solicitors	1,839,602
Morgan Cole	1,801,550
Hindle Campbell Solicitors	1,574,656
Gorvin Smith Fort	1,537,690
VWF	
Thompsons	11,479,303
Browell Smith and Co.	9,589,891
Raleys Solicitors	7,622,747
Hugh James Ford Simey	6,546,774
Union of Democratic Mineworkers / Vendside	6,021,390
Graysons	4,588,150
Beresfords Solicitors	3,983,583
Watson Burton	3,506,950
Moss Solicitors	3,272,467
Towells Solicitors	3,046,481
Kidd and Spoor Harper Solicitors	2,158,859
Atteys	2,155,684
AMS Law	2,096,526
O. H. Parsons	1,657,193
Irwin Mitchell	1,573,908
Saffmans Solicitors	1,545,589
Shaw and Co. Solicitors	1,441,903
Capital Law	1,319,902
Corries	1,170,324
McLeish Carswell	1,159,343
Oxley and Coward Solicitors	1,133,135
Latham and Co. Solicitors	1,066,796
T. S. Edwards and Son Solicitors	926,709
Hickmotts Solicitors	842,604
Motions Solicitors	810,048
Thompson and Co. Solicitors	760,212
Hopkins	756,779
Marrons Solicitors	651,615
Keeble Hawson Moorhouse	597,126
German Hamilton Solicitors	596,224
Morisons Solicitors	528,024
Randell Lloyd Jenkins and Martin	519,560
Furley Page	470,575
Meloy Whittle Robinson	429,408
The Legal Warehouse	370,818
Gabb and Co.	368,711
Endlars Solicitors	342,618
Frank Allen Pennington Solicitors	324,931
Treanors Solicitors	282,868
Mincoffs	274,819
Gorvin Smith Fort	258,837
Branton Bridge	254,849
Russell Young Solicitors	216,822
Robinson King Solicitors	213,944

Solicitor	Total solicitors costs paid (£)
Blackett Hart and Pratt Solicitors	206,401
Wake Smith	199,842
Richmonds Solicitors	165,810
J. Keith Park and Co. Solicitors	164,937
Ross Harper Solicitors	151,248
Canter Levin and Berg Solicitors	148,347
NIHL	
Union of Democratic Mineworkers / Vendside	6,301,334
Beresfords Solicitors	2,859,764
Graysons	2,610,748
Moss Solicitors	1,336,475
Browell Smith and Co.	938,526
Thompsons	876,167
Heptonstalls Solicitors LLP	671,024
Browns	596,733
Hugh James Ford Simey	594,424
Towells Solicitors	534,704
Kidd and Spoor Harper Solicitors	514,859
O. H. Parsons	492,106
Avalon	392,846
Irwin Mitchell	387,490
Corries	367,697
AMS Law	367,219
Latham and Co. Solicitors	327,583
DMH Stallard	294,972
Watson Burton	278,345
BRM Solicitors	270,928
Morisons Solicitors	263,592
Hickmotts Solicitors	262,535
Mortons Solicitors	231,800
Pinto Potts Solicitors	218,833
Raleys Solicitors	206,864
Meloy Whittle Robinson	156,007
Barber Cartain Solicitors	155,077
Holmes and Hills Solicitors	150,629
Endlars Solicitors	146,135
Wake Smith	129,825
Saffmans Solicitors	122,522
Gorvin Smith Fort	122,178
Oxley and Coward Solicitors	121,434
The Legal Warehouse	116,088
Harrowell Shaftoe	112,697
Morrish and Co. Solicitors	96,942
Colemans Solicitors	81,496
Gorman Hamilton Solicitors	81,419
Capital Law	80,638
Marrons Solicitors	80,257
Gabb and Co.	64,042
Simpson Millar Solicitors	63,614
Shaw and Co. Solicitors	62,981
Branton Bridge	60,834
Ollerenshaw Solicitors	58,944
Hopkins	58,728
Maidments Solicitors	58,481
McConville O'Neill	57,979
Ingrams Solicitors	54,570
Thompson and Co. Solicitors	54,218

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on what date his Department was first made aware of the contents of the agreement of 10 January 2002 between the Union of Democratic Mineworkers, Clare Walker and Beresfords. [66748]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 27 April 2006]:* The Department was first made aware of the contents of the agreement referred to above in April 2005.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on what date the first noise induced hearing loss claim from *(a)* the Union of Democratic Mineworkers and *(b)* Vendside was (i) registered with his Department and (ii) paid out. [66749]

Malcolm Wicks: *[holding answer 27 April 2006]:* The first hearing loss claim from the Union of Democratic Mineworkers was registered on 29 April 1997 and from Vendside on 4 March 2004. The first compensation paid was on 29 July 1999 and 1 November 2005 respectively.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which solicitors have pursued common law claims for *(a)* vibration white finger and *(b)* chronic obstructive pulmonary disease in each year since 1999; and how many such claims each pursued in each year. [66750]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 27 April 2006]:* The solicitors that have pursued common law claim for the above conditions since 1999 are set out in the following tables:

COPD

Solicitor	Total
1999	
Atteys	1
Browell Smith & Co	1
Hugh James	10
Moss Solicitors	1
Raleys Solicitors	3
Thompsons Solicitors	1
Total	17
2000	
Beresfords Solicitors	1
Hugh James	3
Thompsons Solicitors	2
Total	6
2001	
Raleys Solicitors	1
Total	1
2002–3	
No common law claims	
2004	
Raleys Solicitors	1
Total	1
2005	
No common law claims	

VWF

Solicitor	Total
1999	
Atteys	4
Browell Smith & Co	26
Digby Brown Solicitors	1
Endlars Solicitors	1
Flint Bishop & Barnett Solicitors	1
Graysons Solicitors	4
Hickmotts Solicitors	3
Leo Abse & Cohen	4
Macquillan & Co	1
Oxley & Coward Solicitors	2
Raleys Solicitors	1
Robson McLean Solicitors	1
Sentley Wilson Bowen Solicitors	2
Thompsons Solicitors	4
Towells Solicitors	1
Watson Burton LLP	5
Total	61

VWF

Solicitor	*Total*
2000	
Allan McDougall & Co Solicitors	1
Askews	1
Beresfords Solicitors	2
Browell Smith & Co	22
Burroughs Day Solicitors	1
Edwards Abrams Doherty	1
Flint Bishop & Barnett Solicitors	1
Freeman Johnson Solicitors	1
Gorman Hamilton Solicitors	1
Graysons Solicitors	1
Hickmotts Solicitors	1
Irwin Mitchell Solicitors	5
John Pickering & Partners Solicitors	1
Lawfords & Co	1
Lester Morrill Solicitors	1
Meloy Whittle Robinson	1
Mortons Solicitors	6
Raleys Solicitors	1
Ross Harper Solicitors	1
Shaw & Co Solicitors	1
Thompson & Co Solicitors	1
Thompsons Solicitors	5
Thornleys	1
Towells Solicitors	21
Total	79
2001	
Atteys	1
Avalon Solicitors	1
Browell Smith & Co	7
Cleaver Thompson	1
Ord & Co Solicitors	1
Flint Bishop & Barnett Solicitors	1
Irwin Mitchell Solicitors	4
Leo Abse & Cohen	1
Mace & Jones	1
Pollard Bower Solicitors	1
Thompsons Solicitors	2
Towells Solicitors	1
Watson Burton LLP	1
Total	23
2002	
Barrie Y Jones & Co Solicitors	1
Browell Smith & Co	3
Ellis Fermor & Negus	1
Graysons Solicitors	1
Raleys Solicitors	1
Thompsons Solicitors	5
Towells Solicitors	2
Whittles Solicitors	1
Total	15

Note:
No VWF common law claims since 2002.

National Institute for Medical Research

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 8 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1513W to the hon. Member for Hertsmere (Mr. Clappison) on the National Institute for Medical Research (NIMR), if he will place a copy of Professor Blakemore's letter on moving the NIMR from Mill Hill to Euston in the Library. [65100]

Barry Gardiner: A copy of Professor's Blakemore's reply to the hon. Member for Hertsmere will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Nuclear Decommissioning

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what his Department's estimate is of the cost of cleaning up the UK's nuclear power plants after decommissioning. [66144]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 27 April 2006]:* The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) assumed responsibility for the decommissioning and clean up of the UK's civil nuclear legacy on 1 April 2005. The cost of the decommissioning and clean up of the NDA's sites is calculated by means of Life Cycle Baselines—which are long-term plans providing a detailed assessment of the scope, methodology, and time scale of proposed site activities, including the cost of its commercial operations. Based on the 2005–06 Life Cycle Baselines the NDA has estimated the undiscounted cost of delivering its mission at £62.7 billion at current prices. This is the figure given in its strategy. But the NDA has also identified a potential further £7.5 billion of costs that will need to be included in future Life Cycle Baselines. Information on Life Cycle Baselines and the long-term funding of the NDA's mission is available on its website www.nda.gov.uk

Nuclear Energy

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the merits of using pebble bed modular nuclear reactors to generate electricity. [65532]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government have carried out no technical assessment of Pebble Bed Modular Reactor systems. We are aware of the research and development work being carried out in China and South Africa on this technology, and the potential that this technology may be more proliferation resistant, economic and safer than some other types of nuclear reactor.

Nuclear Fuel (Transportation)

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if the Government will undertake a review of the practice of transporting spent nuclear fuel by rail to take account of the increased terrorist threat. [65411]

Malcolm Wicks: The transportation of spent nuclear fuel by rail is carried out in a secure manner and in accordance with stringent security regulations—the Nuclear Industries Security Regulations 2003. These regulations are administered and enforced by the Office for Civil Nuclear Security, who regulate the security of such movements of spent nuclear fuel.

The security of the transportation of nuclear material was thoroughly reviewed following the events of 11 September 2001, and is regularly reviewed in light of the prevailing threat.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the security implications of the rail transportation of nuclear waste through *(a)* tunnels and *(b)* inner city areas. [65520]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 26 April 2006]:* The transportation of spent nuclear fuel by rail is carried out in a secure manner and in accordance with stringent

security regulations—the Nuclear Industries Security Regulations 2003. These regulations are administered and enforced by the Office for Civil Nuclear Security, who regulate the security of such movements of spent nuclear fuel.

The security of the transportation of nuclear material was thoroughly reviewed following the events of September 11 2001, and is regularly reviewed in light of the prevailing threat.

Nuclear Incidents

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the incidents at nuclear licensed installations that met the reporting criteria for each quarter from January 1990 to date; and what the *(a)* location and *(b)* nature of each incident was. [65098]

Malcolm Wicks: The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) publishes quarterly statements for incidences at nuclear installations, which meet the ministerial reporting criteria.

Quarterly statements of nuclear incidents at nuclear installations from 1 October 2000 are available on the HSE website at: http://www.hse.gov.uk/nuclear/quarterly-stat/index.htm

37 hard copies of quarterly statements between January 1990 and September 2000 have been placed in the Libraries of the House.

Post Office

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many sub-post offices have closed in East Yorkshire since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [66533]

Barry Gardiner: This is an operational matter for Post Office Ltd. Alan Cook, the managing director has been asked to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Nuclear Research

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much has been committed by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council to research into nuclear energy in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [66733]

Barry Gardiner *[holding answer 27 April 2006]:* Expenditure by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council on research and related training into nuclear energy, including both fusion and nuclear fission, was as follows:

Expenditure per annum (£000)

	Nuclear fission	*Fusion*[1]
1997–98	42	—
1998–99	81	—
1999–2000	62	—
2000–01	128	—
2001–02	325	—
2002–03	307	—
2003–04	212	15,630
2004–05	112	19,530
2005–06[2]	952	16,990

[1] Responsibility for funding of Fusion research transferred from DTI to EPSRC in April 2003
[2] Estimated expenditure

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the total amount spent by BNFL in supporting UK involvement in international research into nuclear power is; and if he will make a statement. [66734]

Barry Gardiner *[holding answer 27 April 2006]:* In financial year 2005–06 BNFL spent £4.3 million on international research on advanced nuclear systems. This included research associated with the Generation IV programme as well as joint activities involving EU partners, IAEA and OECD. This programme of work was aimed at supporting the critical skills and capabilities required to keep the nuclear option open in the UK as aligned with UK energy policy.

Postal Charges

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the price of a *(a)* first class and *(b)* second class stamp has been in each year since 1976. [65017]

Barry Gardiner: I understand from Royal Mail that the price of a *(a)* first class and *(b)* second class stamp in each year since 1976 was:

Date	*Weight not exceeding lb oz*	*First class*	*Second class*
7 June 1976	60g	8½p	6½p
13 June 1977	60g	9p	7p
20 August1979	60g	10p	8p
4 February 1980	60g	12p	10p
26 January 1981	60g	14p	11½p
1 February 1982	60g	15½p	12½p
5 April 1983	60g	16p	12½p
3 September 1984	60g	17p	13p
4 November 1985	60g	17p	12p
20 October 1986	60g	18p	13p
5 September 1988	60g	19p	14p
2 October 1989	60g	20p	15p
17 September 1990	60g	22p	17p
16 September 1991	60g	24p	18p
1 November 1993	60g	25p	19p
8 July 1996	60g	26p	20p
April 1999	60g	26p	19p
27 April 2000	60g	27p	19p
8 May 2003	60g	28p	20p

Date	Weight not exceeding lb oz	First class	Second class
1 April 2004	60g	28p	21p
7 April 2005	60g	30p	21p
3 April 2006	60g	32p	23p

Renewable Energy

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what percentage of renewable energy generated in the UK in the last period for which figures are available came from landfill gas; and how many landfill gas sites there are. [67139]

Malcolm Wicks: In 2004, 28 per cent. of the electricity generated in the UK from renewable sources came from 327 landfill gas sites.

Road Fuel Prices

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will set up an inquiry into *(a)* possible price gouging by oil companies and *(b)* the reasons for recent price increases of petrol and diesel; and if he will make a statement. [65476]

Malcolm Wicks: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry will not be setting up inquiries into either issue. Pricing issues may be investigated by the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) if they are the result of anti-competitive agreements or behaviour.

The recent increase in the price of petrol and diesel reflects the increased cost of crude oil, caused partly by recent developments in oil producing countries such as Nigeria, Iraq and Iran.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions he has had during each week of 2006 with oil companies about the price of petrol and diesel; and if he will make a statement. [65477]

Malcolm Wicks: The data is not available in the format as requested. It is the Government's policy not to intervene in commercial price setting, as it believes the consumer is best served by the operation of open competition between companies.

The Government do, however, recognise the concerns about the current high price of oil products such as petrol and diesel. This was an issue, which I discussed at length with my ministerial colleagues from OPEC, among others, at the International Energy Forum in Doha last weekend.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will introduce legislation to penalise oil companies who are found to be price gouging of *(a)* petrol and *(b)* diesel; and if he will make a statement. [65480]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government do not intend to introduce new legislation.

The Competition Act 1998 prohibits anti-competitive agreements and conduct which amounts to an abuse of a dominant position under chapters I and II respectively. In general, the price a retailer sets for a product or service is a matter for its own commercial judgment. The OFT has an enforcement role under the Competition Act 1998, if it has reasonable grounds to suspect that prices are arrived at by an arrangement contrary to chapter I, or reflect an abuse of a dominant position within a market contrary to chapter II.

Shareholders' Voting Rights

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what measures have been taken by his Department to increase the effectiveness of shareholders' voting rights. [67588]

Alun Michael: The Government are committed to encouraging the exercise of share ownership rights. That is why we have already required all quoted companies to seek shareholder approval for the directors' remuneration report, and continue to support the work of the Shareholder Voting Working Group.

The Company Law Reform Bill builds on this by including provisions to ensure that voting processes are more transparent and that companies can enable indirect investors to enjoy or exercise various governance rights. In addition, the registered shareholder will have the right to appoint more than one proxy, thus enabling indirect investors acting as proxies to exercise all the meeting participation rights of the registered shareholder.

Sunday Trading Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on the operation of Schedule 1, paragraph 2(4) of the Sunday Trading Act 1994. [66867]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Under the Sunday Trading Act 1994 large shops (over 280 sq m/3,000 sq ft) are required to remain closed on Easter Sunday. We are reviewing this as part of the current review of Sunday shopping.

Technology and Engineering Education

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the terms of reference are of *(a)* Technology and Engineering in Schools Strategy and *(b)* Engineering Education Alliance; who the members are; and what assessment he has made of its effectiveness to date. [64716]

Barry Gardiner: The Technology and Engineering in Schools Strategy (TESS) was initiated by Lord Sainsbury in 2005 and is a programme through which the engineering community has agreed to work together to provide better coordinated support for the promotion of engineering and technology in schools.

It is led by the Royal Academy of Engineering and involves the engineering institutions and other bodies active in promoting engineering and technology to schools at a national level. Membership currently comprises: The Royal Academy of Engineering, the Office of Science and Innovation, the G15 of Engineering Institutions, the ETB (and, through ETB,

its Business and Industry Panel), SETNET, the BA, The Institute of Physics, The Association of Science Educators, The Learning Grid.

The TESS mission is to give every primary and secondary school in the UK, regardless of geography or local circumstances, equal access to a good number of quality-approved, high impact, coordinated schemes in engineering and technology related education. This will be achieved by the coordination of existing national-scale engineering and technology education schemes that deliver curriculum enrichment and/or teacher CPD. It will cover the promotion of engineering, the provision of information and the delivery of educational enrichment activities in engineering and technology to young people.

The TESS strategy was agreed in late November 2005 and the TESS project was initiated early in 2006. There has been no formal assessment of its achievements to date. The project has included wide consultation with the engineering community and with the science institutions has been followed by the development of an implementation plan to deliver the first phase of TESS by September 2006. This will be a directory of approved schemes in engineering and technology and a methodology for colleagues in science to customise and build upon. The approval process for schemes will be transparent, draw on existing best practice, be based on a set of criteria agreed by the TESS Steering Group, and any national engineering and technology scheme will be free to apply.

The Engineering Education Alliance (EEA) was formed in March 2002 following consultation with the engineering institutions and related organisations to provide a forum for coordinating information on education and skills initiatives related to engineering and technology. As of February 2006 membership of the EEA consisted of the following organisations:

Association of Cost Engineers, British Computer Society, The British Institute of Non-Destructive Testing, Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers, The Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management, Engineering Council (UK), Energy Institute, Engineering Professors' Council, Engineering and Technology Board, Institution of Agricultural Engineers, Institution of Civil Engineers, Institution of Chemical Engineers, The Institute of Cast Metals Engineers, Institution of Engineering Designers, Institution of Engineering and Technology, Institution of Fire Engineers, Institution of Gas Engineers and Managers, The Institute of Healthcare Engineering and Estate Management, Institute of Highway Incorporated Engineers, Institution of Lighting Engineers, Institute of Mathematics and Its Applications, Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology, Institution of Mechanical Engineers, Institute of Measurement and Control, The Institution of Nuclear Engineers, Institute of Acoustics, The Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining, Institute of Physics, Institute of Physics and Engineering in Medicine, The Institute of Plumbing and Heating Engineering, Institution of Structural Engineers, Institution of Water Officers, Royal Academy of Engineering, Royal Aeronautical Society, The Royal Institution of Naval Architects, Science Engineering Technology Mathematics Network, Specialist Schools and Academies Trust, The Welding Institute.

The aims of the EEA are to:

Provide a regular forum where the engineering institutions and professional affiliates can meet to exchange views and knowledge with the aim of developing common cause in promoting engineering and technology in schools, colleges and universities.

Seek to influence the simplification of the engineering 'message' such that it becomes more effective in schools, FE and HE.

Support and endorse effective activities that communicate a consistent and clear message to young people about engineering.

Help to make engineering and technology initiatives in schools, colleges and universities fit for purpose.

Support and endorse key activities that enhance the perception of engineering and technology among parents, teachers and careers advisors.

Work closely with other bodies that already play a directional, influential and valuable role in the education sector (e.g. DfES and QCA).

Liaise, advise and provide effective support for teachers thus enabling them to improve the engineering, scientific, mathematical, design and technology skills of young people.

Provide opportunities for ad-hoc groups to be established as part of the Alliance, which might focus on specific activities.

Seek to influence and support existing bodies and networks rather than create a 'rival' body.

Provide and develop an EEA publicly accessible website that enables the engineering and technology and education communities to communicate with each other and promulgate their collective activities.

There has been no formal assessment of the EEA's achievements to date. It has completed two projects. The first (March to October 2003) was to research and publish a set of criteria to be used in assessing the many initiatives and externally initiated projects involving the promotion of 'engineering' in schools. These published guidelines were particularly aimed at those within the Science, Design and Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) community who are considering developing, or assessing for continuation, any STEM activity which seeks to involve schools, teachers or pupils.

The second EEA project completed its first phase in late 2005 and is about simplifying the engineering message and making entry into the profession more user-friendly. EEA members produced recommendations on how to increase the number of well-qualified and motivated entrants to engineering and identified key barriers to entry and how these should be tackled. This was published the EEA report "Entry to the world of engineering".

Thorp Nuclear Reprocessing Plant

Colin Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether he expects the full net costs of the closure of the Thorp nuclear reprocessing plant to be recovered through insurance. [65890]

Malcolm Wicks: This is a matter for the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) who became the owners of the plant and facilities of BNFL (including Thorp) when it was set up on 1 April 2005.I understand from the NDA that it intends to make an insurance claim to cover the costs of the temporary closure of Thorp due to the incident including repairs, and any income losses resulting from the closure will be the

subject of an insurance claim by the NDA. The extent of the claim will be dependant both on regulatory approval for the re-start of the facility and on the subsequent restart date. The claim is currently being compiled and validated by the NDA. This is expected to be completed by the summer in light of which discussions with loss adjusters will then begin.

Departmental Policies

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will set out with statistical evidence relating as closely as possible to West Lancashire constituency the effects in West Lancashire of changes to his Department's policies since 1997. [64238]

Alun Michael: The Department for Trade and Industry has responsibility for driving our ambition of 'prosperity for all' by working to create the best environment for business success in the UK, helping to increase productivity through the promotion of enterprise, innovation and creativity and investing in world-class science and technology. It ensures that a successful economy is underpinned by secure, sustainable and affordable energy and champions British interests globally while promoting economic reform in Europe and free and fair world trade.

In 2002 we launched the Manufacturing Strategy and Advisory Service which has helped over 1,000 companies nationally increase their value added by an average of £105,000. We invest approximately £500 million per year via the Small Business Service and Business Link to assist the start up and development of SMEs. In 2003–04 through the Office of Science and Technology we invested £2.4 billion in UK research and we are investing £187 million (2004 to 2006) through the Higher Education and Innovation Fund to support knowledge transfer. A summary of our achievements can be found at www.dti.gov.uk.

The Government-funded regional development agencies are the key vehicle for driving forward regional economic development. Businesses across the north west have benefited from a range of initiatives in the Regional Economic Strategy, developed by the Northwest Development Agency (NWDA) and regional partners, which aim to develop business cluster and key sector growth potential, assist access to finance, develop business incubators, promote innovation, drive up skills and support regeneration.

115 projects in West Lancashire are benefiting from NWDA funding. In addition, extensive business counselling and advice has been provided to businesses and potential start-ups through the Business Links, the Research and Development grant and the Manufacturing Advisory Service.

DTI provides comprehensive statistical information. The following web address will take you directly to the service: www.dti.gov.uk/statistics.

Westfield Development Centre

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether the Minister for Energy *(a)* has visited and *(b)* intends to visit the Westfield Development Centre in Fife. [63279]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 18 April 2006]:* I have not visited the Westfield Development Centre.

I was grateful, however, for the Scottish Affairs Committee recommendations on 'Meeting Scotland's Future Energy Needs' published on 29 March and my office will be contacting Westfield Development Centre with a view to organising a meeting with their representatives.

World Trade

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations he has made to the EU Commissioner for External Trade on *(a)* his decision to impose duties on imports of shoes from China and Vietnam, *(b)* the current discussions on imports of furniture from Asia and *(c)* the current talks in the Doha trade round; and if he will make a statement. [64673]

Ian Pearson: The Department of Trade and Industry was actively involved in the European Commission's consideration of provisional anti-dumping measures on footwear with leather uppers from China and Vietnam. Given the likelihood that measures would be implemented, Ministers and officials sought to ensure that the Commission took account of the concerns of the full range of stakeholders, not just those EU producers who had filed the initial complaint. In so doing, the UK successfully agreed for the exclusion of children's footwear and special technology athletic footwear from the measures.

The Government have made no representations on imports of furniture from Asia, nor is it aware of any discussions between the Commission and member states on this issue.

My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State has met Peter Mandelson, the European Trade Commissioner, on several occasions over the last 12 months, to discuss the current Doha Development Agenda, including ways to secure an ambitious pro-development outcome to which the UK is fully committed.

Wylfa Power Station

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate has been made of the *(a)* cost of and *(b)* time required to carry out the necessary safety and environmental impact assessments into a possible extension of the life of Wylfa nuclear power station beyond 2010; and if he will make a statement. [64126]

Malcolm Wicks: This is a matter for the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) who (when it was set up on 1 April 2005) became the owner of the plant and facilities of BNFL (including the fleet of Magnox nuclear power stations e.g. Wylfa). The NDA is considering the scope for extending the life of Wylfa beyond 2010—which is the planned closure date given in its approved strategy. The NDA has advised me that in light of factors such as the age of the plant, related safety concerns, and the closure of associated fuel processing facilities at Sellafield such an extension is highly unlikely.

PRIME MINISTER

Number Ten Events and Visits Office

Mr. Amess: To ask the Prime Minister how many people have been employed by the Number Ten Events and Visits Office since May 1997, broken down by grade; and if he will make a statement. [64994]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Chichester (Mr. Tyrie) on 23 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1965W, and to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Lewes (Norman Baker) on 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 400W.

Visits

Mr. Amess: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list the towns in *(a)* England and Wales, *(b)* Scotland and *(c)* the European Union that he has visited in an official capacity in each month since 1997; what the purpose of each visit was; what the (i) date, (ii) time, (iii) location and (iv) duration was of each meeting; if he will place in the Library the text of any speech made; and if he will make a statement. [64998]

The Prime Minister: Records of my official visits are not categorised in this way.

For visits I have made in the UK between 2001 and 2004 I refer the hon. Member to the answers I gave to the hon. Member for Lewes (Norman Baker) on 7 November 2002, *Official Report*, columns 441–43W, 26 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 829–30W, and 4 March 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1429–30W. Between January 2005 and March 2006 I have undertaken the following visits within the UK:

Date	*Official visits*
6 January 2005	Leeds
	Baildon
	Idle
	Bradford
13 January	St. Mary's Island, Dartford
	Chatham
20 January	Watford
24 January	Greenford, Northolt
31 January-1 February	Wythenshaw
	Castlefield
	Manchester
11 February	Kettering
	Warwick
	Leeds
	Gateshead
12–13 February	Gateshead
15–16 February	Bromsgrove
	Redditch
	Sellyoak
	Birmingham
	Milton Keynes
	Wembley
23 February	Lambeth College
3–4 March	Kirkintilloch
	St. Andrew's Bay
	Dundee
10 March	Brighton
24–25 March	Hull
30 March	Coventry Leicester
31 March	Gravesend
8 April	Birmingham
15 April	Birmingham
11 May	London
26 May	London
28 June	Portsmouth
14–15 July	Newcastle
25 July	London
28 July	London
2 September	Watford
3 September	Glasgow
	Balmoral
12 September	London
13 September	Brighton
24–29 September	Brighton
5 October	Southall
13 October	Crawley
18 October	Birmingham
20 October	London
24 October	London
25 October	London
3 November	Manchester
17 November	Leeds
29 November	London
5 December	London
12 December	Harlow
22–23 December	Middlesbrough
10 January 2006	Swindon
14 January	Nottingham
17 January	London
24 January	London
26 January	Cardiff
30 January	London
2 February	Oxford
9 February	Croydon
10 February	Liverpool
	Blackpool
23–24 February	Manchester
	St. Helens
	Wigan
	Inverness
	Aviemore
2 March	London
16–17 March	York

My visits cover a range of matters including health, education, criminal justice and the economy. I also travel regularly to my constituency. I travel making the most efficient and cost-effective arrangements. My travel arrangements are in accordance with the arrangements for official travel set out in Chapter 10 of the Ministerial Code, and the accompanying guidance document, "Travel by Ministers".

For overseas visits, the Government have since 1999 published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. Copies of these lists are available in the Library of the House. Information on the number of officials accompanying Ministers on overseas visits is included in the list. All Ministers' travel arrangements are in accordance with the arrangements for official travel set out in Chapter 10 of the Ministerial Code, and the accompanying guidance document, "Travel by Ministers". Information for the year 2005–06 will be published as soon as it is ready after the end of the financial year.

Copies of my speeches are made available on the No. 10 website.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Boundary Commission

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs (1) when she expects the Boundary Commission to submit its recommendations on English boundary changes to the Department; and when she plans to lay draft orders before both Houses; [66448]

(2) what she expects the period of time to be between the Boundary Commission submitting its proposals for revised Westminster Parliamentary constituencies for England to her Department and laying draft orders before Parliament. [66249]

Bridget Prentice: The Parliamentary Boundary Commission for England expects to submit its report to the Government by the end of this year. Under the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986, the report will then be brought before Parliament "as soon as may be". We cannot be clear about the exact timing of the draft orders until we know the extent of any representations made following the submission of the report to the Government.

Cemetries

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what *(a)* regulatory and *(b)* statutory quality guidelines local authorities are required to comply with in their management of cemeteries and burial grounds relating to health and safety. [65760]

Ms Harman: Under health and safety legislation, I understand that local authorities, as employers, have a duty to ensure that the risk is properly managed. The need to have regard to health and safety risks has been brought to cemetery managers' attention in our recently published "Guide for Burial Ground Managers".

Death Certificates

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs in what circumstances a death certificate can be altered after it has been issued. [65539]

John Healey: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 2 May 2006:

As Registrar General for England and Wales I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking in what circumstances a death certificate can be altered after it has been issued. (65539)

The term death certificate is widely used to mean either the medical certificate of cause of death issued by a doctor who certified the death or the certified copy of the registration of the death. In either case the only circumstances in which a death certificate can be altered is if it can be shown that it contains incorrect information.

Departmental Publications

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the *(a)* research and *(b)* publication costs were of each of the reports and reviews by her Department in 2006. [67101]

Ms Harman: My Department does not hold this information centrally. To provide an answer would be disproportionate to cost.

Electoral Registration

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many electoral registration officers there are in the West Midlands region. [66499]

Bridget Prentice: There are 34 electoral registration officers in the area comprising the West Midlands region for the purpose of the regional assembly and elections to the European Parliament.

Telephone Advice Lines

Mr. Love: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many telephone advice lines her Department and its non-departmental public bodies support; how many telephone advisers each employs; and how much funding is provided to each by *(a)* her Department and its non-departmental public bodies, *(b)* other Government Departments, *(c)* the private sector and *(d)* the voluntary sector. [66584]

Ms Harman: We do not hold central records of the number and costs of the advice lines supported by my Department and its non-departmental public bodies. That information could now be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Belarus

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Belarusian authorities regarding the imprisonment of opposition figures following the presidential elections. [65833]

Mr. Straw: The Minister for Europe, my right hon. Friend the Member for Paisley and Renfrewshire, South (Mr. Alexander), issued a statement on 24 March strongly condemning the arrests and calling for the release of those detained. The text of the statement is available at: http://www.gnn.gov.uk/Content/DetailLasp?ReleaseID=192765&NewsAreaID:=2. EU Heads of Mission in Minsk made a démarche to the Belarusian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in similar terms on 24 March. The presidency of the EU issued a declaration on 25 March condemning the use of violence against demonstrators, expressing serious concern about the arrest of demonstrators and members of the opposition, including Alexander Kazulin, and demanding their immediate release. The text of the declaration is available at: http://www.eu2006.at/en/News/CFSP_Statements/March/belarus.html. The EU's local presidency made a further démarche on 6 April. Senior Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials also raised this matter

with the Belarusian Ambassador in London on 7 April. The conclusions of the General Affairs and External Relations Council on 10 April urged the Belarusian authorities not to penalise or discriminate against those exercising their right to freedom of expression and freedom of assembly, including the leaders of the opposition parties, and imposed restrictive measures on those responsible for these actions.

Chad

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the Government of Chad about *(a)* the administration of oil revenues and *(b)* corruption. [65649]

Ian Pearson: We have had no specific discussions with the Government of Chad about the use of oil revenues or corruption. But we have made consistently clear our wish to see oil revenues used to benefit Africa's poor and the importance of transparency and African leadership in the fight against corruption.

We welcomed the arrangement between Chad and the World Bank in 1999 to enshrine the principle of using oil revenues to tackle poverty eradication in Chad but regret the recent dispute between the World Bank and Chad, following changes to the law by the Government of Chad to reduce this. We welcome US mediation and the current discussions between the World Bank and the Chadian authorities and hope they reach a positive resolution soon.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the extent of human rights abuses in Chad. [65651]

Ian Pearson: We are concerned about the poor human rights record in Chad, particularly the lack of freedom of expression and good governance. Our main means of influence with the Chadian authorities is through the EU. We, together with other EU member states, have called on them to take substantive steps to improve human rights and governance.

Chad is due to hold presidential elections on 3 May 2006. The UK is working with EU partners to urge the Chadian authorities to ensure a peaceful and credible electoral process in which all parties can participate.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the Government authorise the transfer of arms to Chad. [65825]

Dr. Howells: All applications from the UK are rigorously assessed on a case-by-case basis against the Consolidated EU and National Export Licensing Criteria, taking full account of the prevailing circumstances at the time of application. This process includes specific criteria whereby we will not issue a licence where there is a clear risk that the proposed export might be used for internal repression, might aggravate existing tensions or conflict in the country of final destination or that the export may be used aggressively against another country. Details of all export licences approved to Chad are available in the Quarterly and Annual Reports on Strategic Export Controls (available on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website at: http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1089131553823), and are subject to detailed retrospective scrutiny by the Quadripartite Committees.

The Government have in the past authorised applications for the export of military-listed goods. Our records show that since 2004, three Open Individual Export Licences have been approved for humanitarian use in Chad.

China

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Government of China on *(a)* reports of the harvesting and sale of organs from executed prisoners and *(b)* human rights in China. [65741]

Ian Pearson: The Government regularly raise human rights with the Chinese Government, through the formal UK and EU-China human rights dialogues, ministerial meetings and contacts between officials.

The Government are concerned about the practice of prisoners subject to the death penalty in China donating their organs and the trade in these organs. I raised these concerns with the Chinese Government on 7 April. The Chinese Government have acknowledged this practice, but have denied recent media reports of widespread organ harvesting in China. We have received no evidence to substantiate these reports. We believe that the right approach is to seek to overcome the social taboo of organ transplants and encourage donation from the general population. The Government welcome the announcement by the Chinese Ministry of Health of a new regulation to come into effect on 1 July, to ban the sale of organs and introduce medical standards for organ transplants.

Colombia

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the freedom and fairness of the forthcoming presidential election in Colombia. [65654]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The first round of the Colombian presidential elections will take place at the end of May. It is too early to make an assessment of the election. All of the presidential candidates continue to be given plenty of opportunity to voice their opinions through Colombia's media.

The Colombian parliamentary elections in March 2006, which were accepted by most observers as being free and fair, confirmed that Colombia is a democratic country. However, there are areas in which democratic institutions and processes could be strengthened.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the likely effects of decisions of the Colombian Government *(a)* to negotiate a demobilisation programme, with rights to immunity from prosecution for human rights abuses, with right-wing paramilitary groups and *(b)* not to negotiate with left-wing rebels. [65680]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: As was made clear in the EU Council Conclusions on Colombia in October 2005, we and other EU member states consider that the effective and transparent implementation of the Law on Justice and Peace, under which more than 30,000 paramilitaries in Colombia have now demobilised, will have a positive impact on peace-building in Colombia. This implementation needs to ensure that those found guilty of human rights abuses are punished for their crimes.

The Colombian Government is actively involved in talks with the National Liberation Army, a left-wing illegal armed group and the next round of talks began on 25 April. Its recent efforts to begin preliminary talks with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, the countries biggest illegal armed group, have been consistently rebutted by the guerrillas.

Cote D'Ivoire

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with members of the Government of Cote d'Ivoire regarding President Laurent Gbagbo's concerns of possible electoral fraud resulting from the concurrent running of disarmament and voter identification programmes; and if he will make a statement. [66640]

Ian Pearson: There have been no direct contacts between Foreign and Commonwealth Office Ministers and the Government of Cote d'Ivoire about these concerns.

The UK is represented at official level at the African Union-led International Working Group (IWG) which oversees the peace process. At its last meeting on 20 April, the IWG recalled that the main Ivorian leaders had agreed on simultaneous and immediate implementation of the voter identification and disarmament processes. The IWG called on the Government to accelerate simultaneous implementation and stressed that the identification of citizens will allow the establishment of reliable voter lists and contribute to the holding of free, fair, open and transparent elections.

Cyprus

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he last visited Cyprus; and if he will make a statement. [66921]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary last visited Cyprus on 24–25 January. I refer my hon. Friend to the reply given by my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary to the hon. Member for Eastbourne (Mr. Waterson) on 7 February 2006, *Official Report*, columns 733–35.

Darfur

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the extent of al-Qaeda influence and activity in Darfur. [66346]

Ian Pearson: Osama Bin Laden was resident in Sudan until he was expelled in 1996. We have no details of any current al-Qaeda activity or influence in Darfur. On 23 April, Osama bin Laden made a statement including a call for Muslims to resist a Western 'crusade' in Darfur. The Government of Sudan subsequently made a public statement rejecting and criticising bin Laden's comments.

Darfur (UN Access)

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the Sudanese Government's co-operation with the United Nations, with particular reference to the UN's access to the Darfur region. [65719]

Mr. Straw: The Sudanese Government's co-operation with the UN is wholly inadequate. On 4 April, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Development and my noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, wrote to the Sudanese Foreign Minister, Dr Lam Akol, expressing concern about the Government of Sudan's refusal to allow the UN Humanitarian Co-ordinator, Jan Egeland, access to Darfur. They made clear that the Government must facilitate access for and co-operate in full with UN and humanitarian agencies in Darfur.

We are also pressing the Government of Sudan to allow access to Darfur for the UN Department for Peacekeeping Operations planning mission to look at options for a UN force in Darfur, authorised by UN Security Council Resolution 1663.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo on the merit of an HIV/AIDS prevention and awareness campaign which specifically refutes the belief that sorcery is a vehicle for transmission of the virus. [65656]

Ian Pearson: The UK has an on-going dialogue with the Congolese Government on HIV, the "child witch" phenomenon and human rights. But we have not made representations specifically linking HIV awareness and sorcery. The UK fully supports the Congolese Government's planned HIV sensitisation programme. This will help dispel the myth about the link between "sorcery" and HIV, and will contribute to longer-term improvement of children's rights. To address the issue of HIV/AIDS in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the UK has funded behaviour change communications campaigns and the distribution of millions of condoms. We are assisting the Government to implement a national HIV/AIDS strategy, and we are supporting the provision of primary health care and education through UN agencies and non-governmental organisations.

Eritrea

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what assessment his Department has made of the level of religious freedom in Eritrea; and if he will make a statement; [66095]

(2) what discussions he has held with officials from the Eritrean Government on religious persecution; and if he will make a statement. [66096]

Ian Pearson: We remain concerned by reports of State interference in religious affairs and lack of freedom of worship in Eritrea. We monitor closely action taken by the authorities against minority religious groups.

Together with EU partners, we raise these issues with the Eritrean Government whenever possible. My noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, wrote to President Isaiah on 6 October 2005 and has raised our concerns with the Eritrean ambassador several times.

EU Finance

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the reasons were for the UK's position on the discharge of the EU's 2004 budget at the Economic and Financial Affairs Council on 14 March; and what discussions he had with his Dutch counterpart on this matter. [66917]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I have been asked to reply.

I attended the Economic and Financial Affairs Council on 14 March. The UK's position in support of the Council's recommendation on discharge was based on recognition of the progress that has been made in financial management and control and the importance of Council commitment to the November ECOFIN agreement on taking forward the "integrated internal control framework". Treasury officials work closely with their Dutch counterparts and kept me informed of the Dutch position.

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what *(a)* net and *(b)* gross contributions to the EU are to be paid by each of the 25 member states of the EU in each of the next seven years following the agreement on 17 December 2005. [66122]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I have been asked to reply.

I refer the hon. Gentleman to the reply given to the hon. Member for South Holland and The Deepings (Mr. Hayes) on 27 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 332W.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on *(a)* future financing of the EU and *(b)* EU budget reform. [66922]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: As I said in my reply to my hon. Friend the Member for North-West Leicestershire (David Taylor) on 25 April 2006, *Official Report*, columns 497–99, the December European Council agreed a European Union budget for 2007 to 2013. The Government welcome the Inter-Institutional Agreement (ILA) that the Council, the European Commission and Parliament have provisionally reached to give formal effect to the December agreement. The Council now needs formally to approve the IIA, but before then a debate on the agreement will take place on the Floor of the House.

The December European Council also invited the European Commission to undertake a full and wide-ranging review of the EU budget and to report back to the European Council in 2008–09.

Fisheries

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the potential effect on the progress of the proposed UN referendum in Western Sahara of the signing by the EU of a new EU-Morocco Fisheries Partnership Agreement; and if he will make a statement. [66493]

Dr. Howells: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Islington, North (Jeremy Corbyn) on 23 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1806–07W.

European Constitution

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what written submission the UK Government *(a)* have made and *(b)* intend to make in advance of discussions on a European Constitution at the Council of Ministers meeting on 27 May. [67577]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Government are still considering how they intend to contribute to preparations for the meeting.

Avian Influenza

Mr. Vara: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what *(a)* guidance and *(b)* support his Department offers on inoculation against the H5N1 virus to British nationals living overseas in countries where there is a major outbreak. [65755]

Dr. Howells: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), in conjunction with the Department of Health and other Departments, has produced a comprehensive fact-sheet on avian and pandemic flu for both Britons travelling and resident overseas, available at http://www.fco.gov.uk/flu Included in the comprehensive guidance are specific precautions one should take to minimise the risks of contracting avian flu, which are believed to be very low. The FCO regularly updates travel advice pages when a country is verified by the World Health Organisation as having had incidences of avian influenza.

British diplomatic missions overseas cannot provide medicines or medical treatment to British nationals living overseas, but they will be able to advise on the local availability of medicines and provide details of health care providers.

There is currently no vaccine available to inoculate humans against avian influenza.

International Arrest Warrants

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he has received documentary evidence from the Israeli Government on potential changes to UK law on international arrest warrants. [66291]

Dr. Howells: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has received representations from the Israeli Government on the subject of international arrest warrants. I discussed this with the Israeli Foreign Minister, Tzipi Livni, when she visited London on 2 March.

Internet/Website Provision

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list *(a)* the websites operated by his Department and *(b)* the reports placed on the internet in March 2006, indicating in each case whether paper copies were also made available. [65207]

Ian Pearson: The websites operated by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) include the main FCO website, UKvisas website, i-UK.com website and 180 overseas post websites. A complete list of the websites operated by the FCO will be placed in the Library of the House, as the information requested is lengthy. Five reports were published on the FCO main site during March 2006, these were:

1. Autumn Performance Report;
2. Report on Stakeholder Consultation;
3. UN High Level Report;
4. Six monthly report on Hong Kong, July-December 2005;
5. Staff survey 2006 highlight report.

The Autumn Performance Report and the six monthly report on Hong Kong, July to December 2005, were placed in the Library of the House.

Iran

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps are being taken by his Department to support pro-democracy student groups in Iran. [65664]

Dr. Howells: Encouraging greater respect for human rights and political freedoms is a key element of our approach towards Iran. We seek to promote the internationally recognised principles to which many Iranians aspire including freedom of speech and transparent, genuinely democratic and accountable government. We maintain a dialogue with those inside and outside the Iranian Government who are working to support reform and the promotion of the rule of law. We do not generally publicise the details without the consent of our Iranian partners.

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the Iranian space programme; and if he will make a statement. [65722]

Mr. Straw: The UK reviews the space programme of other nations on a periodic basis. We note Iran's interest in using earth observation data, and that Russia recently launched a small satellite belonging to Iran for this purpose. Iran does not currently have the capability to launch a satellite into space without assistance.

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the threat to Baha'is in Iran; and if he will make a statement. [66118]

Dr. Howells: We have serious concerns about the situation of the Baha'i community in Iran. Reports suggest that Baha'is have been subjected to harassment, intimidation and arbitrary arrest and a hostile campaign in the media. Iran's Chambers of Commerce have also reportedly been ordered to create lists of all Baha'i businesses. In December, a Baha'i, Dhaibullah Mahrami, died in custody in unclear circumstances.

The Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, Asma Jahangir, has recently highlighted her concern at a letter apparently from Iran's Supreme Leader instructing the country's authorities and armed forces to identify Baha'is and monitor their activities. I share these concerns. I can see no justification for the authorities to collect such information, nor for ordering surveillance of Baha'is simply on account of their faith.

Ministers and officials have pressed the Iranian authorities on many occasions to address discrimination suffered by the Baha'i community. At our suggestion, the EU presidency did so on 11 April 2006. On 10 April 2006, EU foreign Ministers underlined their

> "continued concerns about the human rights situation in Iran, in particular regarding the situation of Baha'is".

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the extent of freedom to practise religion in Iran; and if he will make a statement. [66119]

Dr. Howells: We continue to have serious concerns about the situation of religious minorities in Iran. The Iranian constitution recognises the Christian, Jewish and Zoroastrian communities, but not others such as the Baha'is. We receive many reports of discrimination against those wishing to practise these faiths. The position of people who have converted from Islam appears to be especially difficult. We have made clear to the Iranian authorities that we believe that persecution of individuals on the grounds of their religious beliefs is unacceptable. We expect Iran to uphold freedom of religion and belief in accordance with its international obligations under Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil & Political Rights.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his policy is on the provision of assistance to UK citizens in Iran; and if he will make a statement. [66488]

Dr. Howells: Our policy on consular assistance to British nationals in Iran is the same as it is elsewhere in the world. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary made a statement to the House on 21 March announcing the publication of the consular guide which sets out what we can and cannot do for British Nationals (*Official Report*, Columns155–168). A copy of the guide has been sent to all hon. Members and is also available in the Library of the House.

Iraq

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when his Department's officials have met Iraqi Ministry of Oil officials since March 2003; and what subjects were discussed. [66770]

Dr. Howells: Officials based in our embassy in Baghdad have had regular contact with Ministry of Oil officials since 2003. Discussions cover a range of subjects relating to rehabilitation and future development of the energy sector in Iraq.

Israel (Nuclear Threat)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps are being taken to minimise the possible nuclear threat to Israel following recent statements from the President of Iran. [66957]

Dr. Howells: President Ahmadinejad's statements calling Israel a 'fake regime' which 'cannot logically continue to live' are outrageous and wholly unacceptable. They further heighten concerns about Iran's approach in the region, and reinforce international determination that Iran should comply with its non-proliferation obligations.

We remain fully committed to preventing the spread of nuclear weapons. With France and Germany we have been at the forefront of efforts to encourage Iran to take steps that would create confidence that the intentions of its nuclear programme are solely peaceful. The Security Council is now involved, to reinforce the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and its Board of Governors. We strongly supported the statement on 29 March by the President of the Security Council, calling on Iran to take the steps the IAEA Board has deemed essential. We will now be consulting other Security Council members on what further action the Council should take, following the IAEA Director-General's 28 April report on Iranian compliance.

Moldova

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the ability of opposition politicians in Moldova to operate without *(a)* intimidation, *(b)* harassment and *(c)* threats of legal action; and if he will make a statement. [66492]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Respect for democracy, freedom of expression and the rule of law are principles which form the foundation for UK and EU co-operation with Moldova. They are also principles to which Moldova is committed through its participation in the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and other international organisations. Moldova has made some progress towards becoming a functioning democracy, with active opposition parties represented in Parliament. However, the OSCE's Office for Democracy and Institution for Human Rights identified a number of shortcomings in the conduct of the 2005 parliamentary elections, including obstruction of the opposition's campaign. Recent reports have also raised concerns about interference by the Moldovan authorities in the work of opposition political parties. Through the EU troika, we have raised our concerns about these issues, most recently with the Moldovan Foreign Minister at the EU-Moldova Co-operation Council on 6 April. We will continue to monitor Moldova's progress towards meeting its democratic commitments, including through the European Neighbourhood Policy, which offers Moldova the opportunity to achieve its ambition of closer relations with the EU, subject to progress on internal reform.

Nigeria (Homosexuality)

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Government of Nigeria on the progress of its bill to criminalise homosexuality. [65682]

Ian Pearson: We are concerned this Bill will cut across many of Nigeria's international human rights obligations by continuing to criminalise the homosexual community in Nigeria. We are also concerned that the Bill will criminalise non-governmental organisations and human rights defenders who may work on behalf of the homosexual community.

Together with our EU partners we plan to raise our concerns with the Nigerian authorities.

Palestine

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with US representatives on the withdrawal of funding for Palestinian development projects; and if he will make a statement. [65456]

Hilary Benn: The UK Government are in regular contact with the US on development assistance to Palestinians. On 30 March, the Quartet (the US, the EU, the UN and Russia) noted that the new Palestinian Government has not yet complied with the principles of non-violence, recognition of Israel's right to exist and commitment to the peace process.

Without progress against the Quartet's conditions, the UK cannot provide direct support to the Palestinian Cabinet or its Ministries. Projects with Palestinian ministries have been suspended or re-oriented to focus on other partners. The Department for International Development is also working with other major donors including the US to establish the most effective mechanism to meet the basic needs of the Palestinian people without providing funding through the Palestinian Government.

Scrutiny Reserve

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answers of 17 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1290W and 7 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1344W, on the scrutiny reserve, what the reason was for the different estimates for the number of scrutiny overrides in 2005. [66155]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: My reply to the hon. Member on 17 January 2006 (*Official Report*, column 1290W) made it clear that the figure for the number of overrides for the period July-December 2005 was a preliminary estimate. The figure of 36 was based on a preliminary list compiled by officials that had not yet been checked with the lead departments responsible for the legislation in question. That checking process revealed the lower final figure given in the follow-up reply to the hon. Member on 7 March (*Official Report*, column 1345W). The initial list identified two cases which should have been included in the previous report for January to June and one that had been included in error which had already been covered in the previous report. Other adjustments were needed, for example, to remove items which had in fact received clearance

before agreement. The details of the overrides for the period July to December 2005 have now been sent to the European Scrutiny Committee. A copy of that letter has been placed in the Library of the House.

Son Jong Nam

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the North Korean Government for clemency in the case of Son Jong Nam. [66345]

Ian Pearson: The Government learned recently of the reported conviction of and death penalty imposed on Mr. Son Jong Nam. We have asked our ambassador in Pyongyang to make inquiries.

Sudan

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what powers are available to African Union troops to capture those who are believed to be involved in acts of atrocity in Sudan; and how many such people have been *(a)* captured, *(b)* brought to trial, *(c)* convicted and *(d)* imprisoned in the last 12 months. [66719]

Ian Pearson: The African Union's mandate is to monitor developments and contribute to a secure environment. It does not include powers to arrest suspected perpetrators of atrocities in Sudan.

The Government have consistently made clear that those responsible for the terrible crimes committed in Darfur should be brought to justice. We have pressed the Government of Sudan to apprehend, bring to trial and punish those involved. The UK sponsored UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1593, referring the situation in Darfur to the International Criminal Court (ICC). The Prosecutor of the ICC began a formal investigation on 6 June 2005. We also co-sponsored UNSCR 1672 of 25 April, which imposed the first targeted sanctions on individuals responsible for human rights violations in Darfur.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to members of the African Union to increase their troop levels in Sudan. [66721]

Ian Pearson: There have been no recent representations made by my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary or Foreign and Commonwealth Office Ministers to members of the African Union (AU) to increase their troop levels in Sudan. However, we support the AU's decision in principle to transfer responsibility for the international monitoring mission in Darfur to the UN. The UN force will need to be larger and better equipped than the present AU force, currently totalling some 7,000 troops. Meanwhile we continue to offer the AU support to enhance the effectiveness of its mission.

Turkey

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what discussions he has had with members of the Turkish Government regarding the murder of Ferho and Fatim Akgül in Turkish Kurdistan in March 2006; what assurances he has sought with regard to the investigation into this act; and if he will make a statement; [66642]

(2) what assessment his Department has made of the allegations of the involvement of the Turkish local authorities and the Turkish armed forces in the murder of Ferho and Fatim Akgül in Turkish Kurdistan in March 2006; and if he will make a statement. [66643]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Ferho and Fatma Akgül were found murdered on 2 March near Mardin in Southeast Turkey. We are aware of a number of allegations about their deaths, including that from Derwich Ferho, Chairman of the Kurdish Institute in Brussels, that Turkish military special forces and village guards were responsible for his parents' killing. The local prosecutor has opened an investigation into the killings. Our embassy in Ankara is closely monitoring the case, but the Government has not discussed this matter with the Turkish Government.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with members of the Turkish Government since January 2006 concerning allegations of violence against the Turkish population; and if he will make a statement. [66644]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: During his visit to Turkey on 25 January, my right hon. Friend, the Foreign Secretary pressed for sustained Turkish momentum on internal reform. Our ambassador in Ankara has since conveyed similar messages to senior Turkish Ministers and officials and has discussed the recent rioting in Diyarbakir and other provinces with the Turkish Government.

The Government condemn the recent violence in South East Turkey and the subsequent terrorist attacks in Istanbul.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps his Department is taking to monitor and evaluate the full adoption and implementation of the Copenhagen criteria in Turkey; what progress has been reported since Janaury 2005; what areas have been highlighted as needing more work; and if he will make a statement. [66646]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The European Commission monitors a candidate country's fulfilment of the Copenhagen political criteria and produces an annual regular report on candidates' progress. The November 2005 report states that Turkey "continues to sufficiently fulfil the Copenhagen political criteria," but that "implementation of the reforms remains uneven". Areas requiring further attention include torture, freedom of expression and religious freedoms. The Government closely monitors developments and regularly raises related issues with Turkey, and did so most recently at ministerial level during my right hon. Friend, the Foreign Secretary's visit to Turkey on 25 January.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the freedom to operate of the legal profession in Turkey. [66944]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Turkish judicial system has been strengthened in recent years with the adoption of structural reforms and a new penal code. There have been concerns raised about provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure which effectively prevents lawyers accused or convicted of terrorism offences from representing others accused of terrorist crimes.

We, along with the European Commission, will continue to monitor the effect of the new legislation, including with regards to defence rights and free operation of the legal profession.

CABINET OFFICE

Legislative and Regulatory Reform Bill

24. **Gordon Banks:** To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what assessment he has made of the likely effect of his proposed amendments to the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Bill on the burden of administration affecting businesses. [66796]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The Legislative and Regulatory Reform Bill has the potential to make a real impact on reducing burdensome regulation. I am currently looking to focus the order-making power in the Bill on delivering better regulation objectives, to bring to an end speculation about far-fetched constitutional risks. These amendments will make it clear that the Bill provides an effective power to reduce burdens more quickly and easily.

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will make a statement on the extent of ministerial powers to be granted by the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Bill. [67305]

Mr. Jim Murphy: I refer the hon. Member to my letter of 12 April 2006 to the Chairman of the Regulatory Reform Committee, my hon. Friend the Member for Ellesmere Port and Neston (Andrew Miller). Copies are available in the Library.

Public Services (Reform)

25. **Mr. Bone:** To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what recent assessment he has made of the progress of the Cabinet Office's work in leading and supporting the delivery and reform of public services. [66797]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The Cabinet Office has an important role in supporting and challenging Departments to more effectively deliver and reform public services.

Correspondence

26. **Mr. Allen:** To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on handling correspondence from hon. Members; and if he will make a statement. [66799]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The revised "Guidance for Departments on the handling of Members' and Peers' Correspondence", published on 21 July last year, sets out best practice. Copies of the guidance are available in the Library.

Ministerial Code

27. **Richard Ottaway:** To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster whether the Government plans to amend the Ministerial Code. [66800]

Mr. Jim Murphy: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I provided on 21 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 202W, to the hon. Member for Hammersmith and Fulham (Mr. Hands).

Council Tax (Official Residences)

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster pursuant to the answer of 29 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1031W, on council tax (official residences), whether there has been a change in occupancy in any official residence activating revised guidance for Ministers on their liability for council tax on such residences. [66768]

Mr. Jim Murphy: There has been no such change. I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 16 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 2394W, by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, confirming that the right hon. Member for Sheffield, Brightside (Mr. Blunkett) had left his official residence.

Engagements

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster whether he will attend the birthday celebrations for the Duke of Lancaster in May. [66903]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's Office will be represented by Duchy Officers at Her Majesty's birthday celebrations.

Equal Pay

John Bercow: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what assessment he has made of the gender pay gap in the civil service. [65626]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The Cabinet Office undertook an equal pay review for the senior civil service (SCS) in 2002 and equal pay has been re-examined each year since then as part of the Government's evidence to the Senior Salaries Review Body. Under the delegated pay arrangements for staff below the SCS, every Department and agency produced an equal pay action plan in 2003 as part of the Government's commitment to address the gender pay gap. Civil service organisations continue to monitor progress against their action plans and equality-proof their pay systems following implementation of annual pay awards.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Accession State Workers

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of nationals of the new EU member states who were working in a self-employed capacity in the UK on 31 January. [66382]

Mr. McNulty: The Accession Treaty allows nationals of the new member states to establish a business in the UK if they choose on the same terms as UK nationals.

Self-employed migrants from the new EU member states are not required to register under the Worker Registration Scheme and as such there are no reliable estimates of the number of self-employed accession nationals in the UK.

Airport Security

Mr. Burrowes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps the Government are taking to safeguard the UK's borders at airports. [66698]

Mr. McNulty: At major airports, Border Control has staff deployed to meet all services requiring immigration control. At smaller airports, resources are deployed on an intelligence led risk basis to deal with passengers who require leave to enter. The IAN Act 2006 provides additional powers to deal more effectively with people posing a threat to border security, including the capture of data on passengers and fingerprinting of those detained. The Border Management Programme ensures that the three border agencies (HMRC, UKIS and the Police) work more closely together to maximise border security while minimising the impact on legitimate traffic. MATRA groups (Multi Agency Threat and Risk Assessment Group) at airports bring together border agencies, operators and carriers to identify and assess risks to general security and put in place action plans in order to counter any potential threats. e-Borders is a multi agency programme to harness passenger information and use new technology to provide more effective border controls. Project Semaphore, as part of the e-Borders programme, is further strengthening the border through the use of an advance passenger information processing system and the adoption of a proactive intelligence led approach.

Assisted Suicide/Infanticide

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females (i) were found guilty of and (ii) pleaded guilty to complicity in or assisting (A) a suicide and (B) infanticide in Coventry and the West Midlands in the last period for which figures are available. [65939]

Hazel Blears: rom the Court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform show that there were no convictions for aiding and abetting suicide in Coventry and the West Midlands in 2004. Offences of complicity in or assisting infanticide cannot be separated from the offence of infanticide itself in the data held. However the records show that there were no convictions for infanticide in Coventry and the West Midlands in 2004.

Figures for 2005 will be available in the autumn of 2006.

Asylum/Immigration

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his Department's policy is on the deportation of failed asylum seekers to the Democratic Republic of Congo; and if he will intercede in the case of Aleen Monka' bie Izai. [64926]

Mr. McNulty: Congolese claimants who have been found by the Home Office and the appeals process not to be in need of international protection and have no legal basis of stay in the UK are expected to return to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

The Home Office works with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) to facilitate voluntary returns of failed asylum seekers to any region of DRC. Where an individual does not return voluntarily, removal may be enforced. As with all countries, returns of failed asylum seekers to DRC are considered on an individual case basis.

With reference to the case of Aleen Monka' bie Izai, while it would not be appropriate for me to comment on the case, any representations received will be fully considered.

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his policy is on granting asylum to refugees from Darfur; and if he will make a statement. [65555]

Mr. McNulty: Asylum applications from all nationalities, including Darfuris from Sudan, are assessed on a case by case basis against the background of current country information.

Current reports from the foremost governmental and non-governmental human rights monitors confirm previously held information that tribal leaders, prominent activists and intellectuals of non-Arab ethnic Darfuri origin are at increasing risk of treatment amounting to persecution outside of the Darfur regions. In these cases the grant of asylum is likely to be appropriate. However, the available country information does not indicate that ordinary non-Arab ethnic Darfuris are likely to be at risk of treatment amounting to persecution outside Darfur. In these cases the grant of asylum is unlikely to be appropriate.

Stephen Hesford: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures his Department used to assess the suitability of the set of questions recently formulated by a group of senior Anglican clergy to assess the faith of asylum seekers. [65645]

Andy Burnham: Asylum caseworkers are trained to conduct interviews in a professional manner and to determine asylum claims fairly in accordance with our obligations under the 1951 Convention. However, cases where an individual claims to be at risk of persecution due to a faith conversion can raise sensitive issues where there are doubts about the genuineness of the conversion. The paper submitted by the clergy does not provide a set of questions to test an individual's conversion but will form the basis for further discussion and use in guidance to caseworkers. This will be taken forward in consultation with the clergy concerned and other stakeholders.

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications for asylum have been rejected on the grounds of asylum but have been approved, whether or not on appeal, on human rights grounds in each year since 1997. [65830]

Mr. McNulty: Information on the number of decisions to grant exceptional leave, humanitarian protection or discretionary leave are published

quarterly and annually. Copies are available from the Library of the House and on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate web site at http://homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications for section 4 support were received by National Asylum Support Service in each month since 1 January 2006; and how many of these applications resulted in a grant of such support. [65982]

Mr. McNulty: Section 4 support statistics are published on a quarterly basis, figures for January, February and March 2006 will be published on 23 May 2006. These will be available on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many flights have been made to Erbil airport from the UK for the purpose of returning failed asylum seekers to Iraq in each of the last two years; how many such people have been on these flights; and how many of these were voluntary returns. [66517]

Mr. McNulty: Between 16 August 2005 and 27 April 2006 there have been 21 charter flights which have returned 1,019 Iraqis under the VARRP (Voluntary Assisted Return and Integration Programme). Prior to 16 August all returns were made by way of flights from the UK to Jordan, with the returnees continuing their journey overland from Amman to Baghdad.

In the last two years there has been one flight from the UK to Erbil for the purpose of enforcing the removal of failed asylum seekers. This flight was on 20 November 2005 and returned 15 Iraqis.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* asylum seekers and *(b)* migrants are registered with the police. [50667]

Mr. McNulty: Asylum seekers are not required to register their details with the police, although they may be required to report to the police as a condition of their temporary admission.

Bruche Police Training Centre

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent discussions the Department has held on the future use of the Bruche Police Training Centre. [64744]

Hazel Blears: The Bruche site will continue to be used in its capacity as a police training centre up until 26 May this year. Decisions regarding the future of this Centrex site are the responsibility of the Centrex board and Chief Executive. The Home Office remains closely involved in the process of disposing of the site, both through the board and directly with the officials in Centrex. Discussions are not currently focused on the future use of the site as options around future use will depend largely on who takes an interest in purchasing the site once it is placed on the market.

Builders' Tools

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what advice is given by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the police to builders to secure their materials, tools and properties they are working on to avoid crime; and if he will make a statement. [66774]

Hazel Blears: Although the Home Office does not offer specific crime prevention advice to builders, it has, in partnership with the business community and police, produced crime prevention advice tailored for all businesses. Guidance such as "Your business: Keep crime out of it" and "Putting Crime Out Of Business" give practical information to help businesses identify security risks and take measures to reduce crime. They are available on the crime reduction website (http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk/businesscrimeminisite01.htm) and include advice on the safe storage of building materials and security of buildings.

General crime prevention advice is also available from the police on individual force websites and more detailed crime prevention advice can be obtained by visiting local police stations.

Charities

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list those who responded to the consultation on financial thresholds for charities to register with the Charity Commission; and how many of those supported *(a)* a £10,000 and *(b)* a £5,000 threshold. [66760]

Paul Goggins: The review "Private Action, Public Benefit" (Prime Minister's Strategy Unit, 2002) proposed a group of measures to change the registration rules for small charities. An analysis of the response to public consultation on that group of measures can be found in "Charities and Not-for-Profits: A Modern Legal Framework" (Home Office, 2003).

The Government undertook—*House of Lords]*, 28 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 231—to review, with full public consultation, all the financial thresholds for charities a year after Royal Assent of the Charities Bill which is now before Parliament.

Changes to the levels of financial thresholds can be made by statutory instrument.

Child Trafficking

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 30 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1160W, on child trafficking, where the figures relating to the numbers of children smuggled into the UK are held. [65986]

Mr. McNulty: The specific information requested is not kept centrally and no reliable statistical information on the potential numbers of children being smuggled to the United Kingdom is available.

Citizen's Arrests

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many citizen's arrests were made in England and Wales in the last two years for

which figures are available; and in which areas the *(a)* highest and *(b)* lowest number of such arrests were recorded. [65106]

Hazel Blears: The information requested is not available centrally.

Convention on the Rights of the Child

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to review current reservations to the Convention on the Rights of the Child in relation to the detention of under 18-year-olds. [64937]

Mr. McNulty: The United Kingdom has two reservations to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, relating to: (i) immigration and nationality, and (ii) children mixing with adults in custodial institutions.

Regarding children mixing with adults: we have made great progress in achieving separation of under and over-18s in custody, for example by placing girls under 17 in non-Prison Service accommodation and by providing new, special units for 17-year-old girls., We will therefore be considering whether there is a continuing need for the Reservation against Article 37*(c)* of the Convention; and this review is due to begin shortly.

Correspondence

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Parliamentary Business Unit of the Immigration and Nationality Department will respond to the letters of *(a)* 20 January 2006 and *(b)* 28 February 2006 from the hon. Member for Edinburgh, West with regard to his constituent Ms Osibanja Reagan, Home Office reference number O182493. [64413]

Mr. McNulty: The Immigration and nationality directorate replied to the hon. Member for Edinburgh, West on 25 April 2006.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the immigration and nationality directorate will reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Warley of 18 January 2006 on behalf of Miss Bloomfield of Oldbury. [66063]

Mr. McNulty: The immigration and nationality directorate wrote to the right hon. Member on 25 April 2006.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the immigration and nationality directorate will reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Warley of 17 January on behalf of Mr. and Mrs. McLeish of Oldbury. [66065]

Mr. McNulty: The immigration and nationality directorate wrote to the right hon. Member for Warley on 26 April 2006.

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter to the immigration and nationality directorate of 6 February 2006 from the hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood, on behalf of Sumithra Wickramage (Home Office Reference W227390/3, Acknowledgement Reference B3928/6). [66152]

Mr. McNulty: The immigration and nationality directorate wrote to the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood on 26 April 2006.

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood, of 30 January 2006 about Markland Gray (Home Office Reference G1052868, Acknowledgement Reference B2826/6). [66153]

Mr. McNulty: The immigration and nationality directorate wrote to the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood on 26 April 2006.

Departmental Publications

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which division in his Department was responsible for the commission, design and production of the process flow-charts distributed to hon. Members about the nationality application process, the family indefinite leave to remain exercise, and the work permits UK application process; what the total cost was of the design and production of the flow-charts; to which budget the design and production of the flow-charts were allocated; what total number of man-hours was spent on the design and production of the flow-charts; how many copies of the flow-charts have been produced; and to whom they have been distributed. [65075]

Mr. McNulty: The process flow-charts were commissioned by the Change and Reform Directorate of the immigration and nationality directorate. They were drafted and designed by IND staff; 700 copies of each of the three maps were printed by an outside supplier at a total cost of £702 . This cost was met by the Change and Reform Directorate budget. In total, approximately 16 man-hours were spent on the design and development of the three maps. A copy of each map was distributed to every member of the House on the 6 April 2006.

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has considered producing flow-charts that describe the decision process for the *(a)* nationality application process, *(b)* family indefinite leave to remain exercise and *(c)* work permits UK application process. [65076]

Mr. McNulty: The production of these flow-charts has been considered. The three flow charts that describe the nationality application process, the 'Family Indefinite Leave to Remain Exercise and the Work Permits UK' application process have been produced and a copy of each has been distributed to every Member of the House.

DNA Database

Grant Shapps: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 31 January 2006, to Question 49933, how many people who were under the age of 18 years at the time they were arrested and had a DNA sample taken up to and including 1 December 2005 were subsequently not charged or cautioned for any offence. [49028]

Hazel Blears: On one December 2005, there were 24,168 persons on the National DNA Database who were under 18 years of age at the time they were arrested and had a DNA sample taken and who were still under 18 on one December 2005 who were subsequently not charged or cautioned for any offence.

There were around 27,000 persons on the National DNA Database who were under 18 years of age at the time they were arrested and had a DNA sample taken but who had attained the age of 18 by one December 2005 who were subsequently not charged or cautioned for any offence.

These figures were obtained from data extracted from the Police National Computer (PNC) since they are not available from the National DNA Database.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to make estimates of the number of *(a)* juveniles, *(b)* women and *(c)* members of ethnic minorities who will be registered on the national DNA database by 1 January 2010; and if he will make a statement. [66383]

Andy Burnham: We currently have no plans to estimate the future composition of the National DNA Database by age, gender or ethnicity. The right hon. Gentleman will be aware from my answer to his earlier question (41099) that forecasts are made of the overall growth rate and total number of people on the Database. Information is currently being collected from police forces on the use made of DNA for crime detection during the financial year April 2005 to March 2006. When the new data are available, the forecast will be reviewed. It is expected this will be in July 2006.

Domestic Violence

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will introduce legislation to define domestic violence; and if he will make a statement. [64880]

Hazel Blears: Legislation is not required as, since 2004, the Government have a commonly agreed definition of domestic violence:

'Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality.'

This replaces the various definitions previously used by Government Departments and agencies. The definition was agreed by members of the Inter-Ministerial Group for Domestic Violence which is chaired by the right hon. Baroness Scotland, the Minister of State for Criminal Justice and Offender Management.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what definition he uses of domestic violence; and what the Government's policy is on the intervention of police officers in domestic incidents. [65182]

Hazel Blears: The common Government definition (agreed in 2004) of domestic violence is:

'Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members', regardless of gender or sexuality.'

This definition mirrors the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) definition, which ACPO have recommended that all police forces use.

The Government support the ACPO 'Guidance on Investigating Domestic Violence' which states that:

'action taken at all stages of the police response should ensure the effective protection of victims and children while allowing the criminal justice system to hold the offender to account. An effective and proactive investigation should be completed in all cases where a domestic violence incident is reported.'

This guidance has been promulgated in England and Wales through the Centrex (Central Police Training and Development Authority) and CPS training for all police officers and Crown Prosecution Service prosecutors. By 2008, all police officers, CPS prosecutors and caseworkers will be trained in domestic violence.

General Election Leaflets

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the remarks of the Minister of State for Immigration, Citizenship and Nationality, of 21 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 214–15, if he will list *(a)* the candidates and *(b)* the parties responsible for the general election leaflets from which he quoted; which were the candidates' leaflets which he described as verging on the racist; if he will list the newspaper advertisements which he suggested contained misinformation and lies; and if he will correct the incorrect information to which he referred. [61672]

Mr. McNulty: I will write to the hon. Member.

General Pinochet

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the total public expenditure was on the arrest and detention of General Pinochet. [50528]

Hazel Blears: The total cost to public funds of the extradition case of Senator Pinochet was £3,857,108.58. The breakdown of this is as follows:

1. Total costs incurred by the Home Office: £670,588.82, comprising:

Treasury Solicitor's fees £63,150.00*

Disbursements (mainly counsel's fees) £292,385.93*

Costs of the Kingdom of Belgium and Amnesty International £155,081.68

Costs of medical examination on 5 January 2000 £11,751.25

Responding to public correspondence (this covers staff costs where letters were handled in house and Central Office of Information fees where letters were contracted out) £10,941.05

Staff costs (estimated) £165,778.91*

Of these two amounts £28,500.00 was recovered from Senator Pinochet under costs orders made against Senator Pinochet by the High Court.

2. Total costs incurred by the Crown Prosecution Service: £676,691.00, comprising:

Counsel's fees £425,077.00

Staff costs (estimated) £137,055.00

Other costs (interpreters, travel and subsistence and photocopying) £114,559.00

3. Total costs incurred by the legal secretariat to the law officers: £60,000.00, comprising:

Staff costs (estimated) £60,000.00

4. Total costs incurred by the Lord Chancellor's Department: £1,209,775.05:

The Law Lords ordered that Senator Pinochet's costs should be met from central funds for the first two hearings before the House of Lords in the unusual circumstances of the case. The costs paid from central funds were as follows:

for the first hearing in the House of Lords £270,935.89; and

for the application to set aside the judgment following the first hearing in the House of Lords £151,361.30.

The costs of those divisional court hearings in which Senator Pinochet was successful or which did not proceed, and the costs of the committal proceedings in Bow Street magistrates court from 27 September to 1 October 1999, were also ordered to be paid from central funds. The costs of these hearings were £787,477.86.

All these costs were ordered to be paid under Section 16 of the Prosecution of Offences Act 1985, and they fall to be paid out of the Lord Chancellor's Department's portion of central funds.

Senator Pinochet received no legal aid funding in any of the proceedings against him.

5. Treasury Solicitor's fees: £100,053.76, comprising:

Amicus Curiae (costs and disbursements including counsel's fees): £71,029.00

Other costs and disbursements: £29,024.76

6. Total security costs: £1,200,000.00:

Responsibility for Senator Pinochet's protection and detention were the responsibility of the Metropolitan Police. For security reasons, it has long been the practice of successive Government's not to provide information about police operations relating to protection.

The costs incurred by Surrey police relating to general policing and public order matters in relation to Senator Pinochet's residence in Wentworth were £1,200,000.00.

All of the above figures include value added tax where appropriate.

Home Detention Curfew Scheme

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners released on the home detention curfew scheme were subsequently recalled to prison before their sentence expiry date for committing violent crimes. [45868]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information requested is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Imitation Weapons

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the extent of the use of imitation and replica weapons by criminals. [65425]

Hazel Blears: Imitation weapons were used in 30 per cent. of non-air weapon offences in 2006. Detailed figures are published in Quarterly Crime Statistics and Violent Crime Overview 26 January 2006.

The Violent Crime Reduction Bill includes a number of new provisions to tackle the use of imitation firearms. These include a ban on the manufacture or sale of realistic imitation firearms; tougher manufacturing standards to prevent imitation firearms being converted to fire live ammunition and tougher sentences for carrying imitation firearms.

Table 3.03: Crimes recorded by the police in England and Wales in which firearms were reported to have been used by type of principal weapon

Number of offences

	1998–99[1]	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*[2]	*2002–03*[3]	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Long-barrelled shotgun	322	353	303	380	361	424	305
Sawn-off shotgun	320	340	305	332	310	294	293
Handgun							
Converted imitation	—	—	—	—	—	—	20
Reactivated	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
Converted air pistol	—	—	—	—	—	—	18
Other	—	—	—	—	—	—	866
Type unknown	—	—	—	—	—	—	3,441
Handgun total	2,687	3,685	4,109	5,874	5,549	5,144	4,347
Rifle	43	67	36	64	52	48	55
Imitation firearm							
Imitation handgun	—	—	—	—	—	—	354
Soft air weapon	—	—	—	—	—	—	200
BB gun	—	—	—	—	—	—	2,625
Deactivated firearm	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Blank firer	—	—	—	—	—	—	27
Other Imitation	—	—	—	—	—	—	126
Imitation firearm total	566	823	787	1,245	1,815	2,146	3,333
Unidentified firearm	665	762	950	1,176	1,431	1,356	1,462
Other firearm	[4]	[4]	[4]	[4]	[4]	[4]	9
Unconverted starting gun	—	—	—	—	—	—	515
CS gas							

Table 3.03: Crimes recorded by the police in England and Wales in which firearms were reported to have been used by type of principal weapon

Number of offences

	1998–99[1]	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02[2]	2002–03[3]	2003–04	2004–05
Pepper spray	—	—	—	—	—	—	140
Machine gun	—	—	—	—	—	—	25
Stun-gun	—	—	—	—	—	—	142
Other converted imitation weapon	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Other reactivated weapon	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Disguised firearm	—	—	—	—	—	—	14
Other firearms (specified)	—	—	—	—	—	—	323
Other firearm total	606	813	980	952	730	926	1,178
All weapons excluding air weapons	5,209	6,843	7,470	10,023	10,246	10,338	10,964
Air weapon	8,665	10,103	10,227	12,377	13,822	13,756	11,825
All weapons	13,874	16,946	17,697	22,400	24,070	24,094	22,789

[1] There was a change in the counting rules for recorded crime on 1 April 1998.
[2] Figures may have been inflated by some police forces implementing the principles of the National Crime Recording Standard before 1 April 2002.
[3] The National Crime Recording Standard was introduced on 1 April 2002. Figures for some crime categories may have been inflated by this.
[4] Included in 'Other firearm' total.

Immigration Act

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people under 18 years are currently detained under Immigration Act powers. [64936]

Mr. McNulty: The number of children detained with their families under Immigration Act powers will change from day to day. However, internal management information shows that, as at 19 April 2006, there were 46 children detained with their families under Immigration Act powers: 42 at Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre and four at Tinsley House Immigration Removal Centre. These figures are not broken down into asylum and non-asylum cases. These individuals were all detained as part of family groups whose detention was considered necessary. The figures provided do not constitute part of the National Statistics and are based on management information. This information has not been quality assured under National Statistics protocol and should be treated as provisional.

Information on the number of persons detained, as at 31 December 2005, broken down by those who are under 18 years of age, are published in the Quarterly Asylum Bulletin, on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Immigration and Nationality Directorate

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Immigration and nationality directorate will notify Mrs. Robina Kouses, ref: LR1600016626/1 of her immigration status. [65489]

Mr. McNulty: The immigration and nationality directorate informed Mrs. Kouses of her immigration status on 9 December 2005.

Immigration Detention

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) if he will make it his policy to ensure that no decision to detain for purposes of immigration control is made unless a formal age assessment has been undertaken by social services; [66783]

(2) if he will establish independent age assessment dispute panels comprised of social workers, paediatricians and relevant professionals as part of his immigration detention policy. [66784]

Mr. McNulty: We are currently reviewing ways in which the age assessment process might be improved. No decision has yet been made on whether independent age assessment dispute panels will be established.

A person claiming to be under 18 will not be treated as an adult for detention purposes unless there is credible and clear documentary evidence that they are 18 years of age or over, or a full age assessment by social services is available stating that they are 18 years or over, or their physical appearance/demeanour very strongly indicates that they are significantly older than 18 and no other credible evidence exists to the contrary.

Immigration Detention

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make it his policy to publish monthly statistics on the detention of children for immigration purposes, including *(a)* overall numbers of children detained, *(b)* the average length of detention of children, *(c)* the number of asylum applications involving age dispute issues and *(d)* the numbers of age disputed asylum applicants who are detained. [66665]

Mr. McNulty: Statistics on numbers of children detained for immigration purposes and their length of detention are published on a quarterly basis in the asylum statistics bulletin. This can be used to calculate an approximate average time in detention. There are no plans to publish these statistics on a monthly basis.

The number of asylum cases involving age dispute issues is published in the annual bulletin, Asylum Statistics United Kingdom, in table 2.4, but the number of them who are detained is not held centrally. There are no plans to publish these statistics on a quarterly or annual basis broken down by months.

The latest available statistics can be found on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on his policy on the detention of children; and what assessment he has made of the extent to which it conforms to international standards and guidelines. [66667]

Fiona Mactaggart: Young people under 18 may only be sent to custody as a last resort, where the seriousness of the offence or offences committed makes custody unavoidable. Of the roughly 190,000 young people each year who are found to have offended, only about 4 per cent. are sentenced to custody.

The Government are committed to ensuring that non-custodial interventions are used wherever possible. We have taken major steps to bring that about, for example through the introduction and development of the Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme.

The Government's policy is in accordance with our international commitments, including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. We currently have a Reservation against Article 37*(c)* of the Convention, which relates to the mixing of under- and over-18-year-olds. We will be reviewing the continuing need for that reservation in the near future.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent study he has made of alternatives to the detention of children that are used in other countries for the purpose of immigration control. [66672]

Mr. McNulty: We are currently conducting a review of the now discontinued American Appearance Assisted Program (AAP) in order to establish whether this provides a suitable model for UK purposes.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action his Department is taking *(a)* to monitor and *(b)* to reduce transfers between different detention centres where transfers involve children. [66782]

Mr. McNulty: There are no specific arrangements to monitor the number of movements of families with children between immigration removal centres. Transfers are kept to the minimum necessary. A dedicated team deals with the allocation of family accommodation and every effort is made to accommodate families in one location throughout their stay, usually at Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make it his policy that assessment should be carried out to establish whether it would be better for a child to be detained with his or her family, or separated from it, as part of immigration control procedures. [66785]

Mr. McNulty: It has very occasionally been the case that, once a child is detained with his/her parents, it has become clear that there are parenting or child protection issues that require intervention from local social services. These issues are never ignored, and the safety and well-being of the child is always paramount in such cases.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will ensure that legal advice and representation are available to all who are detained for purposes of immigration control. [66786]

Mr. McNulty: Information is available at all immigration removal centres (IRCs) about how detainees can obtain legal advice and representation. Information about local firms of solicitors and legal advisers is kept in the libraries of all centres.

The Legal Services Commission is currently running weekly advice workshops in a number of IRCs. Detainees who do not have legal representation are able to access 30 minutes of free advice at the end of which the client will be taken on or referred onwards.

International Arrest Warrants

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he plans to put before the House his proposals to amend the law to prevent individuals from applying for international arrest warrants; and what discussions he has had on this issue with foreign Governments since 1 February. [66050]

Andy Burnham: I cannot indicate at this stage when proposals may be put before Parliament. The Government are still considering a range of issues relating to the issuing of arrest warrants in international cases, but has not yet concluded what changes, if any, are required to existing legislation. Since 1 February, my Department has had discussions on this issue with representatives of Israel.

Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of reports that the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam have used intimidation, extortion and violence against Sri Lankan Tamils living in the UK. [65749]

Hazel Blears: The LTTE has been a proscribed organisation in the UK since March 2001. As a consequence of being proscribed, fundraising, recruitment and a number of other activities by or on behalf of the LTTE are all offences under the Terrorism Act 2000.

Prosecution for those offences is a matter for the police and the prosecution authorities.

National Criminal Justice Board

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how frequently the National Criminal Justice Board meets; who sets the agenda; if he will place in the Library copies of the minutes of its meetings; and if he will make a statement. [32807]

Fiona Mactaggart: The National Criminal Justice Board (NCJB) meets monthly and its agenda is set by the Minister who chairs the meeting. I will place copies of the board's minutes in the Library.

The National Criminal Justice Board is the key high-level forum in which the services and departments reporting to the Home Secretary, the Lord Chancellor, and the Attorney-General, come together with the judiciary and others to exercise joint leadership over the Criminal Justice System.

The role of the NCJB is to develop the vision for Criminal Justice Reform and oversee its delivery, primarily by the 42 local criminal justice boards. The board's tasks include:

Agreeing outline delivery strategies for shared targets

Ensuring that agency targets and cross-cutting targets are consistent and support each other

Reviewing progress and overseeing the management of performance

Horizon scanning and agreeing areas where future joint work would be useful

A full membership list and a full description of the board's responsibilities contained in the Terms of Reference follow.

Membership list

Name	*Title/Department*
The right hon. Charles Clarke (chair for every third meeting)	Home Secretary
Lord Falconer QC (chair)	Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs
Lord Goldsmith QC (deputy chair)	Attorney-General
Baroness Scotland QC (deputy chair)	Minister of State, HO
Des Browne MP	Chief Secretary, HM Treasury
Mike O'Brien MP QC	Solicitor-General
Paul Goggins MP	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, HO
Fiona Mctaggart MP	Parliamentary Under-Secretary, HO
The right hon. Harriet Harman QC MP	Minister of State, DCA
Alex Allan	Permanent Secretary, DCA
Jonathan Nancekivell-Smith	Cabinet Office
Sir Ronald De Witt	Chief Executive, HM Courts Service
Clare Dodgson	Chief Executive, Legal Services Commission
Richard Foster	Chief Executive, CPS
Chris Fox QPM BSc DIS (representative Maria Wallis)	President, ACPO (Chief Constable, Devon and Cornwall)
Sir John Gieve	Permanent Secretary, HO
Tim Godwin	Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police
Bob Jones	Association of Police Authorities
Sir Igor Judge	President of Queen's Bench Division, Chair of the Criminal Justice Council
Moira Wallace	Director General, CPCT, HO
Ken Macdonald QC	Director of Public Prosecutions, CPS
Professor Rod Morgan	Chair, Youth Justice Board
Vacant (Helen Edwards—Acting)	Chief Executive, NOMS
Kieran Brett	No. 10 Policy Unit
John Suffolk	Director General, CJ IT
Jane Furniss	Acting Chief Executive, OCJR
Neil Ward	Service Director, Crime, HMCS

National Criminal Justice Board: Terms of Reference

The National Criminal Justice Board is responsible for supporting local boards to deliver the CJS's Public Service Agreement on the justice gap and confidence.

It will do this by:

Removing barriers to joint working, focusing in on particular concrete aspects of the CJS business process

Strategic direction of resources to secure achievement of objectives

Horizon scanning to identify longer term opportunities and threats

Learning and transferring the lessons from local areas and agencies which have successfully innovated and offer lessons for the rest of the system

The National Criminal Justice Board also has specific responsibility for:

Combating inequality and discrimination in the CJS

Communication across the CJS

National Offender Management Service

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what arrangements there are under the National Offender Management Service to ensure joint working for *(a)* planning, *(b)* resourcing and *(c)* implementing the Wales Reducing Reoffending Action Plan; and if he will make a statement. [49055]

Fiona Mactaggart: A Wales Pathfinder Project was commissioned by the Home Office with the agreement of the Welsh Assembly Government to examine ways of delivering a reducing re-offending strategy within the specific Welsh context. The outcome led to the joint Ministerial launch of Joining Together in Wales: an Adult and Young People's Strategy to Reduce Re-offending.

The strategy is based on the strong partnership between the National Offender Management Service and the Welsh Assembly Government and forms the basis of a consultation to implement the strategy.

The outcome of the consultation will help inform the development of a joint action plan that will reflect both the Welsh Assembly Government's responsibilities and those of the National Offender Management Service to reduce re-offending in Wales.

Offences Against the Person Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will bring forward proposals that the courts impose a fine or community sentence as the first option for offences under Section *(a)* 18 and *(b)* 20 of the Offences Against the Person Act 1861; and if he will make a statement. [64863]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Government have no plans to restrict courts to non-custodial sentencing options for first time offenders for offences under Sections 18 and 20 of the Offences Against the Person Act 1861.

We established a Sentencing Guidelines Council in the Criminal Justice Act 2003. The Council is responsible for issuing guidelines on sentencing for the range of criminal offences. A consultation paper on assaults and other offences against the person was published last year and a draft guideline will be published in due course.

Offences Committed Abroad

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to enable offences which are committed abroad to be subject to further investigation in this country with a view to prosecution. [65788]

Fiona Mactaggart: As a general rule, our courts have jurisdiction to try offences that are committed within this country's territory only. This is because generally speaking the Government believe that trials are best conducted in the jurisdiction in which they occurred not least because there are very real difficulties associated with the obtaining of the evidence necessary to effectively prosecute here offences that are committed in foreign jurisdictions. The Government have no plans to depart from this general rule.

We have exceptionally, however, assumed extra-territorial jurisdiction over some serious crimes such as murder where the factors in favour of the ability to prosecute here outweigh those against. In many cases such jurisdiction is adopted where there is a consensus that action needs to be taken at the international level. Such offending includes terrorism, genocide, war crimes, hijacking, serious corruption, sex tourism and trafficking in human beings. Where extra-territorial jurisdiction is assumed it is often restricted to offences committed by UK nationals abroad.

Overseas Doctors

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether trainee doctors from the Commonwealth will require work permits before they can be interviewed and short listed for medical jobs. [64674]

Mr. McNulty: Work permits are only issued once a non-EEA national has been offered a relevant post and not at the interview or short listing stage. In most cases the work permit will only be issued where there are no suitable resident workers to take the job.

The work permit system applies to all non-EEA nationals coming to the UK for employment, unless they qualify under another category of the Immigration Rules. Commonwealth nationals who are not EEA nationals (who are not nationals of the UK, Cyprus or Malta) will therefore require a work permit unless they are otherwise eligible to work in the UK.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he held with *(a)* the British Medical Association, *(b)* organisations representing immigrant doctors and *(c)* NHS hospital trusts on the recent changes in immigration rules and their impact on doctors; and what discussions he had with the Secretary of State for Health. [65016]

Mr. McNulty: The permit free training rules were first amended in July 2005, Since then officials have been discussing with COPMED, the BMA Junior Doctors Committee and organisations representing overseas doctors the arrangements for those already in training and to agree what further guidance and clarification is needed to deal with the new arrangements.

The Department has been working closely with NHS Employers to provide guidance to the NHS.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what period of grace will be allowed to senior house officers in training in the NHS before they are asked to leave on the grounds of an expired visa. [65021]

Mr. McNulty: Senior House Officers training in the NHS with leave as a postgraduate doctor or dentist granted prior to the changes will continue on the same conditions as before. Overseas doctors and dentists can use this leave to complete their current training posts and to seek suitable new training posts. Doctors and dentists who want to remain in the UK beyond this time will need to apply for an extension of stay in another category.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether jobless doctors already in the UK will be able to apply for Tier 1 status. [65023]

Mr. McNulty: Those currently in the UK with leave as a postgraduate doctor or dentist will be able to use their existing leave to seek suitable new posts until that leave expires. Doctors and dentists wishing to remain after their leave expires will need to apply for an extension of stay in another category.

In the future, as is currently the case, doctors and dentists will not be granted leave to seek employment. As stated in the Command Paper, A Points-Based System: Making Migration Work for Britain published on 7 March, they will be admitted to the UK as Visitors in order to take the PLAB Test or IQE. If successful in the test, they will be able to switch into the new points based system if they meet the relevant requirements.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he plans to issue full guidelines on work permits, categories and the detailed operation of the new immigration rules. [65027]

Mr. McNulty: Full guidance on work permits can be found on the Working in the UK website at www.workingintheuk.gov.uk.

Full guidance on the new requirements of the Immigration Rules are already available on the IND website at: www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk.

Details of the implications of the changes for the medical community is available on the NHS Employers website at: www.nhsemployers.org.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether international medical graduates taking a medical job in the UK can switch the basis of their stay if they have *(a)* postgraduate leave, *(b)* leave as a visitor and *(c)* leave as a dependent of another migrant. [65034]

Mr. McNulty: There have been no changes to the switching provisions.

As before, those with leave as a postgraduate doctor or dentist can switch into leave as a work permit holder if they meet the relevant requirements.

Dependants of certain categories of the Immigration Rules are permitted to take employment in the UK, such as the dependents of work permit holders. However there is no provision for those in the UK with leave as a dependent to switch into work permit employment in their own right.

There has never been any provision to allow those present in the UK as visitors to switch into work permit employment.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether doctors with a work permit who change employers as part of their training programme will require a new work permit; and whether the new job is contestable by EU or EEA nationals.[65035]

Mr. McNulty: Under the current work permit arrangements, doctors on a training programme will be required to obtain a work permit for each part of their training.

Following the recently announced changes to the rules on Postgraduate Doctors and Dentists transitional arrangements have been put in place to ensure that those who were already in training in the UK on 7 March can switch into the work permit system without their posts needing to be advertised first.

The Home Office and the Department of Health are continuing to discuss the work permit arrangements for doctors and dentists in training programmes in the UK with the relevant bodies.

Port Security

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the basis was for the allocation of funding for security at the ports of Holyhead and Mostyn in North Wales for *(a)* 2005–06 and *(b)* 2007–08. [66028]

Mr. McNulty: All decisions relating to the allocation of funding of security at ports, including Holyhead and Mostyn, are taken in conjunction with the appropriate security authorities, ensuring that all relevant factors are taken into account.

Following consultation and widespread support we have consolidated from 2006–07 a range of financial provisions previously made for Counter Terrorism (CT) policing. This includes provision for Dedicated Security Posts (DSP) previously included in the general grant formula. North Wales will receive £3.7 million in DSP funding next year and will be able to bid for further CT funding from a £64 million pot that will be allocated on advice from the Terrorism and Allied Matters Committee of the Association of Chief Police Officers.

Special Constables

Mr. Donohoe: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many special constables there are in England and Wales. [65492]

Hazel Blears: The information requested for police officers is available from the 'Police Service Strength publication as at 31 March 2005'. This report was published on 25 July 2005 and is available in the Library of the House and on:www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs05/hosb1205.pdf

Police

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the planned funding levels are for *(a)* Derbyshire, *(b)* Leicestershire, *(c)* Nottinghamshire, *(d)* Lincolnshire and *(e)* Northamptonshire police forces for (i) 2006–07, (ii) 2007–08 and (iii) 2008–09. [63402]

Hazel Blears: Grant funding, where available, is set out in the table. Funding for 2008–09 will be announced in due course as part of the newly introduced multi year funding settlements.

£ million

Police authority	*Formula grant allocation 2006–07*	*Amending report receipts/ payments 2004–05*	*Amending report receipts/ payments 2005–06*	*Allocation net of amending reports/ receipts/ payments 2006–07*	*Formula grant allocation 2007–08*	*Special formula grant[1], specific grants and capital provision 2006–07*	*Special formula grant[1], specific grants[2,3] and capital provision 2007–08*	*Total grants 2006–07*	*Total grants 2007–08*
Derbyshire	102.0	0.0	0.3	102.3	105.8	14.3	14.7	116.6	120.5
Leicestershire	107.5	-0.3	-0.2	107.0	111.5	15.0	15.4	122.0	126.5
Lincolnshire	58.3	0.0	0.0	58.3	60.5	17.1	10.7	75.4	71.2
Northamptonshire	69.3	0.1	0.0	69.4	71.7	9.6	10.2	79.0	81.9
Nottinghamshire	127.8	-0.6	-0.4	126.8	132.5	17.6	17.2	144.4	149.7

[1] Special Formula Grant comprises the former specific grants Rural Policing Fund; Special Priority Payments; Forensic (DMA Expansion) Grant.

[2] Community Support Officers Continuation funding is based on a 3 per cent. uplift.

[3] 2007–08 figures exclude Pension Deficit Grant that will be based on actual net pensions' costs (estimates are available and used here for 2006–07); and Dedicated Security Posts funding, for which allocations for 2006–07 have been made and are included in the table.

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police per head of population there are in *(a)* England and Wales, *(b)* Avon and Somerset police constabulary, *(c)* Taunton Deane, West Somerset and Sedgemoor Basic Command Unit and *(d)* Taunton constituency. [64063]

Hazel Blears: The available information for England and Wales and Avon and Somerset constabulary is provided in the table.

The available data for the number of police officers per head of population in each BCU level in Avon and Somerset are provided in the table. Deployment of police officers in Avon and Somerset to basic command units is an operational matter for the chief constable.

Statistics by constituency are not collected centrally.

Police officers per 100,000 population by area as at 31 March 2005

	Male police officers	*Female police officers*	*Total police officers*
England and Wales	210	57	267
Avon and Somerset	182	43	225
Basic Command Unit1			
Bath and North East Somerset	—	—	130
Bristol	—	—	239
North Somerset	—	—	122
Somerset, East	—	—	106
Somerset, West	—	—	122
South Gloucester	—	—	110
BCU Total	—	—	225

[1] BCU data is not collected by gender.

Colin Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what he estimates the set-up costs of the new Yorkshire and Humberside police force will be; and from what main areas he expects the projected savings to come. [64985]

Hazel Blears: The cost of the proposed reorganisation of North Yorkshire, South Yorkshire, West Yorkshire and Humberside police is currently estimated at £39 million. Long-term savings made possible by the merger are estimated at around £18 million per annum. The precise projected level of these costs and savings is a matter for negotiations currently taking place. We have agreed to meet 100 per cent. of reasonable set up revenue and capital costs, net of reasonable savings.

The main projected savings will come from ongoing reductions in police authorities, command teams from four to one, savings in staff through redeployment and some natural wastage and economies of scale in administrative functions.

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether additional funding will be available in police budgets for 2006–07 for the merging of the Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire police forces. [65785]

Hazel Blears: We are committed to paying 100 per cent. of reasonable set up revenue and capital costs of restructuring, net of reasonable savings. The precise projected level of these costs and savings is a matter for negotiations currently taking place.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the governance arrangement of the new Yorkshire-wide police force will be. [65793]

Hazel Blears: An order made under section 32 of the Police Act 1996 amalgamating the Humberside, North Yorkshire, South Yorkshire and West Yorkshire police areas would provide for the establishment of a combined police authority. We have asked the existing police authorities to submit proposals as to the number of members to be appointed to the combined police authority and have indicated that we are ready to provide, for a transitional period, for a slightly larger authority than would be appropriate in the longer term. After the transitional period (which is expected to be for two years) the expectation would be that most police authorities would have no more than 23 members, although a higher number may be appropriate in the case of a new Yorkshire-wide police authority given to need to ensure that all upper tier local authorities in the region have at least one seat on the police authority. From 1 April 2008, when the new force would be established, the combined police authority would have the same duties and responsibilities as existing police authorities with the addition of the new functions provided for in schedule 2 to the Police and Justice Bill.

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the additional costs to individual police force budgets of merging the Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire police forces. [65809]

Hazel Blears: The estimated cost of the proposed restructuring in order to improve procedure service of the five East Midlands police forces is £77 million. We will pay 100 per cent. of reasonable set up revenue and capital costs, net of reasonable savings. The precise projected level of costs and savings is a matter for negotiations currently taking place.

Long run savings from restructuring are currently estimated at £16 million per annum in the East Midlands.

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the set-up costs of a strategic police force for Wales. [66033]

Hazel Blears: The estimated set-up costs of a strategic police force for Wales is £35 million. We are committed to paying 100 per cent. of reasonable set-up revenue and capital costs, net of reasonable savings. The precise projected level of these costs and savings is a matter for negotiations currently taking place.

Long-term savings made possible by the merger are currently estimated at around £16 million a year.

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what provision will be made for redundant staff in the event of police reorganisation in Wales. [66078]

Hazel Blears: The proposed merger of police forces into new strategic forces addresses an identified weakness in current provision and is intended to strengthen forces' ability to deliver protective services to the public. Decisions about future posts will be for the new strategic forces management teams to determine. The transfer of officers and staff to new strategic forces

will be governed by existing regulations and terms and conditions and, with regard to police staff, by the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment Regulations).

Prisons

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 15 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 2303W, on the Criminal Justice Act, how many prisoners have been given exactly 12-month sentences since the Act came into force; and what estimate has been made of the effect of custody plus on prison numbers. [65382]

Fiona Mactaggart: Since the Criminal Justice Act 2003 came into force for offences committed on or after 4 April 2005, 4,245 prisoners were received into prison with custodial sentences of exactly 12 months (the latest data are until the end of February 2006).

Sentencing in individual cases is entirely a matter for the courts. It is consequently difficult to forecast the effect of custody plus on the prison population with precision. We have modelled various assumptions which suggest an impact of between -675 prison places to +1,630 prison places, depending on how much the courts use the new sentence and the breach rate.

The Sentencing Guidelines Council will issue guidance to the courts on the use of custody plus. We are working with them, with sentencers and others to ensure that we are best prepared to absorb the impacts that the new sentence will bring.

These estimates have been made for internal planning purposes and do not constrain the discretion of sentencers in any way. The impacts will be monitored and updated as new data becomes available.

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps have been taken to set up an electronic system for the transfer of prisoners' educational records. [65460]

Fiona Mactaggart: New, interim arrangements have been rolling out in the three OLASS development regions—north east, north west and south west since January this year to enable electronic access to the offenders' individual learning plans. The specification for the national, longer term system is being developed and procured by the Learning and Skills Council in partnership with NOMS.

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many adult prisons have learning support assistants; [65461]

(2) what progress has been made in ensuring that each prison has a special educational needs co-ordinator. [65462]

Fiona Mactaggart: We do not collect information about the availability of learning support assistants in the adult estate and have no plans to introduce special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo) posts which have been funded for the juvenile estate. This is because, as part of the new Offenders' Learning and Skills Service planned and funded by the LSC, contracted providers will be required to assess individual learners' needs, develop a learning plan, and provide the tailored support which addresses these needs.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners were transferred between prisons in the last period for which figures are available. [65550]

Fiona Mactaggart: There were 97,975 prisoners transferred between prisons in 2005. Figures for transfers in 2006 are not yet available.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects all prisons holding children to comply with Prison Service Order 4950. [65582]

Fiona Mactaggart: All prison establishments are expected to follow the advice and guidance in Prison Service Orders (PSOs), and in particular to comply with their mandatory requirements.

The Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB) commissions and purchases all secure accommodation for sentenced and remanded young people. The terms of PSO 4950 have been agreed with the YJB. Where non-compliance with particular requirements is identified, the YJB works with providers to support them in achieving compliance.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the effect on the levels of mental health care in the community on the number of people serving prison sentences. [65587]

Fiona Mactaggart: Information is not available on the effect on community mental health services of prison population levels.

Although sentencing is a matter for the courts, we know that we continue to imprison too many people with mental health problems.

As part of Five Year Strategy for Protecting the Public and Reducing Re-offending (Cm 6717, 2006), we are conducting a study into the best way to manage offenders with mental health problems, and will work closely with the Department of Health to make sure they can get access to effective treatment, whether in prison, in hospital or in the community. A copy of the strategy is available in the Library as well as on the Home Office's website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/five-year-strategy?version=1.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he has taken to ensure that rehabilitative programmes are adapted to meet the specific needs of women prisoners. [65591]

Fiona Mactaggart: A new programme CARE (Choices, Actions, Relationships and Emotions) which addresses personal and circumstantial difficulties has been developed, and is currently being piloted. P-ASRO (Prisoners Addressing Substance Related Offending) has been provisionally accredited for use with women and FOR, a resettlement programme for short-term prisoners was accredited in April 2006.

Additionally, a democratic therapeutic community which offers a group therapy environment where women can explore and change problem behaviours relating to their offending has been established at Send prison. A programme for women with borderline personality

disorder and at high risk of self-harm is being piloted. Good practice guidelines for supporting women who report having been abused is available to all staff.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make it his policy to ensure that home leave is ordinarily available for women prisoners. [65594]

Fiona Mactaggart: Release on temporary licence for home leave is available equally to female and male prisoners who meet the eligibility criteria and pass a rigorous risk assessment. Full details of the eligibility criteria are set out in Prison Service Order 6300 Release on Temporary Licence which is available on the HM Prison Service website.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many places for women in open prisons have been provided in each of the last 10 years. [65596]

Fiona Mactaggart: The figures requested for women's open prisons are set out in the following table. There are no plans, at present, to increase capacity within the women's open prison estate.

Average number of places available by year for women's open and semi-open[1] prisons

	Askham Grange	*Drake Hall*[2]	*East Sutton Park*	*Morton Hall*[3]	*Total*
1996	128	284	94	—	506
1997	130	281	94	—	505
1998	130	288	94	—	512
1999	130	295	94	—	519
2000	131	270	94	—	495
2001	132	267	94	160	653
2002	139	300	94	225	758
2003	141	315	94	365	915
2004	150	315	94	391	950
2005	136	315	94	391	936

[1] Semi-open conditions: Prisoners who present a low risk to the public but who require a level of physical perimeter security to deter abscond

[2] Drake Hall was re-designated from open to semi-open in 2002.

[3] The function of Morton Hall was changed from a male to a semi-open women' s prison in 2001

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the appointment of accountable officers with responsibility for women prisoners at each establishment where women are held. [65597]

Fiona Mactaggart: All public sector prisons accommodating women do so exclusively. Each has a governor who is accountable to the Home Secretary through operational line management and the chief executive of the National Offender Management Service (NOMS). Two prisons in the contracted estate hold women. One of them has separate male and female sites, each with a head who is accountable to a director. Directors are accountable to the Home Secretary through their regional offender manager, the national offender manager and NOMS chief executive.

All prisons have an Independent Monitoring Board and are inspected by HM Inspectorate of Prisons. Both bodies are directly accountable to the Home Secretary. There are no plans to create additional or different levels or types of accountability.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many places there have been on prison drug treatment programmes in each of the last 10 years. [65600]

Fiona Mactaggart: The numbers of prisoners who have been on an intensive drug treatment programme are given in the following table. There are no centrally recorded figures prior to 2001–02.

	Entrants
2001–02	4,691
2002–03	4,386
2003–04	4,703
2004–05	7,621
2005–06	10,729

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has for special intensive courses in basic education and drug treatment to be completed by short-term prisoners while in custody. [65601]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Government recognise the value of short and smaller qualifications that allow offenders to progress towards full employability, but maintains that the key focus of offender learning should be on achieving results that lead to employment. The Government's proposed overhaul of the National Qualifications Framework in order to create a new Framework for Achievement by 2010 will increase flexibility and offer better opportunities for offender learners to build up credit towards qualifications in smaller units.

Short term prisoners are able to benefit from a comprehensive range of drug interventions that address the needs of low, moderate and severe drug dependency:

Clinical services (detoxification and/or maintenance prescribing programmes), available in all local/remand prisons;

CARATs (Counselling, Assessment, Referral, Advice and Throughcare services), available to all prisoners who are 18 and over;

The Juveniles Substance Misuse Service, delivered across the Juvenile estate;

Drug Rehabilitation Programmes—of which 40 are the innovative, high-intensity Short Duration Programme aimed primarily at those serving short sentences.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the selection process for the participation of prisoners in offending behaviour programmes. [65604]

Fiona Mactaggart: Prisoners are assessed and their needs identified through various processes, such as induction and sentence planning. Further assessments may be undertaken to ascertain the prisoner's suitability for particular interventions including offending behaviour programmes. Places are then prioritised and allocated accordingly.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will assess the merits of the creation of a specialist not-for-profit agency outside the prison service to co-ordinate investment, marketing and supply for prison industries. [65606]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Prison Service has taken a number of steps to increase the performance of prison industries. These include working with a private sector advisor to prison industries and reorganising resources to create a central business development, sales and contract team. Other options will be assessed once the outcome from these initiatives is clear.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he has taken to ensure that vocational training and works programmes in prisons are matched to basic labour shortages and skills gaps in the external labour market. [65607]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Department for Education and Skills, the Home Office and the Department for Work and Pensions have jointly published a Green Paper: Reducing Re-offending through Skills and Employment (December 2005). This puts the focus on jobs, with employers driving the design and delivery of programmes. One of the key aims of the Green Paper is to explore ways to help more offenders improve their skills and get jobs through better use of prison facilities, with skills training built into other activities such as workshops. The Prison Service will also seek to support more partnerships with commercial organisations to equip workshops with industry standard facilities.

The responsibility for the planning and delivery of skills in prisons is in the process of being transferred to the Learning and Skills Council who will ensure that the education and skills programmes in prisons relates to the needs of the labour market.

The National Offender Management Service is also seeking to improve the employment prospects of offenders by focusing on developing links with employers in sectors that have significant labour shortages. These sectors include utilities, hospitality and catering, the construction industry, sports and fitness and industrial cleaning.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his projection is of the prison population in England and Wales by *(a)* 2010 and *(b)* 2020; and if he will make a statement. [65618]

Fiona Mactaggart: The latest prison population projections are published in the Home Office Statistical Bulletin 10/05 "Updated and Revised Prison Population Projections, 2005–2011, England and Wales".

The projections span a total of seven years. There are currently no projected prison population figures beyond 2011.

Proscribed Terrorist Organisations

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what criteria the Government use when placing groups on his Department's list of proscribed terrorist organisations. [66366]

Hazel Blears: The criteria for proscription are set out in section 3 of the Terrorism Act 2000, as amended by section 21 of the Terrorism Act 2006. In reaching his decisions, the Secretary of State also takes into account a number of factors including:

- The nature and scale of an organisation's activities
- The specific threat that it poses to the UK
- The specific threat that it poses to British nationals overseas
- The extent of the organisation's presence in the UK
- The need to support other members of the international community in the global fight against terrorism.

Any decision by the Secretary of State to proscribe an organisation has to be endorsed by both Houses of Parliament.

Recidivism

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will reinstate the public service agreement target to reduce reoffending by 5 per cent. [65619]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office remains committed to its spending review 2002 public service agreement target to reduce re-offending by 5 per cent. by 2006 and the spending review 2004 public service agreement standard to at least maintain it at this level thereafter.

The Home Office strategic plan published in July 2004 also set out our commitment to working towards a 10 per cent. reduction by the end of the decade.

The Home Office will agree its next set of public service agreements as part of the 2007 comprehensive spending review.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of prisoners were reconvicted within two years of leaving prison in the last period for which figures are available. [65620]

Fiona Mactaggart: The most recent information on the recidivism of adult prisoners is published in "Reoffending of adults: results from the 2002 cohort". This is available online at: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs05/hosb2505.pdf. In particular, please see Table A.5 of that report.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) if he will make an annual oral statement to Parliament on progress made in implementing the National Action Plan to reduce reoffending; [65621]

(2) what the timetable is for delivery of the National Action Plan for reducing reoffending. [65803]

Fiona Mactaggart: We published the National Action Plan in July 2004. It set out the key actions we would take to reduce reoffending over the next 15 months. In

November 2005, the Government published a progress report setting out the considerable progress we had made in delivering the action plan.

This update on progress was published as part of a new document: The National Reducing Re-offending Delivery Plan. A copy of the Delivery Plan was placed in the Library of the House. This plan sets out the key actions the Government will take to reduce re-offending over the next 18 months. Regular reports on progress against delivery will be made available on the Home Office website. We have no plans to make an oral statement.

Remand

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will commission a comprehensive review of the role of remand in the criminal justice system. [65602]

Fiona Mactaggart: Bail and remand is an area of work which is kept under continuous review, with the aim of ensuring that appropriate decisions are made in accordance with the Bail Act 1976, and to improve the processes which underpin the management of bail.

We are working closely with criminal justice agencies and other stakeholders on a wide-ranging programme of work on bail and remand, directed by the National Criminal Justice Board and delivered at local level through the 42 Local Criminal Justice Boards. This programme focuses on supporting the remand decision-making process, through developing risk assessment tools and improving the information available to decision-makers; increasing first-time compliance with bail, for example through the use of telephone and text reminders and the greater use of sureties and securities; improving the management of bail through the use of inter-agency bail agreements; improving the enforcement of warrants when defendant fail to surrender to bail; and promoting the implementation of the Lord Chief Justice's Practice Direction on bail on dealing robustly with non-attendance.

Road Traffic Offences

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females convicted of an offence under section 14 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 have been fined the maximum amount in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available, broken down by age. [64702]

Paul Goggins: Available information from 1995 to 2004 (latest available) is given in the table.

2005 data will be available early in 2007.

Number of maximum fines[1] given at magistrates courts for offences under s.14 of the Road Traffic Act 1988[2], by sex and age-group, England and Wales 1995 to 2004

Number of offences

	Total fined maximum amount	*Age group*							
		17	*18–19*	*20–24*	*[3]25*	*26–29*	*30–39*	*40–49*	*50+*
1995									
Male	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Female	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Other	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
1996									
Male	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Female	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Other	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1997									
Male	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—
Female	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Other	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—
1998									
Male	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Female	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Other	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1999									
Male	3	—	—	—	—	—	2	1	—
Female	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Other	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	3	—	—	—	—	—	2	1	—
2000									
Male	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—
Female	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Other	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—

Number of maximum fines[1] given at magistrates courts for offences under s.14 of the Road Traffic Act 1988[2], by sex and age-group, England and Wales 1995 to 2004

Number of offences

	Total fined maximum amount	*Age group* *17*	*18–19*	*20–24*	*[3]25*	*26–29*	*30–39*	*40–49*	*50+*
2001									
Male	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Female	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Other	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2002									
Male	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
Female	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Other	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	2	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
2003									
Male	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Female	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Other	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
2004									
Male	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Female	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Other	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

[1] L2 = £500 for offences under s. 14 Road Traffic Act 1988

[2] Seat belt offences.

[3] Ages 17 and 25 separate as they are used as a default age, at Youth and adult courts respectively, when date of birth not known.

Sentencing

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his definition is of a short-term prison sentence. [65579]

Fiona Mactaggart: A short term prisoner is an offender sentenced to a custodial term of less than 12 months.

Sex Offenders

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what counselling is available to serious sex offenders *(a)* whilst in prison and *(b)* when released into the community to deal with a reliance on hardcore pornography. [65787]

Fiona Mactaggart: The main provision for serious sex offenders in prison is accredited offending behaviour programmes. Assessment and treatment would identify and seek to address unhelpful sexual preoccupations including pornography.

Serious sexual offenders will be subject to licence supervision and a multi-agency risk management plan. Licence conditions may include a requirement to participate in a treatment programme and where appropriate receive medical treatment.

Speeding

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many motorists stopped for breaking the speed limit in 2004 in *(a)* Southend, *(b)* Essex, *(c)* Hertfordshire, *(d)* the Metropolitan police area of London and *(e)* England and Wales received a (i) warning and (ii) caution. [64752]

Hazel Blears: The annual Home Office publication 'Offences relating to motor vehicles, England and Wales 2004, Supplementary tables', Table 18 gives data by police force area on written warnings (which includes formal cautions) issued by motoring offence groups. Copies of the above publications are available in the Library. The publications can also be accessed on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics (RDS) web site at: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/index.htm

It is not possible from the data collected centrally to identify Southend within the geographical area covered by the Essex police force.

2005 data will be available early in 2007.

Mrs. Maria Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many speeding offences occurred in Hampshire in each year since 1990. [64811]

Paul Goggins: Available information on speeding offences for the Hampshire police force area from 1990 to 2004 (latest available) is given in the table.

Data for 2005 will be available early in 2007.

Speeding offences[1] dealt with by official police action[2], Hampshire police force area, 1990 -2004

Number of offences

	Total offences dealt with[2]
1990	18,300
1991	18,000
1992	23,700
1993	25,100
1994	37,500
1995	37,600
1996	34,800
1997	33,600

Speeding offences[1] dealt with by official police action[2], Hampshire police force area, 1990 -2004

Number of offences

	Total offences dealt with [2]
1998	41,400
1999	54,500
2000	34,300
2001	34,900
2002	37,300
2003	51,000
2004	57,200

[1] Offences under the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 ss. 16, 81, 84, 86, 88 and 89; Motor Vehicles (Speed Limits on Motorways) Regs 1973; Parks Regulation (Amendment) Act 1926—byelaws made thereunder.

[2] Includes written warnings, fixed penalty notices and court proceedings.

Theft Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the operation of sections 4, 4A, 4B and 4C of the Theft Act 1968. [65037]

Hazel Blears: In general this part of the Theft Act 1968 appears not to give rise to operational problems. If the hon. Gentleman has any particular concern I would be glad to learn of it.

UK Identity and Passport Service

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what access the UK Identity and Passport Service has to information held by *(a)* HM Revenue and Customs and *(b)* the Valuation Office Agency. [66299]

Andy Burnham: The Identity and Passport Service is not routinely provided with information held by HM Revenue and Customs or the Valuation Office Agency. IPS will occasionally obtain information held by HMRC on a case-by-case basis (under the exemption in section 29 of the Data Protection Act 1998) where this is necessary for the prevention or detection of crime or the apprehension or prosecution of offenders.

Violent Crime Reduction Bill

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the likely effects of the Violent Crime Reduction Bill on *(a)* historical re-enactment groups and *(b)* collectors of historical weaponry. [65423]

Hazel Blears: The Bill provides a defence which will allow the sale of realistic imitation firearms for the purpose of specified historical re-enactments. Groups will also be allowed to use any realistic imitation firearms they currently possess and any firearms held on a certificate. De-activated firearms have been excluded from the definition of realistic firearm, as have imitations of firearms designed before 1870. The Bill will not stop collectors from keeping the realistic imitation firearms they already own but they will be unable to sell them in this country or to buy new ones unless it is for the purposes of a museum or gallery.

Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what response he has made to the report and recommendations of the Children's Commissioner on the Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre; and if he will make a statement. [66419]

Mr. McNulty: We responded, in February 2006, to each of the recommendations made by the Children's Commissioner in his report of his visit to Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre. A copy of our response has been placed in the House Libraries.

Work Permits

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many work permits were issued for *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses and auxiliary nurses from (i) Nigeria, (ii) Ghana and (iii) other African countries in each of the last 10 years. [65742]

Mr. McNulty: The following table displays the number of work permits issued for *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses and auxiliary nurses from (i) Nigeria, (ii) Ghana and (iii) other African countries each year since 2000. Figures of permits issued prior to 2000 are not available due to a change in Home Office IT systems.

Nationality/occupation	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*Total*
Ghana							
Doctor	0	7	10	18	19	18	72
Nurse	310	527	631	763	743	640	3,614
Total	310	534	641	781	762	658	3,686
Nigeria							
Doctor	0	28	55	64	88	97	332
Nurse	916	1,160	1,703	1,316	1,329	1,151	7,575
Total	916	1,188	1,758	1,380	1,417	1,248	7,907
Other African countries							
Doctor	0	229	1,000	830	718	472	3,249
Nurse	3,406	5,720	7,518	7,540	7,405	5,667	37,256
Total	3,406	5,949	8,518	8,370	8,123	6,1391	40,505
Total	4,632	7,671	10,917	10,531	10,302	8,045	52,098

Young Offenders

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what plans he has to develop the work of the Young Offender Programme through an increased number of partnership arrangements with employers; [65571]

(2) if he will assess with private sector companies the prospects for extending the approach taken by the National Grid Transco Foundation in training and resettling young offenders. [65608]

Fiona Mactaggart: The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) is working closely with National Grid to consider the options for extending the programme to other prison establishments as well as to offenders in the community. National Grid is also developing links with businesses outside the utilities sector.

Under the Reducing Re-offending Corporate Alliance, which was launched last November, NOMS is actively encouraging more businesses to engage with offenders, by working with them to improve their employability, by being involved in the design of training programmes, and by offering employment.

There is a strong emphasis in the Reducing Re-offending through Skills and Employment Green Paper, which was published in December 2005, on education and training for young offenders, including improving their access to programmes to ensure that they are ready to undertake work.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to ensure that the expenditure on young offenders is brought up to meet the level of additional expenditure that the Youth Justice Board has made on the juvenile estate. [65800]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Government has invested heavily in improved regimes for all prisoners, concentrating on activities such as education and vocational training, which are of particular value to young adults. To address the specific needs of this group, the Home Office has also established a project to develop a strategy and standards for the management of these offenders in custody and the community. This will include consideration of the financial implications of any proposed changes.

TREASURY

Barker Review

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the Barker Review's inquiry into planning policy. [66692]

John Healey: The Chancellor and the Deputy Prime Minister have invited Kate Barker, a member of the Monetary Policy Committee of the Bank of England, to conduct a review of land use planning in England. An interim report is due to be published in the summer. Further information, including the formal terms of reference is available at www.barkerreviewofplanning.org.uk

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will place in the Library copies of responses to the Barker Review. [66694]

John Healey: The responses to the call for evidence for the Barker Review of Land Use Planning will be available on www.barkerreviewofplanning.org.uk in due course. I have requested that Kate Barker make copies available to the House.

Benefit Eligibility

Michael Gove: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how long a national from another EU member state needs to have been resident in the UK before being eligible to receive child benefit; and what the residency period will be after directive 2004/38/EC comes into force; [66124]

(2) how long a national from another EU member state needs to have been resident in the UK before being eligible to receive *(a)* working tax credit and *(b)* child tax credit; and how long the residency periods will be after directive 2004/38/EC comes into force. [66135]

Dawn Primarolo: To claim tax credits or child benefit, irrespective of their nationality any person making a claim must be both present and ordinarily resident in the UK. This means that he or she must be physically present in the UK throughout the period of the award, although a temporary absence of up to eight, or in some cases, 12 weeks may be disregarded.

Since 1 May 2004, a person claiming child tax credit and child benefit must also have a right to reside in the UK under national or EC law. An EU national will generally only have a right to reside if they are working in the UK, or if they have been working in the UK for some time and ceased working. If they are not working in the UK, an EU national will generally only have a right to reside if they have sufficient resources or income to avoid becoming a burden on the social assistance system of the UK.

These rules will not change as a result of the introduction of the directive 2004/38/EC.

Business Investment

Chris Huhne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 25 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 1045W, on business investment, if he will give the page reference of the latest OECD Economic Outlook at which the requested data may be found. [67602]

John Healey: The data are available from the OECD database that supports the Economic Outlook through www.sourceOECD.org. This database is available through the House of Commons' Library. The following web address links to the Economic Outlook database within Source OECD, from where business investment and GDP data, in volume terms, can be downloaded for all OECD economies and the OECD as a whole. Business investment growth rates can also be determined using this data.

http://lysander.sourceoecd.org/vl=4960925/cl=24/nw=1/rpsv/oecd_database.htm

The Economic Outlook was published in late 2005, so 2004 is the latest year for which outturn data is available.

Climate Change

Colin Challen: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of when the measures set out in his speech to the UN ambassadors on 20 April will achieve a sustainable concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. [66416]

John Healey: The global nature of the causes and effects of climate change means that international action is crucial. The measures in the Chancellor of the Exchequer's speech to the UN ambassadors highlight how co-ordinated international action can bring significant emissions reductions. These proposals aim to drive forward effective multilateral action. In particular, the Multilateral Development Banks' Energy Investment Framework, and an extension of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme and the Clean Development Mechanism will have significant impacts in reducing global emissions, encouraging the development of a deeper and more liquid global carbon market. However, details of these proposals have not yet been finalised with international partners and institutions, so an assessment of their impact would be premature. Action is also needed to tackle greenhouse gas emissions from consumers, and the 1 Watt initiative which the Chancellor proposed has significant potential to reduce global emissions and should be accelerated.

Correspondence

Sir John Stanley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the Paymaster General will reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Tonbridge and Malling regarding her tax credits statement made on 22 June 2005. [66363]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 27 April 2006]:* I have replied to the right hon. Member.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he will answer the letter to him dated 14 February from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Julie Reid. [67484]

Dawn Primarolo: I have done so.

Council Tax

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the cost was of the one-off payment to pensioners towards their council tax bills in 2005–06; and what the estimated cost is for 2006–07. [66652]

Mr. Timms: The cost of the £200.00 payment to pensioners to help with their council tax bills in 2005–06 was £1,067 million. There are no plans to make a similar payment for 2006–07.

The tables can be viewed at DWP website at http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd4/expenditure.asp

Source:
DWP Expenditure tables.

Demographics

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the population in each electoral ward in the constituency of *(a)* Cleethorpes, *(b)* Great Grimsby, *(c)* Scunthorpe and *(d)* Brigg and Goole based on (i) the 2001 census, (ii) electoral registers and (iii) patient registers. [67043]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 2 May 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your question regarding the population in each electoral ward in the constituencies of *(a)* Cleethorpes, *(b)* Great Grimsby, *(c)* Scunthorpe and *(d)* Brigg and Goole based on (i) the 2001 Census, (ii) electoral rolls and (iii) patient registers. (67043)

The table attached provides the information you have requested. The most recent population estimates for wards are for mid-2002. The ward population estimates have been published with the status of "experimental statistics". Therefore the estimates should be treated with some care.

The latest available ward electorate counts are for December 2005. The ward electorate counts are for parliamentary electors, including attainers. Local government electorate counts are not available at ward level.

It should be noted that the number of people eligible to vote is not the same as the resident population aged 18 and over. There are numerous reasons for this. For example not everyone who is usually resident is entitled to vote (foreign citizens from outside of the EU and Commonwealth, prisoners, etc. are not eligible), some people do not register to vote and people who have more than one address may register in more than one place. Further, there is inevitably some double counting of the registered electorate as electoral registration officers vary in how quickly they remove people from the registers after they have moved away from an area or after they have died. These factors have a differential impact from area to area.

The latest available ward patient register counts are for July 2004.

It should be noted that patient register counts differ from estimates of the usually resident population for a number of reasons. Patient registers include people who are in the country for at least three months, whereas population estimates are based on a usual residence definition requiring a stay of 12 months or more. The patient registers exclude individuals who are ineligible to be registered with a GP. People may be on a patient register after having left the country and not deregistered with their GP; similarly people may have moved to another area and not re-registered. Some patients may have more than one NHS number e.g. they may have been issued a temporary number for a short period. Again, these factors have a differential impact from place to place.

Wards in Brigg and Goole, Cleethorpes, Great Grimsby and Scunthorpe constituencies: population estimates, electorate counts (December 2005), and patient register counts (July 2004)

Ward Name	*Constituency*	*Population estimate constituency mid-2002*	*Parliamentary electors December 2005*	*Patient register July 2004*
Barton	Cleethorpes	9,600	7,857	10,256
Croft Baker	Cleethorpes	11,500	8,793	12,043
Ferry	Cleethorpes	10,300	8,460	10,916
Haverstoe	Cleethorpes	10,300	8,274	10,498
Humberston and New Waltham	Cleethorpes	10,100	8,626	10,934
Immingham	Cleethorpes	11,800	8,698	12,485

Wards in Brigg and Goole, Cleethorpes, Great Grimsby and Scunthorpe constituencies: population estimates, electorate counts (December 2005), and patient register counts (July 2004)

Ward Name	Constituency	Population estimate constituency mid-2002	Parliamentary electors December 2005	Patient register July 2004
Sidney Sussex	Cleethorpes	12,900	8,718	13,298
Waltham	Cleethorpes	7,000	5,631	7,153
Wolds	Cleethorpes	7,000	5,637	7,366
East Marsh	Great Grimsby	11,500	7,765	12,153
Freshney	Great Grimsby	10,000	7,560	10,485
Heneage	Great Grimsby	11,700	8,218	12,235
Park	Great Grimsby	11,800	8,968	12,516
Scartho	Great Grimsby	9,500	7,823	10,017
South	Great Grimsby	12,800	8,535	13,293
West Marsh	Great Grimsby	7,600	5,165	7,737
Yarborough	Great Grimsby	12,000	8,797	12,318
Ashby	Scunthorpe	9,300	7,575	9,764
Bottesford	Scunthorpe	11,500	9,385	11,763
Brumby	Scunthorpe	11 ,500	8,464	12,450
Crosby and Park	Scunthorpe	11,600	8,520	12,840
Frodingham	Scunthorpe	7,700	5,808	8,185
Kingsway with Lincoln Gardens	Scunthorpe	10,200	8,361	10,908
Ridge[1]	Scunthorpe	12,200	9,884	12,642
Town	Scunthorpe	7,300	5,604	8,215
Axholme Central	Brigg and Goole	6,600	5,405	7,069
Axholme North	Brigg and Goole	7,500	6,126	7,749
Axholme South	Brigg and Goole	6,700	5,581	7,110
Brigg and Wolds	Brigg and Goole	10,500	8,828	11,503
Broughton and Appleby	Brigg and Goole	6,400	5,254	6,620
Burringham and Gunness	Brigg and Goole	3,700	3,154	3,809
Burton upon Stather and Winterton	Brigg and Goole	10,900	8,856	11,326
Goole North	Brigg and Goole	9,900	8,035	10,343
Goole South	Brigg and Goole	9,100	7,024	9,745
Ridge[1]	Brigg and Goole	12,200	9,884	12,642
Snaith, Airmyn, Rawcliffe and Marshlai	Brigg and Goole	8,900	7,693	9,419

[1] Ridge ward falls within both Scunthorpe, and Brigg and Goole constituencies, data for the whole ward are shown.

Notes:

1. The mid-2002 ward population estimates are consistent with the published mid-2002 local authority estimates (September 2004 revisions) and have been rounded to the nearest hundred
2. Parliamentary electors are those people who are entitled to vote in parliamentary elections at Westminster and who meet the residence qualification. Those include overseas voters but exclude Peers and European citizens

Source:

Office for National Statistics

Departmental Initiatives

Lynne Jones: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the departmental initiatives for each year since 2000 which required bids for funding from *(a)* voluntary organisations and *(b)* local authorities together with the total resource allocated to each initiative in each year; how many successful bids there were in each year; what proportion this figure represents of the total bids received; and what assessment he has made of the costs of (i) preparing bids for each initiative and (ii) assessing those bids. [66014]

John Healey: During the period in question, the Treasury has not paid any grants directly to voluntary organisations or local authorities.

However, the Treasury oversees the allocation of resources from the Invest to Save Budget (ISB), which was established in 1998. The Treasury transfers resources to the relevant central Government sponsoring Department, who then allocate it directly to the delivery organisations. There have been eight rounds of resource allocation since this time. The first round was restricted to central Government Departments and their agencies; each subsequent round has been open to local authorities and the voluntary sector. In 2004, the ISB was re-branded as the 'ISB: Inclusive Communities Fund', with priority given to community level, voluntary sector-led initiatives. In total, some £97 million has been allocated to voluntary sector-led community projects since 1998. The Budget announced that a 9th resource allocation round would take place next year, with a focus on the third sector's role in building fairer communities and delivering public services. Further information about the ISB is available from www.isb.gov.uk.

Equal Pay

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps are undertaken within his Department to ensure that women are obtaining equal pay to men doing work of equal value. [65863]

John Healey: HM Treasury undertakes annual gender pay reviews. Three reviews have been undertaken and these have shown no significant differences in pay between men and women.

EU Financial Services Action Plan

Michael Gove: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer at what stage of the *(a)* legislative and

(b) implementation process the measures in the EU Financial Services Action Plan are; and if he will make a statement. [66154]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Of the 42 measures contained in the EU Financial Services Action Plan, 41 have been adopted; only the transfer of seat directive has still to be adopted.

Of these 42 measures, 16 are commission communications or recommendations which do not require transposition into member states' national law and regulations. For a further seven measures the deadline for implementation has not yet been reached. The remaining 19 measures have been implemented, although in the case of the directive on occupational retirement provision there remains a small element of the directive which has yet to be transposed.

Financial Capability

Mr. Love: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what initiatives his Department and its non-departmental bodies support to promote *(a)* financial education, *(b)* financial advice, *(c)* financial inclusion and *(d)* financial capability; and for each initiative (i) which organisations are involved in delivering it and (ii) how much funding is provided by (A) his Department and its non-departmental public bodies, (B) other Government Departments, (C) the private sector and (D) the voluntary sector. [66576]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Government fully support initiatives to promote the increase of financial education and inclusion. Financial education generally is delivered through the Department for Education and Skills and it is for that Department to decide which organisations should help deliver it. Although we promote financial education as part of a government initiative such as the Child Trust Fund or Saving Gateway, costs are not broken down to show separate funding for financial education. The cost of the Child Trust Fund is forecast at £240 million each for the years 2005–06 to 2007–08 and £15 million for the second pilot launched in spring 2005 for Saving Gateway.

A range of stakeholder savings and investment products was launched in April 2005, in support of this a publicity campaign to raise awareness of the features and benefits of these products ran from September 2005 to March 2006 at a total cost of £4 million.

In promoting financial inclusion the Government have established a framework for delivery, including a Financial Inclusion Fund of £120 million over three years and a Financial Inclusion Taskforce to oversee progress. The taskforce was formally launched in February 2005. Details of the fund are published on the Treasury website at www.hm-treasury.gov.uk.

The National Strategy for Financial Capability was set up in 2004 and is led by the Financial Services Authority in partnership with the Government, the financial services industry and voluntary organisations. The FSA published, in March 2006 a programme on initiatives to promote financial capability. Further information about the strategy can be found on the FSA website at http://www.fsa.gov.uk/financial_capability/. While total costs incurred by all partners are not available, the FSA's contributions were £2.5 million in 2003–04, £4 million in 2004–05, and £8 million in 2005–06. The FSA's business plan for 2006–07 includes provision for up to £10 million. The FSA has not yet set a budget for 2007–08.

The Treasury does not keep records of the funding of these issues by other Government Departments or the private and voluntary sectors which are matters for them to decide.

Mr. Love: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much funding was provided by Government departments and non-departmental public bodies to support initiatives to promote *(a)* financial education, *(b)* financial advice, *(c)* financial inclusion and *(d)* financial capability in (i) 2003–04, (ii) 2004–05 and (iii) 2005–06; and how much will be provided under current spending plans in (A) 2006–07 and (B) 2007–08. [66620]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Government fully supports the need to improve financial education and inclusion. Although we promote financial education as part of the Child Trust Fund and Saving Gateway initiatives there is no breakdown of the costs of these budgets to show separate funding for financial education. However, the cost of the Child Trust Fund is forecast at £240 million each for the three years 2005–06 to 2006–07 and £15 million was provided to launch the second Saving Gateway pilot in spring 2005. Likewise there is no specific funding for financial advice though £4 million provided to fund a publicity campaign to raise awareness of Stakeholder savings and investment products from September 2005 to March 2006.

The Financial Inclusion Fund launched in April 2005 has a budget of £120 million over three years and will largely support the increase in the provision of free face to face money advice and provide support to third sector lenders providing affordable credit. Details of the breakdown of the fund have been published and can be found on the Treasury website at www.hm-treasury.gov.uk.

The National Strategy for Financial Capability is led by the Financial Services Authority (FSA) in partnership with the Government, the financial services industry and voluntary organisations. The FSA published, in March 2006, a programme of initiatives to promote financial capability http://www.fsa.gov.uk/pubs/other/fincapdelivering.pdf. While total costs incurred by all partners are not available, the FSA's contributions were £2.5 million in 2003–04, £4 million in 2004–05 and £8 million in 2005–06. The FSA's Business Plan for 2006–07 includes provision for up to £10 million. The FSA has not yet set a budget for 2007–08.

Fuel Prices

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average *(a)* dollar and *(b)* sterling price was for a barrel of crude oil extracted in (i) the United Kingdom and (ii) each OPEC country in each week since October 2005. [66905]

John Healey: Weekly price information (in US dollars per barrel) for the main benchmarks of each oil producing country is available at the following website: http://tonto.eia.doe.gov/dnav/pet/pet_pri_wco_k_w.htm

Exchange rate data is available at the following website: http://www.bankofengland.co.uk/statistics/index.htm

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average price was of a gallon of unleaded fuel in *(a)* Essex, *(b)* Hertfordshire, *(c)* inner London and *(d)* outer London in each week since August 2005. [66906]

Malcolm Wicks: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Gershon Review

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what progress has been made with implementing the recommendations of the Gershon review. [67453]

Mr. Des Browne: The Budget 2006 reported provisional annual efficiency gains totalling £6.4 billion by the end of December 2005 and 40,400 gross workforce reductions, including 7,150 reallocations to frontline services. Departments will report on further progress in their forthcoming departmental reports.

Import Duties

Mr. Burrowes: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the Government are doing to ensure the effective collection of import duties at UK airports. [66697]

John Healey: All importers, or agents acting on their behalf, are legally obliged to lodge customs declarations when bringing goods into the UK from non-member states of the European Community. The overwhelming majority of import declarations are made by electronic means and HM Revenue and Customs computer system (CHIEF) calculates the amount of duties due. To ensure that the right amount of duties is paid import declarations may be checked at either pre or post-clearance to confirm their accuracy.

Income Tax

Andrew George: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 19 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 692W, on income tax, what further estimates he has made of income to the Inland Revenue if the same incomes in the upper rate of income tax has only applied to those earning over £100,000. [66995]

Dawn Primarolo: The following table provides yields from introducing an additional higher tax rate on earnings and savings income above £100,000.

Year: 2006–07

Higher rate of tax (per cent.)[1]	*Yield (£ billion)*
45	1.9
50	3.8
51	4.2
52	4.6
53	5.0
54	5.3
55	5.7
56	6.1
57	6.5
58	6.9
59	7.3
60	7.6
65	9.6
70	11.5

[1] The new higher tax rate applies to earnings and savings income only. Dividends at the higher rate remain taxed at 32.5 per cent.

The income tax information is based upon the 2003–04 Survey of Personal Incomes (SPI) and projected forward in line with 2006 Budget assumptions.

The figures exclude any estimate of behavioural response, which could be significant given the scale of the changes.

Industrial Injury Claims

John Mann: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what representations he has received on the practice of banks loaning money for legal expenses in pursuing industrial injury claims. [65160]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: So far as I am aware, the Treasury has not received any representations on this practice.

International Finance Facility

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what use he expects to be made of the international finance facility to make progress with the research, development and delivery of new vaccines and new diagnostic methods to fight malaria, tuberculosis and other diseases in the developing world. [66343]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The international finance facility for immunisation (IFFIm) will provide $4 billion over the next 10 years to support efforts of the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation (GAVI Alliance) to tackle preventable diseases in the 72 poorest countries in the world. France, Italy, Spain, Sweden, Norway, Brazil and the UK have already announced that they will make contributions to the IFFIm, and on 25 April, South Africa announced that they would also contribute to the IFFIm. It is expected that the IFFIm will save a total of 10 million lives from preventable diseases, including five million children before 2015.

Alongside the IFFIm, the UK and G8 partners are currently working on the proposal for advanced market commitments (AMCs). AMCs are a potentially powerful and cost-effective market-based mechanism to accelerate and stimulate the development and availability of priority new vaccines against diseases like pneumococcus, malaria and TB which kill millions in each year in developing countries.

Low-income Households

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many households earning less than £425 per week *(a)* pay income tax and *(b)* do not claim working tax credit. [66092]

Dawn Primarolo: Information for part *(a)* is not available except at disproportionate costs since our income tax data covers individuals, not households.

For part *(b)*, estimates of the number of families, broken down by income used to calculate entitlement, who are entitled to, but not claiming tax credits are given in tables 4 and 11 of the publication "Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit Take-up Rates 2003–04" available on the HMRC website at http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/takeup_rates_2003-04—mar06.pdf. Estimates for those earning below the exact income level specified (£425 per week) would be available only at disproportionate cost.

Microgeneration Technologies

Chris Huhne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much of the funding to develop microgeneration technologies announced in the Budget has been allocated for each financial year; and how much of the funding in each financial year is additional funding to that previously allocated. [66938]

John Healey: The £50 million announced in the Budget for microgeneration is divided equally between financial years 2006–07 and 2007–08.

This £50 million is in addition to the £30 million that had already been announced for the Low Carbon Buildings Programme.

Millennium Development Goals

Colin Challen: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of when the Millennium Development Goals will be achieved. [66417]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were agreed at the United Nations Millennium summit in September 2000. The goals range from halving global income poverty and protecting the environment, to human development objectives like improving health and sanitation, achieving universal primary education and tackling discrimination against women. Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) has been placed at the centre of Britain's international development effort. DFID's key aims and objectives, as set out in its public service agreement, are the attainment of the MDGs by 2015.

On income poverty there has been progress but is has been very uneven and on current trends few African countries will reach the MDG by 2015.

On the human development goals the situation is more concerning and South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa are off-track on all of them.

The MDGs and global poverty were at the heart of the UK presidencies of the EU and the G7/8 in 2005. The international community committed to raise an additional $50 billion of aid by 2010, to cancel 100 per cent. of the multilateral debts of the world's poorest countries, and to launch the international finance facility for immunisation. G8 leaders also agreed to achieve universal access to AIDS treatment for all those who need it by 2010, and work on advance market commitments for vaccines against malaria, HIV/AIDS and other priority diseases.

These are the sorts of measures needed to get progress towards the MDGs back on track. The key challenge now is for donors to fully implement their commitments and for developing countries to develop 10-year plans to meet the MDGs.

Mortgage Income Tax Relief

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many households benefited from mortgage income tax relief in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* 1997–98. [66451]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The numbers of households benefiting from mortgage interest relief in 1996–97 and 1997–98 are available at http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/mir/table5-2.xls.

Shared Appreciation Mortgages

Mr. Fallon: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent discussions *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials have had with the Financial Services Authority on shared appreciation mortgages. [67507]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: HM Treasury officials have had one conversation with the Financial Services Authority about shared appreciation mortgages in 2006.

Pay Statistics

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the gross weekly pay of full-time employees in the constituency of *(a)* Cleethorpes, *(b)* Great Grimsby, *(c)* Scunthorpe and *(d)* Brigg and Goole was in each year since 2000. [67053]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 2 May 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question to ask what the average earnings of full-time employees in a) Cleethorpes, b) Great Grimsby, c) Scunthorpe and d) Brigg and Goole constituencies was in each year since 2000. (67053)

Average earnings are estimated from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), and are provided for full time employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey period was not affected by absence. This is the standard definition used for ASHE. The ASHE does not collect data on the self employed and people who do unpaid work.

I attach tables showing Average Gross Weekly Earnings by parliamentary constituency for the years 2000 to 2005 for Full Time Employees on Adult Rates. These statistics are already published on the National Statistics website at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=13101.

The ASHE, carried out in April of each year, is the most comprehensive source of earnings information in the United Kingdom. It is a one per cent sample of all employees who are members of pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) schemes.

Gross weekly (£) pay for all employee jobs[1] by parliamentary constituency

	Cleethorpes			
	By place of work		*By place of residence*	
	Median	*Mean*	*Median*	*Mean*
2000	**329	*360	[2]	[2]
2001	*362	*407	[2]	[2]
2002	*381	*441	*358	402
2003	*423	*460	*383	428

Gross weekly (£) pay for all employee jobs[1] by parliamentary constituency

	Cleethorpes			
	By place of work		By place of residence	
	Median	Mean	Median	Mean
2004	*401	435	*399	*447
2004[3]	*394	426	*396	*445
2005	*458	502	*404	458

[1] Employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey pay-period was not affected by absence.
[2] Denotes data not collected before 2002.
[3] Includes Supplementary survey data.

Notes:

Guide to quality:

The Coefficient of Variation (CV) indicates the quality of a figure, the smaller the CV value the higher the quality.

The true value is likely to lie within +/- twice the CV e.g. for an average of 200 with a CV of 5 per cent., we would expect the population average to be within the range 180 to 220.

Key

CV < = 5%

* CV > 5% and < = 10%

** CV > 10% and < = 20%

The median replaces the mean as the headline statistic. The weighted mean is the sum of the weighted values divided by the sum of the weights. The median is the value below which 50 per cent. of employees fall. It is preferred over the mean for earnings data as it is influenced less by extreme values and because of the skewed distribution of earnings data.

Source:

Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, Office for National Statistics.

Gross weekly (£) pay for all employee jobs[1] by parliamentary constituency

	Great Grimsby			
	By place of work		By place of residence	
	Median	Mean	Median	Mean
2000	*317	*366	[2]	[2]
2001	*316	350	[2]	[2]
2002	*337	365	*318	354
2003	*344	*400	*345	376
2004	*360	*420	*357	*398
2004[3]	*356	*424	*350	*391
2005	*365	427	*359	415

[1] Employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey pay-period was not affected by absence.
[2] Denotes data not collected before 2002.
[3] Includes Supplementary survey data.

Notes:

Guide to quality:

The Coefficient of Variation (CV) indicates the quality of a figure, the smaller the CV value the higher the quality.

The true value is likely to lie within +/- twice the CV e.g. for an average of 200 with a CV of 5 per cent., we would expect the population average to be within the range 180 to 220.

Key

CV < = 5%

* CV > 5% and < = 10%

The median replaces the mean as the headline statistic. The weighted mean is the sum of the weighted values divided by the sum of the weights. The median is the value below which 50 per cent. of employees fall. It is preferred over the mean for earnings data as it is influenced less by extreme values and because of the skewed distribution of earnings data.

Source:

Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, Office for National Statistics.

Gross weekly (£) pay for all employee jobs[1] by parliamentary constituency

	Scunthorpe			
	By place of work		By place of residence	
	Median	Mean	Median	Mean
2000	*345	386	[2]	[2]
2001	*365	387	[2]	[2]
2002	*387	406	*406	417
2003	*413	442	*406	436
2004	*430	458	*419	434
2004[3]	*413	451	*406	418
2005	*442	*492	*442	465

[1] Employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey pay-period was not affected by absence.
[2] Denotes data not collected before 2002.
[3] Includes Supplementary survey data.

Notes:

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Source:

Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, Office for National Statistics.

Gross weekly (£) pay for all employee jobs[1] by parliamentary constituency

	Brigg and Goole			
	By place of work		By place of residence	
	Median	Mean	Median	Mean
2000	*333	*379	[2]	[2]
2001	*361	391	[2]	[2]
2002	*376	**453	*390	*442
2003	*366	*420	*409	*455
2004	*438	*477	*415	462
2004[3]	*441	*467	*400	453
2005	*415	*453	*468	**591

[1] Employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey pay-period was not affected by absence.
[2] Denotes data not collected before 2002.
[3] Includes Supplementary survey data.

Notes:

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Key

CV < = 5%

* CV > 5% and < = 10%

** CV > 10% and < = 20%

The median replaces the mean as the headline statistic. The weighted mean is the sum of the weighted values divided by the sum of the weights. The median is the value below which 50 per cent. of employees fall. It is preferred over the mean for earnings data as it is influenced less by extreme values and because of the skewed distribution of earnings data.

Source:

Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, Office for National Statistics.

Pensions

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the cost to his Department in the first full year of the change in personal pension planning outlined in the 2006 Budget. [67545]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: A Regulatory Impact Assessment ("Regulatory Impact Assessment for Simplifying the taxation of pensions—Update") was published on 22 March 2006 setting out the Government's assessment of the impact of the changes to the new simplified regime for pensions taxation introduced in the 2006 Budget. This is available at www.hmrc.gov.uk/ria/ria-pensions-simplification.pdf.

Planning Gain Supplement

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he will introduce the Planning Gain Supplement. [66658]

John Healey: As set out in the consultation document on Planning-Gain Supplement (PGS) published alongside the 2005 Pre-Budget report, PGS would not be introduced prior to 2008.

Further announcements on PGS implementation will be made by the end of the year.

Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many requests the Office for National Statistics has received for information under the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations (PSI) 2005; and how many requests were refused *(a)* in whole and *(b)* in part. [66653]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 2 May 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent parliamentary Question concerning the number of requests the Office for National Statistics has received under the Re-Use of Public Sector Information Regulations (PSI) 2005; and how many requests were refused *(a)* in whole and *(b)* in part (66653)

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Scottish Executive

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the value is of monies being held by his Department on behalf of the Scottish Executive. [66983]

Mr. Des Browne: Details of the End Year Flexibility scheme are set out in the Public Expenditure Outturn White Paper 2005–06, (Cm. 6639). Table 6 of that publication details the End Year Flexibility entitlements for all departments.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what restrictions are in place on the drawing down by the Scottish Executive of money held on its behalf by his Department; and if he will make a statement. [66984]

Mr. Des Browne: Details of the agreed draw-down of end year flexibility are set out in the relevant supplementary estimates and accompanying ministerial written statements.

Sparsely Populated Areas

Chris Huhne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the number of households in Scotland and Wales in sparsely populated areas on the same definition as that already used for England; and if he will estimate the proportion in each case of households that *(a)* are second homes and *(b)* that have access to a car. [66546]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 2 May 2006:

As National Statistician and Registrar General for England and Wales I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking for an estimate of the number of households in Scotland and Wales in sparsely populated areas on the same definition as that already undertaken for England; and an estimate of the proportion in each case of households that a) are second homes and b) that have access to a car. (66546)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is not responsible for the collection of data for Scotland. All enquiries for Scottish 2001 Census data should be directed to the General Register Office for Scotland.

Table A below shows the number household spaces within Wales that were recorded as either a second home or a holiday residence on Census day (29 April 2001). The data have been extracted from table KS16 on the CD accompaniment to the *Census 2001 Key Statistics for the rural and urban area classification 2004*, which is available on request from 2001 Census Customer Services [census.customerservices@ons.gsi.gov.uk].

Table B below shows the number of households within Wales that had access to a car on Census day (29 April 2001). The data is an amalgamation of data extracted from table KS17 on the CD accompaniment to the *Census 2001 Key Statistics for the rural and urban area classification 2004*.

Table A

Wales

Area	*All household spaces*		
	With residents	*Vacant*	*With no residents Second residence/holiday accommodation*
Wales	1,209,048	51,252	15,516
Urban > 10,000—Sparse	23,658	848	69
Town and Fringe—Sparse	43,686	2,475	2,942
Village—Sparse	64,063	3,344	4,663
Hamlet and Isolated Dwelling—Sparse	48,871	2,512	2,976

Table A

Wales

Area	*All household spaces*		
	With residents	*Vacant*	*With no residents Second residence/holiday accommodation*
Urban > 10,000—Less Sparse	754,490	30,399	1,878
Town and Fringe—Less Sparse	155,231	6,647	940
Village—Less Sparse	82,482	3,362	1,293
Hamlet and Isolated Dwelling—Less Sparse	36,567	1,665	755

Source:
Table KS16 in the Census 2001 Key Statistics for the rural and urban area classification 2004

Table B

Wales

Area	*All households*	*All households Number of households (number of cars or vans)*	
		None	*One or more*
Wales	1,209,048	313,797	895,251
Urban > 10,000—Sparse	23,658	7,760	15,898
Town and Fringe—Sparse	43,686	12,311	31,375
Village—Sparse	64,063	10,351	53,712
Hamlet and Isolated Dwelling—Sparse	48,871	4,287	44,584
Urban > 10,000—Less Sparse	754,490	221,915	532,575
Town and Fringe—Less Sparse	155,231	40,663	114,568
Village—Less Sparse	82,482	12,546	69,936
Hamlet and Isolated Dwelling—Less Sparse	36,567	3,964	32,603

Source :
Table KS17 in the Census 2001 Key Statistics for the rural and urban area classification 2004

Stamp Duty

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the revenue was from residential stamp duty from the *(a)* 3 per cent. and *(b)* 4 per cent. band in each year since its creation; and if he will estimate the revenue for 2006–07; [66450]

(2) how many occupiers of domestic properties paid residential stamp duty on sale at the *(a)* 3 per cent. and *(b)* 4 per cent. rate in each year since its creation; and if he will estimate the number of occupiers paying in 2006–07. [66452]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Purchases of property worth more than £250,000 and up to £500,000 have borne stamp duty at 3 per cent., and those in excess of £500,000 4 per cent., since 2000–01. Estimated revenues from residential transactions fallingin those bands are available at http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/stamp_duty/table15_3_october04.xls.

Estimated revenues from stamp duty on residential transactions in 2005–06 will be published in September.

Estimated numbers of transactions subject to these rates are given in the following table:

Thousand

Consideration Rate of stamp duty	*£250,001 to £500,000 3 per cent.*	*Above £500,000 4 per cent.*
2000–01	68	13
2001–02	96	17
2002–03	120	23
2003–04	135	26
2004–05	181	30

Forecasts of stamp duty revenues and numbers of residential transactions in those bands are not available.

Statistics Project

Mr. Slaughter: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many times the Office for National Statistics met the local authorities participating in the Improving Migration and Population Statistics project; what the outcome was of those meetings; and when he expects the project to be completed. [67408]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 2 May 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question concerning the participation of local authorities in the Improving Migration and Population Statistics (IMPS) project. (67408)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is currently working in partnership with four Local Authorities (LAs) to investigate whether there are local data sources that could be used to assist the compilation of the nationally produced population estimates. The four LAs are Barnet, Derby, Hammersmith & Fulham and Welwyn Hatfield. These authorities were selected from four groupings of LAs which each scored highly on different characteristics associated with difficulties in estimating population accurately.

Initial meetings were held with the four selected LAs in December 2005 and January 2006. At these meetings each of the LAs agreed to work with ONS to gain a better understanding of how they use the population estimates, what other local information and data sources they use, what particular issues affect population estimates within their LA and what methods and local data sources they use to overcome these issues.

A further round of meetings is currently under way to review progress and a final round of meetings will be held at the end of the studies in summer 2006. ONS will review the findings to see if any improvements can be applied to the mid-year population estimates processes or quality assurance procedures, either for all LAs or for groups of LAs. ONS will publish the outcome of the studies and evaluate their success, including a review of the criteria and approach for selecting LAs.

ONS has been reporting progress to LAs more generally, and providing them with the opportunity to feed into the IMPS project, primarily through meetings of the Central and Local Government Information Partnership (CLIP).

Tax Credits

Danny Alexander: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps are taken to avoid causing hardship in the recovery of tax credit overpayments. [67257]

Dawn Primarolo: HM Revenue and Customs' approach to handling overpayments, including the procedures in place where recovery might cause hardship, is set out in their Code of Practice 26 "What happens if we have paid you too much tax credit?"

Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will withdraw the concessions under section 225 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992. [65237]

Dawn Primarolo: The whole tax system, including capital gains tax, is kept under review by the Government.

Trader Intra-community Fraud

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the levels of VAT missing trader intra-community fraud for each of the last five years for which data is available; and what steps he is taking to combat such fraud. [66146]

Dawn Primarolo: Estimates of the level of missing trader intra-community (MTIC) VAT fraud for the years 2000–01 to 2004–05 were published at PBR 2005 in Measuring Indirect Tax Losses—2005, a copy of which is available from the House of Commons Library. Estimates for 2005–06 will be published at PBR 2006.

The Government remain determined to tackle MTIC VAT fraud, and the criminals perpetrating it, and a comprehensive strategy involving both operational and legislative measures has been developed. As announced at PBR 2005, this strategy has been strengthened further to counter changes in the fraud.

The operational strategy is designed to identify, disrupt and prevent the fraud and involves targeting the key players involved. It includes:

risk-based controls designed to identify and prevent bogus businesses from registering for VAT;

a fast-track deregistration process for those who enter the VAT system and trade fraudulently;

international co-operation, including sharing intelligence, investigating cases and developing strategic approaches;

frontier activity, including the use of scanning technology to better identify goods involved in the fraud;

a litigation strategy, including criminal prosecutions, designed to increase the risks for the fraudsters, and civil litigation designed to increase the financial risks for others who choose to be involved with the fraud; and

refusing repayment claims where the business has knowledge of VAT fraud in the supply chain.

Three legislative measures have also been introduced in the Finance Bill to further strengthen the tools available to HMRC to tackle the fraud:

As announced on 26 January, the Government have applied to the European Commission for a derogation to introduce a different VAT accounting procedure (known as a reverse charge) for certain goods most commonly subject to MTIC fraud. An enabling provision in the Finance Bill will allow this to be implemented as soon as the approval is granted. This will significantly limit the scope for the fraud to be perpetrated in those goods.

The second measure clarifies that the existing right of HMRC officers to inspect goods for VAT purposes includes the right to record the details of any goods inspected, and evidence of that inspection, by, for example, scanning the barcode.

The third measure will allow HMRC to direct individual businesses to keep specified additional records where there is an identified risk of fraud. HMRC will apply these requirements in a closely targeted manner.

VAT

Mr. Soames: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent assessment he has made of the merits of levying a zero rate of VAT on new build houses and a 17.5 per cent. rate on repairs and conversions. [66902]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 11 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 700W. We continue to keep the impact of VAT on different types of building work under review.

Welsh Speakers

Dr. Alasdair McDonnell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people in Wales speak Welsh, according to the latest census data. [66138]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the national statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated 2 May 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent question concerning how many people in Wales speak Welsh according to the latest census data. I am replying in her absence. (66138)

The table below shows that on Census day (29 April 2001) there were 582,368 people living in Wales who reported that they were able to speak Welsh. The figure has been extracted from Table T39 on the CD supplement to the Census 2001 National report for England and Wales, which is available in the House of Commons Library.

Wales–

All people aged three and over	*Number*
All people	2,805,701
Speaks Welsh	582,368
Does not speak Welsh	2,223,333

Source:
Table T39 in the Census 2001 National report for England and Wales.

Unexpected Payments Worklist

Philip Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people are on the unexpected payments worklist for credits; how many people in HM Revenue and Customs are working through this list; and how many people on this list have been taken to court. [64823]

Dawn Primarolo: As at 20 April 2006 there were around 34,000 items on the worklist but HMRC does not have information regarding the number of claimants involved. Several entries may relate to the same claimant.

There are 10 members of staff working through the list.

HMRC is not aware of any case where a court action has been taken against a claimant who appears on the list.

TRANSPORT

Rail Network (East London)

15. **Meg Hillier:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans the Government have for further spending on the rail network in Hackney and East London. [66815]

Derek Twigg: The funding of further rail enhancements across the country will be considered as part of the development of the High Level Output Specification for the railway to be published in summer 2007.

A number of improvements to the rail network in Hackney and East London are already under way. This investment includes the current preparatory rail bridge building work for the East London Line extension to Dalston. The project will provide new stations for Hackney. Further investment is planned for improvements to the North London Line which have been confirmed by the Mayor when he takes control of the line in 2007. These include new, higher capacity, accessible trains replacing the existing fleet and a £25 million station enhancement programme of North London Line stations.

17. **Martin Linton:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has had with the Treasury about the allocation of funding to complete both phases of the East London Line in time for the London Olympics. [66817]

Derek Twigg: The first phase of the East London Line extension is an Olympic undertaking. This commitment was given to the International Olympic Committee by the Mayor of London, taking into account the Spending Review 2004 financial settlement for TfL. The decision over whether to go ahead with the second phase of the East London Line extension is for the Mayor. Phase 1 of the extension is scheduled to be completed by June 2010, in time for the 2012 Olympics. Phase 2 is not an Olympic commitment and is not planned to be completed by 2012.

Motorways

16. **Daniel Kawczynski:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will meet the Highways Agency to discuss the installation of signs for Shrewsbury on the M6. [66816]

Dr. Ladyman: The Highways Agency has been negotiating with both Shropshire county council and Shrewsbury and Atcham borough council about signing for Shrewsbury on the M6. Both councils have now agreed in principle to the cost involved and a formal agreement is currently being prepared. This will result in Shrewsbury being signed on theM6.

19. **John Penrose:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to increase capacity at junction 21 of the M5. [66819]

Dr. Ladyman: The Highways Agency is working closely with North Somerset council (NSC) and developing a joint scheme to improve the operation of the junction by improvements on the local road approaches, together with upgrading the M5 southbound off-slip road.

Mr. Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to change Junction 5 of the M25 further to the proposed road-widening scheme. [67294]

Dr. Ladyman: The M25 Orbit Multi Modal Study recommended that consideration be given to the construction of additional slip roads between the M26 and A21. The Secretary of State accepted this recommendation and the Highways Agency is in the early stages of developing an appropriate scheme.

Railways

18. **Mr. Vaizey:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the future of rural railway lines. [66818]

Derek Twigg: The Government recognise the importance of local railway lines to the communities that they serve and seeks to support their development, primarily through the implementation of the Community Rail Development Strategy.

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the franchises held by train operating companies; when each franchise was granted; what its length is; when each franchise is scheduled for renewal; and if he will list new franchises he is expecting to grant. [64037]

Derek Twigg: The information requested has been placed in the Libraries of the House. Franchise replacement projects are normally initiated two years prior to the franchise end date.

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the *(a)* supply of and *(b)* demand for dedicated railway engineers for the next (i) five, (ii) 10, (iii) 15 and (iv) 20 years; what action he is taking to ensure that there are sufficient numbers of competent dedicated railway engineers in the United Kingdom; and if he will make a statement. [65515]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 25 April 2006]:* It is the responsibility of the rail industry to predict and meet future needs for competent dedicated railway engineers. However, it became clear in the years following initial privatisation of the railway that the industry, and in particular Railtrack, was not fulfilling this need. Government have established the new industry framework within which both Network Rail and the Association of Train Operators now have active and successful programmes for recruitment, training and professional development of chartered and graduate engineers and engineering technicians. Of particular note is the apprenticeship scheme set up by Network Rail in partnership with the Royal Navy at HMS Sultan, Gosport, which has places for up to 250 per year.

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much the cost of a standard return rail ticket purchased on the day of travel from London to each of the 20 largest cities in the UK has changed in real terms since 1997. [63979]

Derek Twigg: The Office of Rail Regulation compiles an index of fares which can be found at www.rail-reg.co.uk .

Airport Rail Links (Scotland)

20. **John Robertson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has had with the First Minister of Scotland on the proposed rail links to Glasgow and Edinburgh airports. [66820]

Mr. Darling: I have regular discussions with the First Minister on a range of transport and other topics. The promotion and construction of new railways which start and end in Scotland is a devolved matter.

A1079

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much has been spent on repairs to the A1079 road in each of the last 10 years; and if he will make a statement. [66531]

Dr. Ladyman: The A1079 was detrunked on 1 April 2003. Before this it was maintained by the Highways Agency. However, the agency accounts for maintenance on a management area as opposed to a specific route basis, and figures relating to the spend specifically on the A1079 are not readily available.

Spending on maintenance on the A1079 since 1 April 2003 is a matter for the new highway authority, East Riding of Yorkshire. This information is not held centrally.

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many accidents there have been on the A1079 in each of the last five years; how many resulted in serious injury; and if he will make a statement. [66532]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of personal injury road accidents that occurred on the A1079 from 2000 to 2004 (the latest year for which figures are available) and the resulting serious casualties are given in the table.

	Accidents	*Accidents resulting in at least one serious casualty*
2000	155	22
2001	149	32
2002	183	38
2003	181	25
2004	137	31

Airports

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many near misses were recorded involving flights *(a)* into and *(b)* out of each airport in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years, broken down by airline or carrier. [65504]

Derek Twigg: During the five years from 2001 to 2005 inclusive there were seven Airprox incidents over Northern Ireland airspace reported to the UK Airprox Board for assessment. In each case at least one of the aircraft involved was outbound from or inbound to an airport in Northern Ireland. All seven events were reviewed and categorised by the Board as being Category C where no risk of collision existed. At least one commercial air transport aircraft was involved but the Airprox Board does not make public the identity of the airline.

The seven incidents can be broken down as follows:

	Into	*Out of*
2001	1	0
2002	1	1
2003	0	0
2004	1	0
2005	1	2

Mr. Mullin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport on what date and for what reasons the cap of 480,000 flights a year at Heathrow was agreed; and under what circumstances it might be removed. [66400]

Derek Twigg: The limit of 480,000 air transport movements a year at Heathrow is among the conditions imposed by the Secretary of State in his decision letter of 20 November 2001 granting planning consent to the development of a fifth terminal. As stated in the decision letter, the Secretary of State accepted the planning Inspector's recommendation for the limit on the basis of a precautionary approach, and in view of the Inspector's concerns about noise, particularly the weighting of the number of aircraft movements relative to the Leq noise index. The limit applies from the date that the core terminal building opens for public use, but BAA have stated their intention to manage traffic levels in the intervening period. The limit could only be changed following consideration of a further planning application which provided grounds for reaching a different view.

Biodiesel

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the future of biodiesel in the UK. [67088]

Dr. Ladyman: I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 24 April 2006, *Official Report*, columns 832–33W, to the hon. Member for Southend, West (Mr. Amess).

Blue Badge Scheme

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 13 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1883W, on the Blue Badge Scheme, (1) how many people displaying a valid Blue Badge have been prosecuted for parking where there is a ban on loading or unloading in each year since 1997; [64362]

(2) what recent representations he has received on whether to prosecute people displaying a valid Blue Badge for parking where there is a ban on loading or unloading; if he will bring forward legislation to allow people so parked to do so; and if he will make a statement. [64363]

Derek Twigg: Enforcement of the Blue Badge Scheme is a matter for local authorities. There is no legal requirement for local authorities to provide the Department with details of any parking prosecutions. The devolved administrations are responsible for the Scheme in other parts of the UK.

The Department has received representations from some local authorities about the legality of parking by blue badge holders in loading bays. The Department's policy is that under the Blue Badge Scheme, badge holders should not automatically be permitted to park in loading bays during a ban on loading and unloading. To ensure that this is clearly reflected in the regulations the Department proposes to bring forward amendments, where necessary, during the course of the year.

British Transport Police

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many British Transport Police officers there have been in each region in each year since 1997. [65703]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 26 April 2006]:* The British Transport Police have provided the following information on officers employed by the BTP in each of its areas since 1997–98.

	Number of police officers				
	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*
FHQ	111	113	113	110	121
London North	319	312	297	310	307
London South	293	282	288	300	301
London Underground	401	416	402	405	452
North Eastern Area	195	205	197	192	188
North Western Area	280	275	268	270	256
Scotland Area	197	200	199	202	203
Wales and Western Area	299	303	309	320	295
Secondments	—	—	—	—	—

	Number of police officers			
	2002–03	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06*
FHQ	139	149	182	255
London North	311	289	339	406
London South	324	310	324	353
London Underground	476	567	681	744
North Eastern Area	193	197	205	207
North Western Area	263	256	255	271
Scotland Area	205	207	211	225
Wales and Western Area	295	281	288	309
Secondments	—	24	9	4

Carbon Dioxide Emissions

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what forecasts his Department has made of the carbon dioxide emissions from each of the UK's *(a)* designated and *(b)* non-designated airports for each year for which assessments have been made. [66736]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 27 April 2006]:* The Department has not produced carbon dioxide forecasts on an airport by airport basis. The Government believes that the best way of ensuring that aviation contributes towards the goal of climate stabilisation is through a well-designed emissions trading regime.

Crossrail

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the status of Crossrail Line 2. [66132]

Derek Twigg: Responsibility for taking forward proposals on the Chelsea-Hackney line now rests with the Mayor of London.

Departmental Leave (Stress)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many people have been on sick leave suffering from stress in his Department in each of the last three years; and what percentage of the total staff number this represents. [63547]

Derek Twigg: The number of people that have been on sick leave suffering from stress[1] and the percentage of the total staff this represents for each of the last three years is:

[1] Stress absence can also include anxiety, nervous debility, neurosis, emotional upset.

	Total number of staff absent	*Percentage of total staff*
2003	991	6.4
2004	831	5
2005	631	3.7

It should be noted that the reduction in figures in 2005 has been influenced in part by the incomplete data supplied by DVLA. The 2005 figures for DVLA are for January to June only due to a change in their HR system. DVLA figures for the remainder of 2005 will be available at a later date.

First Great Western

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has had with First Great Western on redoubling the track between Kemble and Swindon. [65790]

Derek Twigg: The Department has not had any discussions with First Great Western on this. This would be for Network Rail to take forward and I have therefore asked them to write directly to my hon. Friend.

Grievance Procedures

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many grievance procedures have been initiated in his Department in each of the last three years. [63548]

Derek Twigg: The number of grievance procedures initiated in the Department for Transport in each of the last three years is as follows:

	Number
2003	14
2004	26
2005	50

Highways Agency are not included in the figures as they do not collect this information centrally, but are doing so from 1 April 2006.

There are several reasons for an increase in cases over the three years, including:

staff have a greater awareness of the procedures available to them;

managers are encouraged to be proactive and deal with issues as they occur;

more accurate recording of cases.

Infrastructure Projects

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the potential for *(a)* cost and *(b)* time savings through reform of planning processes and public inquiries for major infrastructure projects; and if he will make a statement. [63245]

Derek Twigg: The Department has considered, with other relevant Departments, the scope for improving the effectiveness of the planning system in handling proposals for major infrastructure schemes. Rod Eddington, who has been appointed by the Department for Transport and Her Majesty's Treasury to advise on the long-term impact of transport decisions on the UK's productivity, stability and growth, is also now considering this as part of his study. The Department has not sought to estimate specific cost or time savings which might result from changes to the planning system.

Purple Airspace

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the flights other than those used by members of the royal family which were granted Purple airspace in each year since 1997. [66904]

Derek Twigg: The configuration and promulgation of "Purple Airspace" ceased in 2001 in response to the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2005. Royal and selected VIP flights are now contained within the UK's existing controlled airspace structure and, as necessary, within time-limited temporary controlled airspace outside the permanent route structure.

Such flights include those by members of other royal families, other reigning sovereigns, prime ministers, heads of state of commonwealth and foreign countries, and UK Members of Parliament requiring expeditious handling. The above measures are implemented by means of a Notice To Airmen (NOTAM). As NOTAM is also used to implement a number of other air traffic control procedures, and records kept are not subject specific, it is not possible to provide the hon. Member with a definitive number of royal and VIP flights that have flown within existing and temporary controlled airspace.

Road Accidents (Essex)

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many people were *(a)* killed and *(b)* injured in road accidents in Essex, excluding Southend and Thurrock, in each year between 1995 and 2004. [66955]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of people killed and injured in each county and unitary authority in Great Britain are published annually in the report "Road Casualties Great Britain".

The numbers of people killed and injured in personal injury road accidents in Essex (excluding the unitary authorities of Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock) each year between 1995 and 2004 (the latest for which figures are available) are given in the following table.

Number of people killed and injured in Essex (excluding UA's): 1995–2004

	Killed	*Serious and slightly injured*
1995	74	7,298
1996	82	7,206
1997	77	7,322
1998	73	7,187
1999	94	7,259
2000	75	7,533
2001	100	7,180
2002	75	6,716
2003	89	6,600
2004	93	6,515

Royal Travel

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, columns 59–60W, on royal travel, why environmental impact is not one of the given criteria for determining the mode of travel; and if he will change the criteria to include environmental impacts. [65491]

Derek Twigg: The criteria which were established in 1997 were based on previous guidelines on royal and ministerial travel. However, as part of a current review of the Financial Memorandum governing the grant-in-aid with the Royal Household, the criteria for official royal travel will be re-examined to consider the need for any change.

Transport Improvements (Coventry)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what transport improvements for which his Department is responsible there have been in Coventry, South in the past 12 months; what further improvements are planned; and if he will make a statement. [66822]

Derek Twigg: The following schemes were carried out in the last 12 months:

The Highways Agency have carried out a number of maintenance enhancement works on the A45 and A46 trunk roads including reconstruction of the A45 between Ryton-on-Dunsmore and the Tollbar End junction (£1.2 million); a junction improvement at A45/A445 at Ryton-on-Dunsmore (£4.5 million); and erection of noise barriers on the A46 south of interchange with A45 at Stivichall (£0.27 million).

In March 2005 Network Rail replaced two level crossings; with a road bridge at Tile Hill, and a pedestrian footbridge at Canley.

Under the West Midlands Local Transport Plan settlement for 2005–06, almost £70 million was allocated to the West Midlands metropolitan local authorities (of which £6.56 million was for Coventry) for transport measures (under £5 million) and road maintenance.

In addition, the following schemes are planned:

A £57 million upgrade of A45/A46 Tollbar End roundabout to provide a grade separated interchange is proposed for 2009–10.

The £31 million LTP-funded Coventry Quality Bus Network scheme will substantially improve bus service provision in four key corridors and will enhance access to some of the most disadvantaged communities. Full approval was given in December 2004 and is due to be completed in 2008.

Network Rail are undertaking resignalling and providing twin-tracking in August/September 2006 on the Leamington to Nuneaton line to the south of Coventry Station.

Utility Companies

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he will be in a position to introduce the proposed permit scheme for utility companies laying pipelines and cables in roads. [65826]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department is working to ensure that the regulations are produced as soon as possible.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Addictions

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people are estimated to have *(a)* a gambling addiction, *(b)* an alcohol addiction and *(c)* a drug addiction in (i) Northern Ireland and (ii) each council area in each of the last five years. [66462]

Mr. Woodward: Information on the number of people estimated to have a gambling addiction is not available.

Information regarding alcohol addiction is not available as requested. The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) carried out the first ever census of Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services on 1 March 2005. Using the data collected, we are able to provide the following information on persons in treatment for alcohol misuse. It is important to note that alcohol misuse does not constitute addiction.

Health and Social Services Board	*Persons in treatment for alcohol only misuse*	*Persons in treatment for both drugs and alcohol misuse*
Eastern	1,002	340
Northern	706	145
Southern	624	147
Western	476	215
Prisons	42	108
Hospitals	224	5
Northern Ireland	3,074	960

Information regarding drug addiction is not available by district council as requested. The Northern Ireland Addicts Index Database holds information on all those persons registered in concurrence with the Misuse of Drugs (Notification of and Supply to Addicts) (Northern Ireland) Regulations 1973. Using the data held we are able to provide the following information on persons who were registered on the index. The information is provided at both HSS Board and Trust level.

HSS Board	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Eastern HSSB	108	106	86	105	97
Northern HSSB	147	133	104	115	102
Southern HSSB	17	19	23	14	15
Western HSSB	30	38	26	21	20
Northern Ireland	302	296	239	[1]259	[2]239

[1] This figure includes four individuals for whom Health and Social Services Trust could not be established.

[2] This figure includes five individuals for whom Health and Social Services Trust could not be established.

HSS Trust	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Armagh and Dungannon	11	15	12	9	11
Causeway	9	9	12	10	7
Craigavon and Banbridge	3	2	4	2	2
Down Lisburn	12	13	10	10	10
Foyle Community	15	21	19	16	12
Homefirst Community	138	124	92	105	95
Newry and Mourne	3	2	7	3	2
North and West Belfast	45	42	21	21	16
South and East Belfast	29	32	43	63	62

HSS Trust	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Sperrin Lakeland	15	17	7	5	8
Ulster Community	22	19	12	11	9
Northern Ireland	302	296	239	[1]259	[2]239

[1] This figure includes four individuals for whom Health and Social Services Trust could not be established.
[2] This figure includes five individuals for whom Health and Social Services Trust could not be established.

Alzheimer's Disease

Dr. Alasdair McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people with Alzheimer's disease in Northern Ireland were prescribed anticholinisterase drugs in each of the last five years. [66142]

Mr. Woodward: Information is not available on drugs prescribed to people with Alzheimer's disease. However, information is available on the number of acetylcholinesterase inhibitors prescription items dispensed in primary care from 2001 to 2005 (see Table 1 below). Acetylcholinesterase inhibitors are commonly used to treat the dementia of Alzheimer's disease. Information is not available on the actual number of individuals that this relates to.

Table 1

	Number of Acetylcholinesterase inhibitor prescription items dispensed
2001	15,087
2002	19,605
2003	25,986
2004	33,056
2005	38,245

Note:
Figures include data for donepezil hydrochloride, galantamine, memantine hydrochloride and rivastigmine.
Source:
Central Services Agency

Anti-bullying Strategy

Dr. Alasdair McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what funds are available for the implementation of the anti-bullying strategy in Northern Ireland; [66103]

(2) how the anti-bullying strategy is to be implemented in schools in Northern Ireland; [66104]

(3) what the Department of Education's anti-bullying strategy is. [66105]

Angela E. Smith: The Department of Education actively promotes and funds anti-bullying initiatives through its anti-bullying programme. The current programme comprises funding for a dedicated bullying advice helpline, operated by ChildLine; a further study into the extent and nature of bullying in schools in Northern Ireland as a follow up to the research published in 2002; and a survey of pastoral care in schools to ensure compliance with the requirements to have measures in place to tackle bullying.

The Department is a member of the local Anti-bullying Forum. The Forum, which draws its members from the statutory and voluntary sectors, was launched in November 2005, with the aim of sharing models of best practice, disseminating information, developing and co-coordinating joint initiatives. This will ensure that schools and organisations working with children and young people are able to have appropriate strategies to prevent and deal with bullying behaviours. The Forum has developed a three-year anti-bullying strategy with the Department of Education funding its administrative structure. The main elements of the Forum's strategic plan includes developing, implementing and promoting of models of good practice, developing parental partnerships, website development and organising annual bullying week.

In 2005–06 the Department of Education has contributed approximately £55,000 to the development of anti-bullying initiatives. In 2006–07 the Department has agreed to fund £66,000 to the local Forum to implement its anti-bullying strategy and providing the terms and conditions of grant are met, the Department has agreed in principle to fund in 2007–08 and 2008–09. Across the education and library boards at least £200,000 per annum is allocated to specific anti-bullying activity. The Department does not have information about the resources that schools devote to anti-bullying initiatives from their own budgets.

Anti-racism Funding

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the effects of the funding awarded to each of the 13 organisations in February 2005 to tackle racism. [65329]

Angela E. Smith: In February 2005 £100,000 was made available specifically to assist local communities build positive relationships with minority ethnic people, thereby helping to tackle hate crime in a number of geographical areas. 33 organisations applied and 13 received funding. These projects were subject to continual monitoring to ensure that they fulfilled the aims and objectives set out in the original applications.

This investment, in the Government's view, represents good value for money. It has enabled those organisations to undertake a range of activities and develop programmes to help minority ethnic and migrant groups integrate into society. The programmes also addressed the problem of racism. For example, over 100 people attended workshops across Northern Ireland to share experiences and develop action plans to tackle racism; a CD ROM is being produced to promote the integration of minority ethnic people into the local communities; over 75 people, in the Greater Belfast area, representing five community groups, received anti-racism and diversity training; over 200 young people from local schools in the mid-Ulster area attended a Chinese cultural awareness and martial arts event; 90 people from North and East Belfast attended cultural celebration events; and 75 children from the mid-Down area attended a six week summer camp designed to tackle issues such as conflict resolution.

Biotinidase Deficiency

Dr. Alasdair McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland for what reasons the Newborn Screening programme does not include screening for Biotinidase deficiency. [66616]

Mr. Woodward: The National Screening Committee (NSC) has recommended that Biotinidase Deficiency should not be included as part of Newborn Screening. This advice was based on two Health Technology Assessment reports which reviewed the current research evidence. The NSC has also assessed Biotinidase Deficiency against its assessment criteria for new screening programmes.

Dr. Alasdair McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will estimate the cost of including Biotinidase deficiency screening for new born babies in the Newborn Screening Programme in Northern Ireland. [66617]

Mr. Woodward: The NSC has recommended that Biotinidase Deficiency should not be included in Newborn Screening. Consequently the cost of including Biotinidase Deficiency screening in Northern Ireland has not been considered.

Dr. Alasdair McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what recent estimate he has made of the cost of *(a)* treating and *(b)* educating a child with Biotinidase deficiency until (i) 16 and (ii) 18 years old in Northern Ireland. [66618]

Mr. Woodward: Biotinidase deficiency is a rare condition. With approximately 12 cases per year across the United Kingdom, Northern Ireland's proportional share, based on number of births, would be one case every three years. Given the small numbers affected, the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety does not record the specific costs of treating a child with this condition.

Specific medical conditions such as biotinidase deficiency are not recorded by education and library boards (ELBs) as part of the school census process. Only one of the ELBs is aware of children in their area with biotinidase deficiency. Regardless of specific medical conditions and their severity, special educational needs provision is matched to the individual needs of pupils. As this provision may be made in a special school, a special unit of a mainstream class, the associated cost cannot be provided for individual pupils.

Blue Badges

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many Blue Badges for disabled people were issued in Northern Ireland in 2005. [66990]

Mr. Woodward: The chief executive of Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has been asked to write to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Dr. Malcolm McKibbin:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question about how many Blue Badges for disabled persons were issued in Northern Ireland in 2005. I have been asked to reply as the issue raised falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service.

I can advise that 29,493 Blue Badges were issued to individuals in 2005. In addition 248 badges were issued to 69 organisations that care for people with a disability.

Capita Group

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much business his Department has placed with *(a)* Capita Group plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries in each of the last five years; what the total value is of outstanding contracts placed with Capita Group plc and its subsidiaries by his Department; for which current tenders issued by his Department (i) Capita Group plc and (ii) its subsidiaries have been invited to bid; and whether (A) Capita Group plc and (B) its subsidiaries have seconded staff (1) temporarily and (2) on a longer-term basis to (X) his Department and (Y) its agencies. [61069]

Angela E. Smith: There were no contracts awarded by Northern Ireland Departments to Capita plc over the last five financial years.

The number of contracts awarded to subsidiaries of Capita plc is 49. Details of the amounts tendered and on which contracts were awarded in each of the last five years are set out in the table. Information relating to the number of tenders submitted or number of invitations to submit tenders cannot be provided due to the disproportionate cost of doing so.

There have been no occasions where staff from Capita plc or its subsidiaries have been seconded by Northern Ireland Departments or their agencies.

The total value of outstanding contracts is nil.

2001–02		
DETI Chief Executive for New Development Agency	Capita Business Services Ltd.	18,000
DHSSPS Workforce Data Audit	Capita Man Consultants	17,762
DHSSPS Consultancy Support for the Community	Capita Business Services Ltd.	13,500
DEL LRA Review of Labour Relations Agency	Capita Business Services Ltd.	18,769
DE Initial Scoping Study into the Options for Replacement of the Teachers' Pay / Pension Computer Sys.	Capita Man Consultants	29,900
DEL Review of Compacts for EGSA and WEA	Capita Business Services Ltd.	13,160
DFP RCA Consultancy for Facilities Management	Capita Business Services Ltd.	49,000
Review of State Pathologists Department	Capita Group Plc	20,089
2002–03		
DFP CPG Evaluation of Graduate Recruitment	Capita Business Services Ltd.	17,250
DFP CPG PCSPS (NI) Administration	Capita Business Services Ltd.	59,992
DCAL MAGNI: Appointment of Consultants	Capita Business Services Ltd.	25,115
DHSSPS Review of Physical Activity Strategy	Capita Business Services Ltd.	19,050
DE Payroll and Pension System	Capita Business Services Ltd.	29,720
DHSSPS Review of Community Dental Service	Capita Business Services Ltd.	30,712

		£
DHSSPS HSS Evaluation of Services to Victims	Capita Business Services Ltd.	33,581
DHSSPS Options Study for Superannuation's Computer System	Capita Business Services Ltd.	24,100
DHSSPS Needs Assessment of Young People's Treatment Services	Capita Business Services Ltd.	36,975
Review of Allowances Paid to Pathologists	Capita Group Plc	5,700
Development of a Consultation Document for the States Pathologists Department	Capita Group Plc	2,820
2003–04		
OFMDFM New Research For Victims Strategy	Capita Business Services Ltd.	32,263
DHSSPS Audit of Training Needs in Treatment and Education Sectors	Capita Business Services Ltd.	29,700
DHSSPS Public Consultation Survey to inform the Development of the DHSSPS website	Capita Business Services Ltd.	14,480
DHSSPS Review of Public Health Functions in NI	Capita Business Services Ltd.	39,916
DFP RCA/VLA End to End Process Review	Capita Business Services Ltd.	27,400
DFP RCA/VLA Customer Requirements Projects	Capita Business Services Ltd.	20,878
DFP District Registration Offices Staffing Review	Capita Business Services Ltd.	29,160
DHSSPS Review of Workforce Planning for Professions Complementary to Dentistry	Capita Business Services Ltd.	17,687
DHSSPS Review of Workforce Planning for Ambulance Services Staff	Capita Business Services Ltd.	17,312
DHSSPS Audit and Survey Management Practices Records for HPSS Bodies	Capita Business Services Ltd.	71,846
DHSSPS Evaluation of LHSCG's	Capita Business Services Ltd.	20,000
DHSSPS Research on Private Fostering	Capita Business Services Ltd.	48,160
DSD DMU Customer Research Programme 2003	Capita Business Services Ltd.	18,012
DOE EHS Review of W5	Capita Business Services Ltd.	28,965
DSD Development of External Communications Strategy	Capita Business Services Ltd.	9,000
DFP Review of NICS Welfare Service	Capita Business Services Ltd.	39,440
DHSSPS Sure-Start Evaluation 2003–04	Capita Business Services Ltd.	47,034
DHSSPS Assessment of Hospital Pharmacy Aseptic Services	Capita Business Services Ltd.	23,501
DHSSPS Review of Health Action Zones	Capita Business Services Ltd.	29,862
Options Appraisal for a Centralised Mortuary Facility	Capita Group Plc	25,754
Recruitment of a Criminal Justice Inspector	Capita Group Plc	18,688
2004–05		
DFP Review of Rating Policy Reform of Non-Dom Rating System Implementation of Hardship Relief Scheme	Capita Business Services Ltd.	28,549
DHSSPS Review of NIGALA	Capita Business Services Ltd.	38,700
DOE EHS Review of NH Support to NGO	Capita Business Services Ltd.	27,800
DFP CPD Business Case to support the Supplier Registration System	Capita Business Services Ltd.	15,146
DHSSPS Review of Children First	Capita Business Services Ltd.	34,528
DHSSPS Facilitation Support for Fit Futures Intersectoral Stakeholders Event	Capita Business Services Ltd.	5,000
DHSSPS Gene Therapy Services within HPSS in NI	Capita Business Services Ltd.	23,917
Recruitment of an Assistant Criminal Justice Inspector	Capita Group Plc	14,743
2005–06		
Medical Advisory Service (Health Solutions formally BMI Health)	Capita Group Plc	1,565

James Brokenshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the value of contracts held by his Department with *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries was in the last three financial years. [61447]

Angela E. Smith: There were no contracts held by Northern Ireland Departments with Capita plc during the last three years.

Details of the amounts tendered by subsidiaries of Capita plc and on which contracts were awarded by Northern Ireland Departments during the last three financial years are set out in the table.

Contract name	*Supplier*	*Value*
2003–04		*£000*
OFMDFM New Research For Victims Strategy	Capita Business Services Ltd	32,263
DHSSPS Audit of Training Needs in Treatment and Education Sectors	Capita Business Services Ltd	29,700
DHSSPS Public Consultation Survey to inform the Development of the DHSSPS Web-Site	Capita Business Services Ltd	14,480
DHSSPS Review of Public Health Functions in NI	Capita Business Services Ltd	39,916
DFP RCA/VLA Customer Requirements Projects	Capita Business Services Ltd	20,878
DFP RCA/VLA End To End Process Review	Capita Business Services Ltd	27,400
DFP District Registration Offices Staffing Review	Capita Business Services Ltd	29,160
DHSSPS Review of Workforce Planning for Professions Complementary to Dentistry	Capita Business Services Ltd	17,687
DHSSPS Review of Workforce Planning for Ambulance Services Staff	Capita Business Services Ltd	17,312
DHSSPS Audit and Survey Management Practices Records for HPSS Bodies	Capita Business Services Ltd	71,846
DHSSPS Evaluation of LHSCG's	Capita Business Services Ltd	20,000
DHSSPS Research on Private Fostering	Capita Business Services Ltd	48,160
DSD DMU Customer Research Programme 2003	Capita Business Services Ltd	18,012
DOE EHS Review of W5	Capita Business Services Ltd	28,965
DSD Development of External Communications Strategy	Capita Business Services Ltd	9,000
DFP Review of NICS Welfare Service	Capita Business Services Ltd	39,440
DHSSPS Sure-Start Evaluation 2003–04	Capita Business Services Ltd	47,034
DHSSPS Assessment of Hospital Pharmacy Aseptic Services	Capita Business Services Ltd	23,501

Contract name	Supplier	Value
DHSSPS Review of Health Action Zones	Capita Business Services Ltd	29,862
Recruitment of a Criminal Justice Inspector	Capita Group Plc	18,688
NIO Options Appraisal for a Centralised Mortuary Facility	Capita Group Plc	25,754
2004–05		
DFP Review of Rating Policy Reform of Non-Dom Rating System Implementation of Hardship Relief Scheme	Capita Business Services Ltd	28,549
DHSSPS Review of NIGALA	Capita Business Services Ltd	38,700
DOE EHS Review of NH Support to NGO	Capita Business Services Ltd	27,800
DFP CPD Business Case to support the Supplier Registration System	Capita Business Services Ltd	15,146
DHSSPS Review of Children First	Capita Business Services Ltd	34,528
DHSSPS Facilitation Support for Fit Futures Intersectoral Stakeholder Event	Capita Business Services Ltd	5,000
DHSSPS Gene Therapy Services within HPSS in NI	Capita Business Services Ltd	23,917
Recruitment of an Assistant Criminal Justice Inspector	Capita Group Plc	14,743
2005–2006		
Medical Advisory Service (Health Solutions formally BMI Health)	Capita Group Plc	1,565

James Brokenshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many tenders *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries has submitted to his Department in each of the last three years; and how many tenders were successful. [61448]

Angela E. Smith: I am unable to advise how many tenders Capita plc and its subsidiaries has submitted in each of the last three years as to do so would be at disproportionate cost.

I am, however, able to advise that the following number of tenders were successful in each of the last three years. None was awarded to Capita plc, all were awarded to its subsidiaries. They are as follows:

	Number
2003–04	21
2004–05	8
2005–06	1

James Brokenshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many contracts his Department holds with *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries which still have a potential duration of five years or more. [61449]

Angela E. Smith: There are no contracts that still have a potential duration of five years or more with either Capita plc or its subsidiaries.

Children's Commissioner

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps are being taken to conduct an open recruitment competition to fill the vacancy for the Children's Commissioner for Northern Ireland. [66394]

Angela E. Smith: We intend to follow a very similar process to the 2003 appointment process for the first Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland, which was widely regarded as very successful. We will commence the public appointment process in May and hold interviews in late June.

Dental Services

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the change in the condition of children's teeth and general dental care over the past five years in Northern Ireland. [67137]

Mr. Woodward: The information is not available in the form requested. Monitoring of the dental health of children is undertaken as part of the Children's Dental Health Survey which takes place every 10 years. The last survey was undertaken in 2003. The following below outline the change in dental decay levels in five, 12 and 15-year-old children in Northern Ireland over the ten year period 1993 to 2003.

The proportion of Northern Ireland children who have experienced dental decay: The 1993 and 2003 surveys compared

Age group	1993	Percentage 2003[1]
Five-year-olds	60	61
12-year-olds	76	66
15-year-olds	85	74

[1] Decay figures calculated using 1993 criteria

Source:

UK Children's Oral Health Survey 1993 and 2003.

The average number of teeth per child in Northern Ireland affected by dental decay: The 1993 and 2003 surveys compared

Age group	1993	2003[1]
Five-year-olds	2.3	2.5
12-year-olds	3.0	2.5
15-year-olds	5.3	3.8

[1] Decay figures calculated using 1993 criteria

Source:

UK Children's Oral Health Survey 1993 and 2003.

In terms of general dental care, we have introduced several measures in 2005 to improve the dental health of children, specifically a targeted preventive fissure sealant scheme and an evidence-based caries reduction programme.

Departmental Leave (Stress)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people in each Department and Government Agency in Northern Ireland have been on long-term sick leave in each of the last three years *(a)* in total and *(b)* broken down by grade; and how many of these cases related to stress. [63584]

Angela E. Smith: Sick absence statistics for the 11 Departments of the Northern Ireland administration and the Northern Ireland Office are analysed by financial year. Tables detailing the information sought for the period 2002–03 to 2004–05 have been placed in the Library. The analysis of sickness absence in Northern Ireland Departments for 2005–06 is currently being finalised and should be available in the autumn of 2006.

Depression (Drug Prescriptions)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the change was in the estimated annual numbers of drugs prescribed to people in Northern Ireland suffering from depression between 1995 and 2005. [65867]

Mr. Woodward: The information is not available in exactly the form requested. However we can provide information on anti-depressant prescription items dispensed in the community from 2000 to 2005.

Table 1: Change in anti-depressant prescription items dispensed

	Anti-depressant prescription items	*Percentage change*
2000	1,021,852	—
2001	1,096,255	7.28
2002	1,200,540	9.51
2003	1,276,880	6.36
2004	1,336,782	4.69
2005	1,356,284	1.46

Source:
Prescription Cost Analysis, Central Services Agency

Table 2: Change in anti-depressant prescription items dispensed as a percentage of total items dispensed

	Total number of prescription items	*Number of anti-depressant prescription items*	*Anti-depressants as percentage of total prescription items*	*Change in percentage*
2000	23,385,701	1,021,852	4.37	—
2001	24,302,910	1,096,255	4.51	0.14
2002	25,766,854	1,200,540	4.66	0.15
2003	26,493,398	1,276,880	4.82	0.16
2004	27,365,465	1,336,782	4.88	0.07
2005	27,981,857	1,356,284	4.85	-0.04

Source:
Prescription Cost Analysis, Central Services Agency

Table 3: Change in anti-depressant prescription items dispensed per head of population

	Mid-year estimate of population	*Anti-depressant prescription items per head of population*	*Percentage change*
2000	1,682,944	0.61	—
2001	1,689,319	0.65	6.88
2002	1,696,641	0.71	9.04
2003	1,702,628	0.75	5.98
2004	1,710,322	0.78	4.22

Note:
The 2005 mid-year estimate of population is not yet available.
Source:
Prescription Cost Analysis, Central Services Agency and Mid-year estimate of population, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

Development Funding for Minority Ethnic Communities

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many groups in Northern Ireland have made successful applications for funding under the development fund for minority ethnic communities announced in February 2005; and what total amount was paid out in Northern Ireland in the last 12 months. [65328]

Angela E. Smith: There were 75 applications for assistance to the development fund for minority ethnic communities, announced in February 2005. 15 organisations were successful in obtaining core funding and four were awarded time-bound project funding. A total amount of £0.6 million was paid to these projects over the last 12 months.

Dogs

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many dangerous dogs have been destroyed in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [65352]

Angela E. Smith: The number of dangerous dogs destroyed in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years from 2001 to 2005 (inclusive) is detailed in the following table. Dogs designated as dangerous dogs, under the Dogs (Northern Ireland) Order 1983, as amended by the Dangerous Dogs (Northern Ireland) Order 1991, are pit bull terrier, Japanese tosa, Dogo Argentino and the Fila Braziliero. All of the dogs destroyed in Northern Ireland over the last five years were of the pit bull terrier type.

Dangerous dogs destroyed in Northern Ireland

	Number
2001	0
2002	4
2003	2

Dangerous dogs destroyed in Northern Ireland

	Number
2004	2
2005	2

Fountain Primary School

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to assist Fountain primary school in Londonderry with its transportation costs. [65316]

Angela E. Smith: The Western Education and Library Board changed its transport policy in September 2005 to restrict home to school transport assistance to eligible pupils. As a result it withdrew concessionary transport for pupils travelling to a number of schools including Fountain primary school.

Derry city council is considering the provision of short term funding of around £3,000 towards transport costs to cover the period April-June 2006 and this will be discussed at the Councils Development Committee meeting on 11 May.

I met with the hon. Member for Foyle (Mark Durkan) and a delegation from Fountain primary school on 5 April 2006 where it was accepted that the Western Board could no longer fund the transport costs for pupils at Fountain primary school. I have, however, agreed to liaise with my hon. Friend, the Member for Delyn (Mr. Hanson) Minister of State for Northern Ireland, to discuss the feasibility of a longer-term solution to the transport problem. Officials from DE and DSD will be meeting shortly to take this issue forward as a matter of urgency.

Educational Attainment

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of *(a)* Catholics and *(b)* Protestants left school without any educational qualifications in the last year for which figures are available. [66978]

Angela E. Smith: In 2003–04, 5.7 per cent. of Catholic school leavers and 3.9 per cent. of Protestant school leavers had no formal qualifications.

Community Differentials

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on what evidence the Government base their view that there is disproportionate poverty and disadvantage among the Catholic community. [66386]

Angela E. Smith: Evidence from the most recent "Households Below Average Income" report for Northern Ireland and the Poverty and Social Exclusion Survey of Northern Ireland both indicate rates of poverty in Catholic households to be higher than for Protestant households. Both publications have been placed in the Libraries of the House.

NHS Employment Statistics

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people were employed *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time by the NHS in Northern Ireland in January (i) 2001 and (ii) 2006. [66991]

Mr. Woodward: Figures for the number of staff employed within the NI HPSS are not available as at January. The information requested is available as at 31 March for 2001 and 2006 and is presented in the following table.

Staff employed within the NI HPSS by employment status as at 31 March 2001 and 2006

Date	Full-time Headcount	Part-time Headcount	WTE[1]	Total Headcount	WTE[1]
March 2001	29810	18533	11716.81	48343	41526.81
March 2006	35973	22688	14445.97	58661	50418.97

[1] WTE = Whole-time equivalent.

Note:
Figures exclude bank staff and home helps. Bank staff maintain service delivery by covering staffing shortfalls and fluctuating work loads and as a result their input to the service is difficult to measure. Home help staff predominately work as and when required, therefore not all home help staff are recorded on the personnel systems from which the data is taken.

Source:
Human Resource Management System.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people were employed in administration positions by the NHS in Northern Ireland in January *(a)* 2001 and *(b)* 2006. [66992]

Mr. Woodward: Figures for the number of administration staff employed within the NI HPSS are not available as at January. The information requested is available as at 31 March for 2001 and 2006 and is presented in the following table.

Administration staff employed within the NI HPSS as at 31 March 2001 and 2006

Date	Headcount	Whole-time equivalent
March 2001	10504	9298.74
March 2006	13234	11562.12

Source:
Human Resource Management System.

Emergency Services

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average starting salary was for newly recruited personnel in the *(a)* police, *(b)* fire and *(c)* ambulance services in Northern Ireland on 1 January. [65880]

Mr. Woodward: Student Police Service of Northern Ireland officers start on a salary of £20,397 rising to £22,770 on successful completion of initial training.

Trainee whole-time Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service firefighters start on a salary of £19,394 rising to £20,202 on completion of training and £25,850

when competent. Retained firefighters receive a quarterly retaining fee of £362.44 or £483.21 for 12 or 24 hour availability respectively. Initially, they receive £17.72 for two hours training per week and, once trained, receive a £12.61 turnout fee per call.

The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) recruits staff initially to its Patient Care (non-emergency) Service tier starting on a salary of £14,462. In time, staff can progress to the trainee Emergency Medical Technician grade starting at £15,908 and then to the Paramedic grade starting at £19,885.

Informants

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps are taken to protect informants and their families in Northern Ireland. [67071]

Mr. Woodward: It is Government policy never to comment on specific national security and intelligence matters.

Independent Treatment Centres

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many operations were carried out in independent sector treatment centres in Northern Ireland in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by type. [64980]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is not held centrally and will take some time to collate. I will write to the hon. Member with the relevant information as soon as it becomes available and place a copy in the Library.

Examination Results

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the *(a)* GCSE, *(b)* A level and *(c)* key stage results were for the 100 (i) primary and (ii) secondary schools in Northern Ireland with the (A) highest and (B) lowest percentage of children receiving free school meals in each of the last three years. [65994]

Angela E. Smith: The requested information is as follows:

GCSE, A level and Key Stage 2 results for the 100 post-Primary and Primary schools with the highest percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals for the last three years

	Post Primary schools		*Primary schools*	
	% of Year 12 pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs or equivalent at grades A-C*	*% of pupils in the final year of an A level course achieving 2 or more A levels or equivalent at grades A-E*	*% achieving the expected level or above in Key Stage 2 English*	*% achieving the expected level or above in Key Stage 2 Mathematics*
2004–05	35	90	58	62
2003–04	33	87	[1]—	[1]—
2002–03	32	88	55	59

[1] Data not available

GCSE, A level and Key Stage 2 results for the 100 post-Primary and Primary schools with the lowest percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals for the last three years

	Post Primary schools		*Primary schools*	
	% of Year 12 pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs or equivalent at grades A-C*	*% of pupils in the final year of an A level course achieving 2 or more A levels or equivalent at grades A-E*	*% achieving the expected level or above in Key Stage 2 English*	*% achieving the expected level or above in Key Stage 2 Mathematics*
2004–05	83	98	91	93
2003–04	82	97	[1]—	[1]—
2002–03	82	97	88	90

[1] Data not available

Note:

Due to Industrial action, Key Stage 2 Assessment results were not available in 2003–04

Fishing

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people are estimated to have visited Northern Ireland during 2005 on fishing holidays. [65875]

Angela E. Smith: Figures for 2005, relating to the number of direct[1] visitors who came to Northern Ireland specifically because of fishing, or who participated in sea, game or coarse fishing during their stay in Northern Ireland are presented as follows. These figures are not mutually exclusive; one visitor could have participated in more than one type of fishing during their stay.

[1] A direct visitor is one who entered NI directly via a NI air or sea port and excludes those who entered NI via ROI and ROI residents.

Visitors (excluding those who entered NI via ROI and ROI residents) who participated in fishing during their stay in Northern Ireland (2005)

	Actual reason for visit	*Participated*	*Total*
Sea fishing	400	4,100	4,500
Game fishing	300	2,700	3,000
Coarse fishing	700	2,500	3,200

Note:

Due to small sample sizes the above figures should be treated with caution.

General Practitioners

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average *(a)* gross annual salary and *(b)* weekly working hours were of GPs in Northern Ireland in the last period for which figures are available. [65879]

Mr. Woodward: *(a)* Following the introduction of the new General Medical Services (GMS) contract with effect from 1 April 2004, the contract for the provision of General Medical Services is between the relevant Health and Social Services Board and a GMS practice rather than individual GPs. Under the contract, each GMS practice receives payment and can generate income through a number of streams, some of which are core and some in which participation is a matter of choice for the practice concerned. It is a matter for each GMS contractor to determine how its practice is organised and how much of the funding it receives goes directly to each GP in the practice by way of salary/profit sharing. Since, as independent contractors, GPs are not required to declare information about their salaries, it is not possible to provide accurate average salary figures for the profession. However, officials estimate that in Northern Ireland, on average, the gross annual income per GP, after practice expenses, is currently in the region of £85,000 to £95,000.

(b) No weekly working hours are stipulated for a GMS contractor (practice) or each GP. However, each GMS contractor is responsible for the provision of General Medical Services to patients within core hours which are defined as,

"the period beginning at 5am and ending at 6:30pm on any day from, and including, Monday to Friday except a public holiday and a local holiday agreed with the Board".

Heart and Lung Transplants

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average NHS waiting time for a heart and lung transplant was in each of the last five years for which records are available in Northern Ireland. [66041]

Mr. Woodward: Information on the average waiting time for a heart and lung transplant in each of the last five years is shown in the following table.

	Average waiting time for a heart and lung transplant in days
2001–02	—
2002–03	—
2003–04	1,402
2004–05	94
2005–06	21

Note:
An average waiting time for 2001–02 and 2002–03 is not available as no patients received a heart and lung transplant during these years.
Source:
Belfast City Hospital Transplant Co-ordinator.

Figures are based on the time waited by patients, normally resident in Northern Ireland, who received a heart and lung transplant during the financial year. The figures do not include patients who have been removed from the waiting list for medical/social reasons or patients who have died while waiting for the transplant operation.

Homelessness

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what change there has been in the number of people *(a)* presenting themselves and *(b)* assessed by the Housing Executive as homeless in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [67548]

Mr. Hanson: During the last five financial years (1 April to 31 March 2006 each year) the information requested is as follows:

	Presenters	*Increase compared to previous year*	*Acceptances*	*Increase/ Decrease compared to previous year*
2000–01	12,694	1,697	6,457	1,265
2001–02	14,164	1,470	7,374	917
2002–03	16,426	2,262	8,580	1,206
2003–04	17,150	724	8,594	14
2004–05	17,362	212	8,470	-124

Notes:
Figures for 2005–06 are currently being collated and quality assured and will be available for release by the Housing Executive shortly.

Invest Northern Ireland

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many jobs were secured by Invest Northern Ireland, and its predecessors, for each of Northern Ireland's constituencies in each of the last 10 years. [66404]

Angela E. Smith: The information is as follows.

Table 1 shows the number of jobs promoted within each parliamentary constituency area as a result of inward investment projects during the 10 years from 1995–96 to 2004–05.

Table 1: New jobs promoted by parliamentary constituency in inward investment projects (1995–96 to 2004–05)

Parliamentary constituency	*1995–96*	*1996–97*	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*
Belfast, East	0	44	419	1,149	1,310	40
Belfast, North	109	113	569	250	289	1,476
Belfast, South	60	203	1,571	988	1,920	595
Belfast, West	464	716	153	75	314	250
East Antrim	0	369	200	221	591	2,363
East Londonderry	0	771	62	77	123	26
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	193	344	22	0	236	20
Foyle	1,402	340	1,225	158	960	357
Lagan Valley	1,552	315	0	512	32	0
Mid-Ulster	449	0	75	0	0	0
Newry and Armagh	298	109	0	0	0	300
North Antrim	0	363	244	0	0	12
North Down	6	0	51	0	358	0
South Antrim	0	799	130	86	226	0
South Down	30	45	75	275	0	0

Table 1: New jobs promoted by parliamentary constituency in inward investment projects (1995–96 to 2004–05)

Parliamentary constituency	*1995–96*	*1996–97*	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*
Strangford	41	11	100	14	80	0
Upper Bann	264	45	310	202	145	37
West Tyrone	61	100	0	155	0	30
NI total	4,929	4,687	5,206	4,162	6,584	5,506

Parliamentary constituency	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*Constituency total*
Belfast, East	142	0	0	410	3,514
Belfast, North	675	0	163	27	3,671
Belfast, South	45	216	649	1,379	7,626
Belfast, West	215	35	72	750	3,044
East Antrim	76	100	67	112	4,099
East Londonderry	0	0	24	0	1,083
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	108	350	202	0	1,475
Foyle	520	93	486	40	5,581
Lagan Valley	40	0	0	16	2,467
Mid-Ulster	0	32	0	166	722
Newry and Armagh	0	75	0	0	782
North Antrim	0	0	0	23	642
North Down	18	41	200	140	814
South Antrim	316	5	0	319	1,881
South Down	134	0	0	0	559
Strangford	15	70	5	19	355
Upper Bann	72	16	110	13	1,214
West Tyrone	150	0	175	53	724
NI total	2,526	1,033	2,153	3,467	40,253

Table 2 shows the number of jobs expected to be created as a result of the Start a Business Programme during the past four years (2002–03 to 2004–05). This information is not available over a longer time period.

Table 2: Jobs created in business start-ups by parliamentary constituency (2002–03 to 2005–06)

Parliamentary constituency	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06*	*Constituency total*
Belfast, East	57	122	146	111	436
Belfast, North	77	95	113	148	433
Belfast, South	101	163	212	161	637
Belfast, West	83	114	170	176	543
East Antrim	138	173	268	204	783
East Londonderry	130	169	304	254	857
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	186	111	433	374	1,270
Foyle	164	257	458	322	1,201
Lagan Valley	176	150	224	211	761
Mid-Ulster	222	267	342	360	1,191
Newry and Armagh	194	228	355	293	1,070
North Antrim	139	139	256	233	767
North Down	120	198	203	186	707
South Antrim	118	179	213	203	713
South Down	208	290	426	389	1,313
Strangford	151	220	269	260	900
Upper Bann	182	220	311	298	1,011
West Tyrone	130	164	234	247	775
NI total	2,576	3,425	4,937	4,400	15,368

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether Invest Northern Ireland has conducted an equality impact assessment on its policy for making land available for industrial use. [66405]

Angela E. Smith: Invest NI is currently carrying out an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) of its Business Development Solutions (BDS) programmes of assistance. The impact assessment will be sent out for public consultation later in 2006.

Invest NI's policy for "making land available for industrial use" will be analysed as part of this Business Development Solutions EQIA.

IRA

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what discussions his Department has had with former IRA members to help prevent future terrorist attacks. [67059]

Mr. Woodward: The Government remain committed to ending all violence and criminality in Northern Ireland and continues to engage with those who are committed to making the transition to the political path and to non-violence and exclusively peaceful and democratic means.

Irish Speakers

Dr. Alasdair McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people in Northern Ireland speak Irish, according to the latest census data. [66137]

Angela E. Smith: A total of 115,731 people (7.15 per cent. of those aged three and over) indicated through the 2001 Census that they could speak Irish.

Local Government Auditor

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland which Department of the Northern Ireland Administration is responsible for accountability and oversight arrangements in relation to the Northern Ireland Local Government Auditor. [28210]

Angela E. Smith: In Northern Ireland, Local Government Auditors are designated by the Department of the Environment under Article 4 of the Local Government (Northern Ireland) Order 2005. Article 4 provides that the Department may, with the consent of the Comptroller and Auditor General for Northern Ireland, designate persons who are members of the staff of the Northern Ireland Audit Office as local government auditors.

The Northern Ireland Audit Office is statutorily independent of Government.

MI5

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the compatibility with the Patten Report of the transfer of lead responsibility on national security in Northern Ireland to MI5; and if he will make a statement. [66535]

Mr. Woodward: The transfer of lead responsibility for national security intelligence work in Northern Ireland is entirely consistent with the Patten Report paragraph 6.15 and Recommendation 20. Paragraph 6.15 says, inter alia:

> 'We recommend that responsibility for policing be devolved to the Northern Ireland Executive as soon as possible, except for matters of national security.'

It is also wholly consistent with the current position in the rest of the United Kingdom and with the comments at paragraph 6.22:

> 'As in the rest of the United Kingdom (including Scotland under the new devolved arrangements there),- the Chief Constable remains fully accountable for the involvement of police in matters involving national security, even though his or her main accountability in such matters is to the Secretary of State rather than to the Policing Board.'

Mortality Statistics

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the five most common causes of death from preventable diseases were among *(a)* men and *(b)* women in Northern Ireland in 2005. [67547]

Mr. Woodward: The public health strategy Investing for Health recognised that a large proportion of early death and disease is preventable. However, the questions of which illnesses may be considered preventable, and at what age a death may be regarded as too young, are not straightforward.

Although much work has been done nationally and internationally in recent decades to measure levels of avoidable or premature mortality within populations, there has been a lack of consensus on how these deaths should be defined.

At present work is under way to define preventable causes of death. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is currently consulting on the development of indicators for use in measuring avoidable and premature mortality.

Motoring Offences

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many motorists in Northern Ireland convicted of speeding offences during 2005 were recorded as having exceeded 100 mph. [65342]

Mr. Hanson: Convictions data sources do not collate information on the actual speed in relation to speeding offences. In 2003, the latest year for which data is available, there were 3,144 convictions for excess speed in Northern Ireland.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many motorists in Northern Ireland convicted of drink driving offences during 2005 were recorded as having an alcohol content of more than 4 times the legal limit. [65343]

Mr. Hanson: Based on information provided by the Police Service of Northern Ireland relating to drivers breathalysed, in 2005 29 motorists had a reading of exceeding the legal limit by 4 times. One person registered as being 5 times over the legal limit. It should be noted that these figures exclude cases where alcohol levels have been forensically obtained from blood/urine samples.

In 2003, and excluding offences relating to failure to provide a sample, there were 2,283 convictions for drink driving. Convictions datasets do not, however, hold any additional information relating to the alcohol levels involved. Convictions data beyond 2003 are currently not available.

Newborn Screening Programme

Dr. Alasdair McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what medical conditions are screened for in the Newborn Screening programme in Northern Ireland. [66615]

Mr. Woodward: Screening is routinely offered to parents of newborn babies for a range of medical conditions. A physical examination is carried out on all babies with a particular focus on screening for developmental dysplasia of the hip, congenital heart disease, congenital cataract and cryptorchidism (descent of the testes in boys). A sample of the baby's blood taken from a heel prick is screened for phenylketonuria,

congenital hypothyroidism, cystic fibrosis, tyrosinaemia and homocystinuria. Their hearing is also tested through the newborn hearing screening programme.

Dr. Alasdair McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what criteria the UK Screening Committee uses when determining for which conditions to screen. [66619]

Mr. Woodward: The NSC assesses proposed new screening programmes against a set of internationally recognised criteria including the epidemiology of the condition, the screening test, any treatment options and the acceptability of the screening programme.

Northern Ireland Parades Commission

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether any breaches of security have occurred in the Northern Ireland Parades Commission since its establishment. [65336]

Mr. Woodward: On one occasion, in response to a request from a local councillor for a faxed list of band names, the commission inadvertently attached details of a list of band organisers, appearing on the same page. The commission then immediately disclosed this fact to the PSNI. The commission considered the circumstances of this administrative error in order to ensure no recurrence, and responded accordingly.

Aside from this incident, the commission is not aware of any breaches of security having occurred since its establishment.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on how many occasions the Northern Ireland Parades Commission has investigated allegations that personal details of members of the public which it held had been leaked; and how many members of staff in the commission have been *(a)* interviewed and *(b)* disciplined as a result of investigations into the leaking of information. [65337]

Mr. Woodward: The commission has never investigated any allegation that personal details of members of the public which it held have been leaked.

On one occasion, in response to a request from a local councillor for a faxed list of band names, the commission inadvertently attached details of a list of band organisers, appearing on the same page. The commission then immediately disclosed this fact to the PSNI. The commission considered the circumstances of this administrative error in order to ensure no recurrence, and responded accordingly.

Northern Ireland Police Fund

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the religious breakdown was of staff in the Northern Ireland police fund in each year since it was created. [65151]

Mr. Woodward: I have been advised by the Northern Ireland police fund that it does not maintain records of the community breakdown of its staff and cannot provide the information requested.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many members of staff in the Northern Ireland police fund have been questioned by the Police Service of Northern Ireland in connection with *(a)* terrorist related offences and *(b)* other crimes since it was created. [65152]

Mr. Woodward: Disclosure of details concerning police investigations is an operational matter for the chief constable.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what Mr. Desmond Clayton's role was within the Northern Ireland Police Fund; what vetting procedure he underwent prior to his appointment; and what relevant experience he brought to his post. [65153]

Mr. Woodward: Mr. Clayton was employed by the Northern Ireland Police Fund as its Chief Executive. As an employee of the Fund all matters pertaining to his appointment and terms and conditions of employment are a matter for the Fund.

Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people were employed by the Office of First Minister and Deputy First Minister on 1 March *(a)* 2002 and *(b)* 2006. [65868]

Angela E. Smith: The information is as follows.

Number of people employed by Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister

	Number
31 March 2002[1]	373
1 March 2006	335

[1] Information not available at 1 March 2002

Omagh Bombing

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) if he will take steps to establish a public inquiry into MI5's handling of threat information on a possible bomb attack at Omagh prior to 15 August 1998; [66423]

(2) how many people were *(a)* killed and *(b)* injured as a result of the Omagh bomb; [66424]

(3) whether he has made representations to *(a)* the Home Office and *(b)* MI5 for the head of MI5 to meet the families of the Omagh bomb victims to discuss the statement by the Chief Constable of the Police Service Northern Ireland that MI5 had threat information on a possible bomb attack at Omagh prior to 15 August 1998; [66425]

(4) if the head of MI5 will meet the families of the Omagh bomb victims to discuss the statement by the Chief Constable of the Police Service Northern Ireland that MI5 had threat information on a possible bomb attack at Omagh prior to 15 August 1998; [66427]

(5) if he will make a statement on the statement of the Chief Constable of the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) that some threat information gathered by MI5

on a possible bomb attack in Omagh prior to 15 August 1998 was only passed to the PSNI in 2006; [66430]

(6) if he will list the dates on which MI5 passed information to the Police Service of Northern Ireland relating to a possible bomb attack at Omagh prior to 15 August 1998; [66431]

(7) if he will review plans to give MI5 primacy on national security in Northern Ireland following confirmation by the Chief Constable of the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) that MI5 did not pass on to the PSNI threat information relating to Omagh prior to the 1998 Omagh bombing. [67297]

Mr. Woodward: The Omagh bombing was the single worst atrocity of the Troubles in Northern Ireland: 29 people were killed and 2 unborn twins died and more than 200 people were injured. The lives of countless people were damaged as a result. We remain committed to catching those who perpetrated this hideous act and to bringing them to justice. The Chief Constable made a clear statement to the Policing Board on 1 March 2006 that the Security Service did not withhold intelligence that was relevant or would have progressed the Omagh enquiry. It remains the policy of successive governments to neither confirm nor deny matters relating to intelligence information. The Treasury Solicitor's Department has explained in correspondence with lawyers acting on behalf of the families of Omagh bomb victims why the Security Service is unable to provide them with any information. We do not believe therefore in the case for a public inquiry; nor is there a case to review the decision to transfer the lead role for national security intelligence work in Northern Ireland from the police to the Security Service.

Parking (Hospitals)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what *(a)* revenue was raised and *(b)* overhead costs were incurred in respect of car parking by each of the hospitals that made charges for car parking in 2005. [65315]

Mr. Woodward: The information is not available in the form requested. Where appropriate, the following table shows actual revenue income from parking charges but the overhead costs are estimates. Actual costs are not available.

£

Hospital	*Revenue from parking charges in 2005*	*Estimate of overhead costs in 2005*
Belfast City Hospital	632,000	20,000
Mater Infirmorum Hospital	109,000	35,000
Ulster Hospital	435,000	35,000

In addition to the three hospitals noted, parking at the Royal Group of Hospitals is operated through the private finance initiative. This arrangement does not generate any revenue or incur any overheads for the trust.

Pathways to Work

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people have gone through the Pathways to Work programme in Northern Ireland since its inception; how many of those people are currently in employment; and how much the Department for Employment and Learning has spent on the programme. [65820]

Angela E. Smith: Between 3 October 2005 and 31 March 2006, 1,130 claims to incapacity benefit have been made in Pathways to Work areas. In the same period, 84 people have found work. The Department spent £428,110 for this period. Also, £100,000 was provided to the Department of Health and Social Services and Public Safety for the early development costs of the Condition Management Programme and £130,600 to the Social Security Agency for benefit administration costs. Although Pathways to Work began last October, most of the first cohort of clients is still participating in the programme so it will be some time before the impact of the new service can be properly assessed.

Petrol Stations

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) how many petrol filling stations have closed in Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 years; [32231]

(2) how many petrol filling stations have closed in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [65150]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated 2 May 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your parliamentary Questions concerning how many petrol filling stations have closed in Northern Ireland in each of the last *(a)* 5 years and in each of the last 10 years. I am replying in her absence. (65150, 32231)

The exact information requested is not available. VAT deregistrations provide some indication, but HMRC confirm that they do not provide all the information because businesses cancel their registration for a wide variety of reasons. For example, the figures include closures of independent petrol filling stations that are now operated by other businesses and exclude closures of petrol filling stations within businesses that continue to run other sites. The total number of enterprises de-registering for VAT in Northern Ireland classified to the "Retail Sale of Automotive Fuel" in each of the 10 years to 2004 (this is the latest data available) is:

Analysis showing the count of VAT de-registrations in Northern Ireland for SJC2Q03 5050 retail sale of automotive fuel.

Data taken at May 2005	*Number*
1995	45
1996	50
1997	50
1998	70
1999	60
2000	50
2001	55

Analysis showing the count of VAT de-registrations in Northern Ireland for SJC2Q03 5050 retail sale of automotive fuel.

Data taken at May 2005	*Number*
2002	40
2003	40
2004	30

Note:
Estimates are rounded to the nearest 5 to prevent disclosure.

For further information on business start ups and closures, please see the National Statistics publication "VAT Registrations and De-registrations: Business Start-ups and Closures", which is available free of charge on the SBS website: http://www.sbs gov.uk/analytical

The data also differ slightly from those published by the Small-Business Service (SBS) as adjustments for death lags have only been applied to the published data.

Police (Shooting Incidents)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many incidents involving shots being fired by police officers in Northern Ireland have been investigated by the Policing Ombudsman; and in how many instances there was a finding of non-justification of the action taken by the officers concerned. [65927]

Mr. Woodward: The Police Ombudsman's Office has advised that in the last five years 49 such incidents were referred to the Ombudsman for investigation. Of these, 21 are currently under investigation.

The Ombudsman has confirmed that the term "non-justification" is not a classification that she would use in the closure of such matters. Of the 28 cases investigated and closed, 12 contained recommendations for action on a number of issues.

Pre-school Education

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when he will publish the report on the review of pre-school education provision in Northern Ireland. [67624]

Angela E. Smith: The Department of Education published the outcomes of the Review of Pre-School Education in Northern Ireland on 25 April 2006.

Prisoners (Self-harm)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many incidents of self-harm among prisoners there have been at *(a)* Maghaberry and *(b)* Magilligan prisons in each of the last five years. [67546]

Mr. Woodward: The number of incidents of self-harm among prisoners in Maghaberry and Magilligan prisons in each of the last five years are shown as follows:

April to March	*Maghaberry prison*	*Magilligan prison*
2001–02	28	12
2002–03	35	5
2003–04	39	5
2004–05	50	14
2005–06	94	14

Note:
Figures until March 2004 are approximate, as self-harm statistics were only routinely recorded with effect from April 2004.

PSNI

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many firearms have been lost by the Police Service of Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [65332]

Mr. Woodward: The Chief Constable has provided the following information in regard to the numbers of firearms lost by the Police Service of Northern Ireland in each of the last five years:

	Number
2001	1
2002	0
2003	2
2004	2
2005	2

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the outcome was of the Police Service of Northern Ireland investigation launched in early 2005 into allegations that an officer chanted IRA slogans in a Belfast hotel at a Christmas function. [65335]

Mr. Woodward: In early 2005, an investigating officer was appointed from the PSNI Internal Investigation Branch to investigate these allegations. The investigation concluded with the officer appearing before a misconduct panel in August 2005 to answer an alleged breach of the Police Code of Ethics. A misconduct sanction was imposed.

Public Sector Employees

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the change was in the number of people employed in the public sector in Northern Ireland between 1995 and 2005. [65487]

Angela E. Smith: Estimates from the Quarterly Employment Survey show that between December 1995 and December 2005 the number of employee jobs in the NI public sector increased by 20,590. The latest figure for public sector jobs in NI stands at 218,822.

Pulmonary Hypertension

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people have died from pulmonary hypertension while on the NHS waiting list for a heart and lung transplant in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years for which records are available. [66044]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is not available.

Recycling

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress is being made on recycling waste in Government Departments in Northern Ireland. [65872]

Angela E. Smith: The new Waste Management Strategy for Northern Ireland requires Government Departments to publish Departmental Waste Management Action

Plans by April 2006, which should include commitments to the progressive use of recycled paper and the preparation of detailed waste recycling plans.

Waste Management Action Plans for all 11 NICS Departments have now been prepared, and will be made available as a single document by the Department of the Environment at the end of April 2006. The first round of monitoring of Departments' performance against their plans will take place at the end of the first year.

Residential Nursing Care Beds

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many residential nursing care beds for elderly people there are in the City of Lisburn. [67389]

Mr. Woodward: Information on the number of beds for elderly people in the City of Lisburn is not available, as nursing beds are not designated specifically for the elderly. However, there are currently 522 registered nursing home beds in total within the City of Lisburn.

Schools

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many integrated schools have opened in Northern Ireland in each of the past 20 years. [67069]

Angela E. Smith: All but one of the 56 existing integrated schools have been established over the past 20 years and these schools are as detailed in the following table. Lagan college is the exception, as it opened in 1981.

	Integrated primary school (IPS)	*Post-primary integrated college (IC)*
1985	Forge IPS, Belfast Hazelwood IPS, Newtownabbey	Hazelwood IC, Newtownabbey
1986	All Children's IPS, Newcastle	
1987	Bridge IPS, Banbridge Mill Strand IPS, Portrush	
1988	Windmill IPS	
1989	Braidside IPS, Ballymena Enniskillen IPS	
1990	Omagh IPS Portadown IPS[1]	
1991	Carhill Controlled IPS, Garvagh Corran IPS, Larne Oakgrove IPS, Londonderry	Brownlow Controlled IC
1992	Acorn IPS, Carrickfergus	Oakgrove IC, Londonderry
1993	Cranmore IPS, Belfast Loughview IPS, Belfast Saints and Scholars IPS, Armagh	
1994		Erne IC, Enniskillen Shimna IC, Newcastle
1995	Portaferry Controlled IPS[1] Cedar IPS, Crossgar	New-Bridge IC, Loughbrickland Drumragh IC, Omagh Integrated College, Dungannon
1996	Oakwood IPS, Derriaghy Rathenraw IPS, Antrim Hilden Controlled IPS, Lisburn[1]	North Coast IC, Coleraine Slemish IC, Ballymena
1997	Annsborough Controlled IPS, Castlewellan	Malone IC, Belfast Strangford IC, Carrowdore Ulidia IC, Carrickfergus
1998	Bangor Central Controlled IPS[1] Kilbroney IPS, Rostrevor Kircubbin IPS	Down Academy Controlled IC[1] Fort Hill Controlled IC[1] Priory Controlled IC[1]
1999	Spires IPS, Magherafelt	
2000	Millennium IPS, Saintfield	
2001	Carnlough Controlled IPS[1]	
2002		Sperrin IC, Magherafelt
2003	Glengormley Controlled IPS Maine IPS, Randalstown Round Tower Controlled IPS, Antrim	
2004	Drumlins IPS, Ballynahinch Glencraig Controlled IPS, Holywood[1] Phoenix IPS, Cookstown Roe Valley IPS, Limavady	Armagh IC
2005	Groarty Controlled IPS[1]	

[1] Year of transformation to integrated status or date grant-maintained integrated status acquired.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many integrated schools there are in Northern Ireland. [67075]

Angela E. Smith: There are currently 56 integrated schools comprising 19 integrated post-primary colleges, and 37 integrated primary schools. There is also one independent primary school and additionally one integrated college and one integrated primary school will be opening in September as independent schools.

Sex Offenders Register

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will bring forward additional powers for monitoring sex offenders whose names appear on the sex offenders register on their release from prison; and if he will make a statement. [66633]

Mr. Hanson: I believe it is important that we continually review and develop how we manage offenders in the community. This is why I intend introducing legislation later this year which will strengthen the current sex offender management arrangements in Northern Ireland by placing these on a statutory footing and extending the arrangements to include the management of non-sexual violent offenders.

The recent consultation on the sentencing framework in Northern Ireland included a wide range of possible sentencing disposals which would provide for: increased public protection through tougher sentences and post-release supervision; a reduction in crime; and improved rehabilitation of offenders in Northern Ireland. Central to that process was consideration of the issue of protection of the public from dangerous violent and sexual offenders through extended sentences underpinned by robust risk assessment and management.

I will carefully examine all the options, taking into account recent developments and experience in the rest of the UK, and will of course ensure we have the most comprehensive and effective framework for protecting the public in Northern Ireland from the risk posed by dangerous offenders.

Smoking

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what actions he has taken to ensure that the smoking ban in public places will be enforced. [67057]

Mr. Woodward: The draft Smoking (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 is currently the subject of a public consultation exercise. This exercise, which ends on 5 May, seeks views on a number of key areas, including enforcement.

Statemented Children

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many children are waiting to be statemented in each education and library board area; and what the longest waiting time was for assessment in each education and library board area in the last five years. [65894]

Angela E. Smith: The following table shows the total number of children at Stage 4 of the Code of Practice. This is where the ELB considers the need for a statutory assessment and if appropriate makes a multi-disciplinary assessment. The table also shows the number of children whose parents have been notified of a proposal to make a statutory assessment, but for whom the assessment process has not yet started. These figures were collated at November 2005.

Education and Library Board	*Number of children at Stage 4*	*Number of children whose parents have been notified of a proposed assessment, but the process has not yet started*
Belfast Education and Library Board	220	0
North Eastern Education and Library Board	164	6
South Eastern Education and Library Board	570	60
Southern Education and Library Board	281	25

Teacher Training

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many teacher training places were available at *(a)* Stranmillis College and *(b)* St. Mary's College in each of the last five years; how many students applied to each college in each year; what the religious background of students at each college was in each year; and how many teacher training students there were at (i) undergraduate and (ii) postgraduate level at each college in each year. [65836]

Angela E. Smith: The information requested is as follows:

Initial teacher training places at St. Mary's and Stranmillis University Colleges 2001/02 to 2004/05

Academic year	*St. Mary's University College*	*Stranmillis University College*
2001/02	230	210
2002/03	235	216
2003/04	240	216
2004/05	240	210
2005/06	230	196

Source:

Department of Education

Applications received for initial teacher training courses at St Mary's and Stranmillis University Colleges 2001/02 to 2004/05

Academic year	*St. Mary's University College*	*Stranmillis University College*
2001/02	946	1,410
2002/03	945	1,688
2003/04	2,181	1,893

Applications received for initial teacher training courses at St Mary's and Stranmillis University Colleges 2001/02 to 2004/05

Academic year	St. Mary's University College	Stranmillis University College
2004/05	2,462	2,170
2005/06	2,077	1,517

Source:
St. Mary's University College, Stranmillis University College.
Note:
From 2003/04 to 2005/06, St. Mary's University College used the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service to process course applications. Please note that a student may apply for more than one course or to both institutions and may therefore be included more than once.

Religious background of all students enrolled at St. Mary's and Stranmillis University Colleges 2001/02 to 2004/05

Academic year	St. Mary's University College				
	Protestant	Roman Catholic	Other	Not known	Total
2001/02	20	601	—	*	1,020
2002/03	26	819	0	290	1,135
2003/04	28	845	—	*	1,155
2004/05	25	819	0	289	1,133

Academic year	Stranmillis University College				
	Protestant	Roman Catholic	Other	Not known	Total
2001/02	863	163	23	335	1,384
2002/03	930	188	30	243	1,391
2003/04	939	190	34	208	1,371
2004/05	984	205	38	234	1,461

Note:
To prevent the identification of individuals, figures less than 5 have been suppressed and are denoted by —. Figures which could allow those figures to be calculated have been replaced by *.
Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency

Student enrolments on initial teacher training courses at St. Mary's and Stranmillis University Colleges by level of study 2001/02 to 2004/05

Academic year	St. Mary's University College		
	Undergraduate	Postgraduate	Total
2001/02	706	14	720
2002/03	753	17	770
2003/04	790	16	806
2004/05	786	20	806

Academic year	Stranmillis University College		
	Undergraduate	Postgraduate	Total
2001/02	710	35	745
2002/03	741	41	782
2003/04	762	40	802
2004/05	789	42	831

Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency.
HESA data for the 2005/06 academic year is not yet available.

Teachers

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many teachers in Northern Ireland have taken early retirement enhanced packages in each of the last five years in the *(a)* controlled sector, *(b)* maintained sector, *(c)* integrated sector, *(d)* Irish language medium sector and *(e)* independent sector. [67582]

Angela E. Smith: The information requested is shown in the following table:

Teacher premature retirements 1 April 2001 to 31 March 2006

Sector	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06
Controlled	109	122	121	158	254
Maintained	154	172	184	180	253
Integrated	1	2	2	5	4
Irish Language Medium	0	0	0	1	0
Independent[1]	145	129	128	70	98
Total	409	425	435	414	609

[1] Includes FE Colleges, Voluntary Grammar Schools and certain Outside Bodies.

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many full-time equivalent teachers have been employed in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years in the *(a)* controlled sector, *(b)* maintained sector, *(c)* integrated sector, *(d)* Irish language medium sector and *(e)* independent sector. [67586]

Angela E. Smith: The number of full-time equivalent teachers employed in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years in the *(a)* controlled sector, *(b)* maintained sector, *(c)* integrated sector, *(d)* Irish Language medium sector is as follows:

Sector	September 2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Controlled	8,272	8,277	8,274	8,244	7,968
Maintained	7,040	6,939	6,929	6,832	6,677
Integrated	722	736	748	784	800
Irish Medium	63	75	81	80	91
Total	16,097	16,027	16,032	15,940	15,536

Note:
The Department does not hold any information on the number of teachers employed in the Independent sector.

Thomas "Slab" Murphy

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what his assessment is of the current whereabouts of Thomas "Slab" Murphy. [65325]

Mr. Woodward: The NIO does not comment about ongoing police investigations.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Affordable Housing

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on planning procedures for affordable homes. [65308]

Yvette Cooper: Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: Housing (PPG3) and DETR Circular 6/98 Planning and Affordable Housing set out current policy in relation to planning for affordable housing.

Draft Planning Policy Statement 3 : Housing (PPS3), published for consultation in December 2005, brings together the policies in PPG3 and the Circular. It would require local planning authorities:

To identify the level, size, type and location of affordable housing needed in their areas, having regard to relevant sub-regional housing market assessments and regional and local housing and community strategies.

In the light of this analysis, to formulate policies for their plans, including an overall target for affordable housing provision.

To ensure that individual proposals for housing development in their areas are consistent with those policies and, where appropriate, make a contribution to the achievement of the target.

Our policy intention remains to ensure that affordable housing, where it is needed, is provided on site, in order to contribute towards mixed and inclusive communities.

Michael Gove: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to increase the amount of Housing Corporation funding available to private developers to provide affordable housing. [65063]

Yvette Cooper: Persons other than registered social landlords, including private developers, were eligible to bid for funding from the whole of the Housing Corporation's National Affordable Housing Programme for 2006 to 2008 except for the specialist funding stream. The Housing Corporation is now looking at how best to encourage more bids from developers in future competitions that offer good value for money, high quality and meet assessed needs.

Antisocial Behaviour

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many antisocial behaviour cases involving high hedges there were in *(a)* Greater London, *(b)* England and *(c)* Havering in each of the last seven years. [67110]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The information requested is not collected centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. Part 8 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003, which gives local authorities powers to determine complaints about high hedges, extends to England and Wales only. It came into force in Wales on 31 December 2004 and in England on 1 June 2005.

Caravan Parks (Illegal Residence)

Chris Ruane: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the number of people illegally residing in tourism caravan parks in each local authority area. [65907]

Yvette Cooper: The Department has not made any assessment regarding the numbers of people living on holiday sites.

Code for Sustainable Homes

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister from what date he intends that new developments built on behalf of public sector commissioners will be required to be constructed to the standards contained in the Code for Sustainable Homes. [66684]

Yvette Cooper: In the light of an initial analysis of the consultation returns, the Government announced proposals to strengthen the code on 9 March 2006, as well as undertaking further research into future improvements.

These improvements will be developed over the coming months. As an interim measure all homes with English Partnerships or Housing Corporation funding will meet the new Ecohomes Very Good 2006 standard from 1 April, which is broadly equivalent to the Code Level 3.

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what progress he has made towards publication of the Code for Sustainable Homes. [66711]

Yvette Cooper: Consultation on the proposed Code for Sustainable Homes ended on 6 March 2006. In light of the consultation responses, the Government announced proposals to strengthen the code on 9 March 2006. This announcement also said that these improvements would be developed over the coming months.

My officials are currently working on developing these improvements; they are also carrying out a detailed analysis of the consultation returns including the costs and benefits of suggested changes to the code, in preparation for the production of a final Regulatory Impact Assessment.

Correspondence

Mr. Malins: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he will respond in full to the letter from the hon. Member for Woking of 14 March concerning a constituent, Mr. Aroskin. [66950]

Yvette Cooper: I replied to the hon. Member's letter on 28 April.

Departmental Advertising

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much his Department paid for the full page advertisement feature in Regeneration and Renewal magazine of 17 March. [62258]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister paid £3,131.00 plus VAT for the full page advertorial in Regeneration and Renewal magazine of 17 March.

Ben Chapman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he will announce new guidance on the control of outdoor advertising. [66868]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister intends to go out to consultation on new draft regulations and a circular on the control of outdoor advertisements shortly.

Gypsy and Traveller Sites

Andrew George: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what statutory obligations local authorities are under to provide sites for gypsy and traveller accommodation. [66076]

Yvette Cooper: Local authorities are not under a statutory obligation to provide sites for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation. However, the Housing Act 2004 requires local housing authorities to assess the housing needs of Gypsies And Travellers residing in, or resorting to, their area and prepare strategies to address this need. Circular 01/2006 requires regional planning bodies to specify in regional spatial strategies the number of pitches required in each local planning authority area to address this need, and authorities must allocate land for these pitches in their development plan documents.

Haven Gateway

Mr. Carswell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what meetings his Department has had with lobbyists and public affairs consultants acting on behalf of the Haven Gateway Partnership; and if he will make a statement. [64266]

Yvette Cooper: No meetings have taken place between the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and lobbyists or public affairs consultants acting on behalf of the Haven Gateway Partnership.

Officials from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister have held meetings with the Haven Gateway Partnership regarding their proposals for housing growth as part of their plans to build sustainable communities. These meetings included a consultant working for the Regional Development Agency, but we are not aware of any meetings with lobbyist of public affairs consultants. We have recently received a submission from the Haven Gateway Partnership setting out their case to be awarded New Growth Point status and funding. We are considering this submission along with others that have been received.

Departmental Televisions

Jo Swinson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many television sets are in operation in the Department *(a)* in total, *(b)* in Minister's private offices and *(c)* in each office building in the Department; and how many television licences are held by the Department. [62797]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has the following number of television sets and television licences:

Property	*Total number of ODPM owned TV sets in the building*	*Number of TVs in Minister's private office*	*Licence held in ODPM's name*	*Licence held in another's name*
26 Whitehall, London	24	8	—	1
Eland House, London	12	6	1	—
Ashdown House, London	4	n/a	1	—
Exchange Tower, London	0	n/a	n/a	—
Ashdown House, Hastings	0	n/a	n/a	—
Hempstead House, Hemel Hempstead	1	n/a	1	—
Building 3, Garston	1	n/a	1	—
1 High St., Glossop	0	n/a	n/a	—
Fire Experimental Unit, Moreton-in-Marsh	2	n/a	1	—

Property	Total number of ODPM owned TV sets in the building	Number of TVs in Minister's private office	Licence held in ODPM's name	Licence held in another's name
Hangar 97 Little Rissington	0	n/a	n/a	—
Marchington, Staffordshire	1	n/a	1	—
ODPM Total	45	14	6	1

ODPM also has three Executive agencies: the QEII Conference Centre, which has six televisions for the use of delegates, the Fire Service College, which provides residential training for the fire and rescue service and has 478 televisions in student bedrooms and common rooms, and the Planning Inspectorate, which has no televisions. Both the QEII Conference Centre and the Fire Service College have TV licences.

These figures do not include display units that are used solely for the dissemination of departmental information to staff or TVs associated with video conferencing facilities.

This answer also does not include the buildings occupied by the Government offices, who carry out functions on behalf of 10 Government Departments.

Fire and Rescue Services

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many *(a)* deliberate fires and *(b)* deliberate vehicle fires there were in England in each year since 1996–97. [66441]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The table shows the number of deliberate primary fires attended by the fire and rescue service in England in each year since 1996–97.

Deliberate primary fires by location of fire, England—1996–97 to 2004–05

	Total	Road vehicles	Other locations
1996–97	72,040	36,454	35,586
1997–98	68,399	36,045	32,353
1998–99	72,358	42,631	29,727
1999–2000	87,457	54,499	32,959
2000–01	90,652	59,057	31,595
2001–02	104,468	68,634	35,833
2002–03[1]	100,713	67,296	33,416
2003–04	93,214	58,738	34,476
2004–05[2]	73,013	44,482	28,531

[1] Includes estimates for incidents not recorded during periods of industrial action in 2002–03.
[2] Data for 2004–05 are provisional.
Source:
Fire and Rescue Service FDR1 returns to ODPM.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what targets he has set for reducing the number of deliberate fires. [66442]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has a public service agreement target to reduce the number of accidental fire related deaths in the home by 20 per cent. by 31 March 2010 and to achieve a 10 per cent. reduction in deliberate fires by 31 March 2010.

Deliberate primary fires have fallen again in the latest year; 69,900 were recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2005, a fall of 20 per cent. compared with the previous year. This is 26 per cent. below the 2010 PSA target of 94,000.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many large outbreaks of fire there have been in each of the last eight years in *(a)* Romford, *(b)* Havering and *(c)* Greater London; and if he will make a statement. [67027]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The following tables show the number of primary fires attended by the fire and rescue service in each year from 1997–2004. Data for constituencies and local authorities are held centrally only for 2002 onwards.

Primary fires in Greater London, 1997 to 2004

Location	Greater London
1997	19,650
1998	19,292
1999	21,385
2000	21,752
2001	22,117
2002[1]	20,040
2003[1]	19,900
2004	17,348

[1] Includes estimates for incidents not recorded during periods of industrial action in 2002 and 2003
Source:
Fire and Rescue Service FDR1 returns to ODPM.

Primary fires in Romford constituency and Havering local authority, 2002–04

Location	[1]2002	[1]2003	2004
Havering LA	330	472	382
Romford Constituency	108	140	117
% assigned to LA and constituency	71	95	96

[1] Excludes incidents not recorded during periods of industrial action in 2002 and 2003
Note:
Primary fires include all fires in buildings, vehicles and outdoor structures or any fire involving casualties, rescues, or fires attended by five or more appliances.
Source:
Neighbourhood Statistics derived from Fire and Rescue Service FDR1 returns to ODPM.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much has been allocated for fire and rescue services to each London borough in each of the last eight years. [67015]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The fire and rescue service is partially funded by formula grant. Formula grant comprises revenue support grant, redistributed business rates and principal formula police grant. The Greater London Authority receives the funding with respect to both police and non-police services including fire. The non-police amounts are as follows:

	Formula grant
1998–99	209.696
1999–2000	217.821
2000–01	238.040
2001–02	254.838
2002–03	266.870
2003–04	258.022

	Formula grant
2004–05	268.401
2005–06	277.093

It is a matter for the Greater London Authority to decide the distribution of funding among the fire and rescue services in each borough.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total annual budget for each fire authority in England was in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available; and what the budget deficit was in each case where this occurred. [65667]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The annual budget of a local authority is usually measured by its budget requirement. This must not change between (forecast) budget and (actual) outturn. Also, prior to 1 April 2004, the budget requirement for combined fire authorities in shire areas was zero as fire authority expenditure was financed entirely by payments from county or unitary councils in their area.

To give a more consistent picture across the last 10 years I have tabled the service expenditure of each single purpose fire authority in England for each of the last ten years for which data are available.

Total service expenditure by single purpose fire authorities for each year from 1995–96 to 2004–05

£ thousands

		1995–96	*1996–97*	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*
E6101	Avon Combined Fire Authority[1]	—	24,220	25,622	27,052	28,544
E6102	Bedfordshire Combined Fire Authority[1]	—	—	14,113	14,427	16,107
E6103	Berkshire Combined Fire Authority[1]	—	—	—	18,617	20,054
E6104	Buckinghamshire Combined Fire Authority[1]	—	—	13,383	14,045	14,342
E6105	Cambridgeshire Combined Fire Authority[1]	—	—	—	14,845	16,369
E6106	Cheshire Combined Fire Authority[1]	—	—	—	24,378	26,976
E6107	Cleveland Combined Fire Authority[1]	—	20,909	21,396	21,771	23,013
E6110	Derbyshire Combined Fire Authority[1]	—	—	20,382	23,021	23,706
E6111	Devon Combined Fire Authority[1]	—	—	—	28,717	30,999
E6112	Dorset Combined Fire Authority[1]	—	—	15,039	16,635	17,385
E6113	Durham Combined Fire Authority[1]	—	.	16,399	16,675	17,451
E6114	East Sussex Combined Fire Authority[1]	—	—	19,827	20,055	22,488
E6115	Essex Combined Fire Authority[1]	—	-	—	42,472	45,085
E6117	Hampshire Combined Fire Authority[1]	—	—	33,466	35,921	39,421
E6118	Hereford & Worcester Combined Fire Authority[1]	—	—	—	16,661	17,529
E6120	Humberside Combined Fire Authority[1]	—	24,742	26,638	27,733	28,691
E6122	Kent Combined Fire Authority[1]	—	—	—	42,388	45,176
E6123	Lancashire Combined Fire Authority[1]	—	—	—	40,939	43,113
E6124	Leicestershire Combined Fire Authority[1]	—	—	17,358	19,188	19,836
E6127	North Yorkshire Combined Fire Authority[1]	—	16,038	17,090	17,449	19,132
E6130	Nottinghamshire Combined Fire Authority[1]	—	—	—	25,804	27,294
E6132	Shropshire Combined Fire Authority[1]	—	.	—	11,368	12,503
E6134	Staffordshire Combined Fire Authority[1]	—	—	23,043	24,150	25,053
E6139	Wiltshire Combined Fire Authority[1]	—	—	11,900	12,484	13,483
E6142	Greater Manchester Fire and CD Authority	70,409	73,474	77,164	79,733	81,512
E6143	Merseyside Fire and CD Authority	47,187	52,737	52,113	55,166	57,804
E6144	South Yorkshire Fire and CD Authority	30,491	31,257	33,244	36,004	38,293
E6145	Tyne and Wear Fire and CD Authority	35,889	36,983	38,002	41,907	41,451
E6146	West Midlands Fire and CD Authority	67,469	69,578	73,645	77,775	80,982
E6147	West Yorkshire Fire and CD Authority	53,017	54,574	57,280	59,920	63,221
E6160	London Fire and CD Authority2	250,060	259,190	265,489	275,287	280,626

£m

		2000–01	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–042*	*2004–052*
E6101	Avon Combined Fire Authority[1]	29,924	31,332	33,837	34,935	39,700
E6102	Bedfordshire Combined Fire Authority[1]	16,158	17,405	18,645	20,250	21,726
E6103	Berkshire Combined Fire Authority[1]	21,066	22,434	23,803	26,230	29,594
E6104	Buckinghamshire Combined Fire Authority[1]	15,786	16,525	17,393	19,685	19,594
E6105	Cambridgeshire Combined Fire Authority[1]	17,306	18,171	18,527	22,346	23,858
E6106	Cheshire Combined Fire Authority[1]	25,538	27,815	28,726	33,945	40,332
E6107	Cleveland Combined Fire Authority[1]	24,096	25,491	26,710	30,013	33,350
E6110	Derbyshire Combined Fire Authority[1]	25,065	25,839	26,893	26,963	31,152
E6111	Devon Combined Fire Authority[1]	32,513	33,997	36,227	39,023	44,272
E6112	Dorset Combined Fire Authority[1]	18,080	18,966	20,258	17,509	23,541
E6113	Durham Combined Fire Authority[1]	18,330	20,084	20,758	23,949	23,407
E6114	East Sussex Combined Fire Authority[1]	23,306	24,348	26,934	20,937	31,825
E6115	Essex Combined Fire Authority[1]	47,383	49,691	51,591	54,349	59,430
E6117	Hampshire Combined Fire Authority[1]	40,743	44,711	47,597	51,390	54,919
E6118	Hereford and Worcester Combined Fire Authority[1]	17,766	19,455	20,768	22,399	24,519
E6120	Humberside Combined Fire Authority[1]	30,598	31,291	32,532	32,595	38,193
E6122	Kent Combined Fire Authority[1]	46,105	48,054	49,743	52,927	56,669
E6123	Lancashire Combined Fire Authority[1]	44,243	45,905	48,467	51,791	55,642
E6124	Leicestershire Combined Fire Authority[1]	21,117	22,075	23,330	24,871	29,396

£m

		2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–042	2004–052
E6127	North Yorkshire Combined Fire Authority[1]	18,663	20,087	23,348	21,515	21,053
E6130	Nottinghamshire Combined Fire Authority[1]	28,221	30,290	31,722	33,127	37,378
E6132	Shropshire Combined Fire Authority[1]	12,688	12,796	14,545	15,363	16,183
E6134	Staffordshire Combined Fire Authority[1]	25,347	27,350	28,807	31,546	34,207
E6139	Wiltshire Combined Fire Authority[1]	15,126	15,764	16,840	17,383	19,299
E6142	Greater Manchester Fire and CD Authority	86,244	89,300	94,729	92,638	97,625
E6143	Merseyside Fire and CD Authority	58,847	61,022	62,525	60,564	65,715
E6144	South Yorkshire Fire and CD Authority	37,880	41,470	43,371	42,640	50,143
E6145	Tyne and Wear Fire and CD Authority	44,559	45,905	48,449	45,362	50,180
E6146	West Midlands Fire and CD Authority	83,252	87,781	90,682	87,491	99,285
E6147	West Yorkshire Fire and CD Authority	64,657	67,508	71,156	69,864	78,940
E6160	London Fire and CD Authority[3]	—	—	—	—	—

[1] Fire authorities did not exist until the first year shown and were created following local government reorganisation. All fire services were previously provided by the county council.
[2] Figures for 2003–04 and 2004–05 are presented on a *Financial Reporting Standard 17 (FRS17)* basis. All other years are presented on a non-FRS17 basis.
[3] London Fire Authority became part of the Greater London Authority in 2000–01.
Source:
ODPM Revenue Outturn (RO) returns 1995–96 to 2004–05—RS data.

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister on how many occasions during 2005 the fire brigade was called out to deal with incidents in hotels and similar establishments where a fire alarm had been triggered by cigarette smoke and there was no fire; what estimate he has made of the cost; and if he will make a statement. [67561]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Homelessness

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many people were homeless in *(a)* England, *(b)* the South West and *(c)* Taunton constituency in each year since 1992. [64068]

Yvette Cooper: Information about local authorities actions under homelessness legislation is collected in respect of households, rather than people, and at local authority rather than constituency level. The constituency of Taunton includes Taunton Deane District Council, West Somerset District Council and Mid Devon District Council.

The number of households accepted by the district councils as eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in priority need for each year since 1996, and the number of households in temporary accommodation arranged by the councils under homelessness legislation as at 31 December in each year is tabled. Information is also collected on the number of people who sleep rough—that is, those who are literally roofless on a single night—and these are also presented in the table. Figures from 1992 are also presented for England and South West.

The duty owed to a household accepted as eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in priority need is to secure suitable accommodation. If a settled home is not immediately available, the authority may secure temporary accommodation until a settled home becomes available. As an alternative to the provision of temporary accommodation some authorities arrange for households to remain in their current accommodation (homeless at home), until a settled solution becomes available.

Households accepted[1] as homeless during the year, households in temporary accommodation[2] at the end of the year, and numbers of rough sleepers[3]

	Taunton Deane District Council			*West Somerset District Council*		
	Households accepted during the year	*Households in TA as at 31 December*	*Rough sleepers*	*Households accepted during the year*	*Households in TA as at 31 December*	*Rough sleepers*
1992	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1993	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1994	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1995	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1996[4]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1997	227	67	n/a	36	3	n/a
1998	272	113	1	49	8	0
1999	336	149	2	80	12	0
2000	291	186	2	90	23	0
2001	244	197	0	91	21	0
2002	254	175	0	135	34	0
2003	260	125	0	91	31	0
2004[5]	234	111	0	114	52	0
2005[5]	281	97	0	72	52	0

	Mid Devon District Council			South West		
	Households accepted during the year	*Households in TA as at 31 December*	*Rough sleepers*	*Households accepted during the year*	*Households in TA as at 31 December*	*Rough sleepers*
1992	n/a	n/a	n/a	8,990	n/a	n/a
1993	n/a	n/a	n/a	9,370	n/a	n/a
1994	n/a	n/a	n/a	9,210	n/a	n/a
1995	n/a	n/a	n/a	9,960	n/a	n/a
1996[4]	n/a	n/a	n/a	9,830	n/a	n/a
1997	98	17	n/a	8,780	2,920	n/a
1998	83	102	9	8,910	4,380	290
1999	131	155	9	9,480	4,520	203
2000	137	132	0	11,170	5,270	124
2001	142	153	0	11,380	5,280	75
2002	160	225	0	12,280	5,820	61
2003	160	364	0	11,770	6,460	64
2004[5]	170	181	0	10,100	6,410	44
2005[5]	132	170	0	8,650	6,710	50

	England		
	Households accepted during the year	*Households in TA as at 31 December*	*Rough sleepers*
1992	138,740	63,070	n/a
1993	127,630	53,580	n/a
1994	118,490	45,630	n/a
1995	117,490	44,140	n/a
1996[4]	113,590	42,190	n/a
1997	102,000	44,870	n/a
1998	104,630	53,790	1,850
1999	105,370	62,180	1,633
2000	111,340	73,080	1,180
2001	117,830	77,510	703
2002	123,840	85,140	596
2003	135,590	94,610	504
2004[5]	127,770	101,030	508
2005[5]	100,170	98,730	459

n/a = Data not available.

[1] Households eligible under homelessness legislation, found to be unintentionally homeless and in a priority need category, and consequently owed homelessness duty.

[2] Households in accommodation either pending a decision on their homelessness application or awaiting allocation of a settled home following acceptance. Excludes those households designated as "homeless at home" that have remained in their existing accommodation and have the same rights to suitable alternative accommodation as those in accommodation arranged by the authority.

[3] Number of persons sleeping rough, based on local authority mid-year counts or estimates. Data not collected prior to 1998.

[4] reflects households accepted and housed under homelessness provisions of the 1985 Housing Act; subsequent years includes cases accepted under the 1996 Housing Act.

[5] Provisional data.

Source:

ODPM PIE Homelessness returns (quarterly) and HSSA returns (annual)

Housing

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what changes the 2006 Budget makes to the Government's targets for increasing the provision of shared ownership. [66340]

Yvette Cooper: In his 2006 Budget statement on 22 March, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced the allocation of £970 million in 2006–08 for shared equity schemes to help 35,000 new homeowners get their first step on the home ownership ladder. This will contribute to the Government's previously stated target of helping over 100,000 more households into home ownership from 2005 to 2010.

The intention to establish a Shared Equity Task Force was announced on 22 March also. This is being led by me and John Healey to examine further ways to increase the number of people able to benefit from shared equity programmes and help the growing number of "intermediate" households. The Task Force will report by the end of 2006 to inform decisions on the Comprehensive Spending Review in the summer of 2007.

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many new homes he expects to be built in Hull for *(a)* rent and *(b)* sale in (i) 2006–07 and (ii) each of the following three years. [64003]

Yvette Cooper: Through the Housing Corporation's Affordable Housing Programme over 90 social rented homes and around 20 low cost home ownership properties will be provided in 2006–08 in Kingston upon Hull.

Future delivery of affordable housing after 2007–08 will be dependent upon the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007 and any future bidding round held by the Housing Corporation.

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much the Government has made available for housing in Hull in each year since 1997. [64004]

Yvette Cooper: The following table shows expenditure through Social Housing Grant and housing capital allocations to the local authority in Kingston upon Hull for 1997–98 to 2004–05.

£ million

	Expenditure through social housing grant	*Housing capital allocations*
1997–98	2.36	7.1
1998–99	2.70	9.4
1999–2000	2.97	9.9
2000–01	1.77	16.1
2001–02	3.28	22.3
2002–03	2.92	23.6
2003–04	0.40	22.2
2004–05	1.47	23.3

Social Housing Grant is expenditure through the Housing Corporation's Approved Development Programme (ADP) and Local Authority Social Housing Grant (up to 2002–03).

Housing Capital Allocations include Housing Investment Programme/Regional Housing Board investment, Major Repairs Allowance (from 2001–02) and Capital Receipts Initiative (from 1997–98 to 1999–2000 only).

A breakdown of how the local authority capital allocations were used is not available.

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much his Department provided to *(a)* housing associations and *(b)* the local authority to build houses to (i) rent and (ii) buy in Hull in the latest year for which figures are available. [64005]

Yvette Cooper: In 2004–05, £713,000 was spent on provision of social rented units through the Housing Corporation's Approved Development Programme out of a total spend of £1.47 million in Kingston upon Hull. The balance of the funds was provided for works to RSL stock and voluntary purchase grant.

A breakdown of how the local authority capital allocations were used is not available.

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many people are on the waiting list for rented social housing in Kingston-upon-Hull; and how many were on the list in each year since 1997. [64006]

Yvette Cooper: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 17 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 811W to the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws) in which the number of people on the housing register in each English local authority was presented for the period 1997–2005.

Not everyone on the waiting list is necessarily in urgent housing need. The waiting list includes those who consider social housing as their preferred or one of a number of housing options, and those who decide to get onto the waiting list ladder before they need or want to move house—particularly where the priority system is heavily based on waiting time.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate his Department has made of housing growth in Coventry over the next 10 years. [62684]

Yvette Cooper: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Denton and Reddish (Andrew Gwynne) on 24 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 930W.

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment has been made of the potential for displacement of problems associated with housing market failure into areas adjacent to renewal schemes. [67250]

Yvette Cooper: As part of the process of deciding upon funding allocations, each of the pathfinders' proposals is assessed to ensure consistency with the broader regional supply of and demand for housing as set out in regional housing strategies and regional spatial strategies, so as to guard against displacement effects.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many ballots on large scale voluntary transfers of council houses *(a)* were held in 2005 and *(b)* have been held in 2006; what the result was of each ballot; and how many houses were involved in each ballot. [64679]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested is tabled as follows.

LSVT ballots taken place to date in 2006

Local authority	*Partial area name*	*Number of dwellings*	*Date of Ballot (2006)*	*Result (Percentage)*	*Turnout (Percentage)*
Mid Devon	n/a	3,200	22 February	75.6 No	78.2
LB Tower Hamlets	Holland	401	24 February	74 Yes	70.6
LB Tower Hamlets	Bow bridge	249	10 March	72.2 Yes	60
Selby DC	n/a	3,081	10 March	64.29 No	75.6
LB Tower Hamlets	Devons Estate	624	10 March	53.7 Yes	68.1
Pendle	n/a	3,444	15 March	84.4 Yes	69.1
Cannock Chase	n/a	5,763	27 March	51.9 No	67.9
North Lincs	n/a	10,370	28 March	63 Yes	67.5
Waveney	n/a	4,767	31 March	67.7 No	79.2

Total ballots 9

LSVT ballots that took place in 2005

Local Authority	*Partial area name*	*Number of dwellings*	*Date of Ballot (2005)*	*Result (percentage)*	*Turnout (percentage)*
LB Tower Hamlets	Norton House	69	7 February	97.4 Yes	80.9
LB Lambeth	Clapham Park Estate	1,398	24 March	59.3 Yes	78
Stafford BC	n/a	6,091	29 March	66.8 Yes	68.7
North Norfolk	n/a	4,500	31 March	64 Yes	76
Broxbourne BC	n/a	3,423	1 April	69.7 Yes	68.3
Ellesmere Port and Neston	n/a	5,500	4 April	51 .8 No	60.4

LSVT ballots that took place in 2005

Local Authority	*Partial area name*	*Number of dwellings*	*Date of Ballot (2005)*	*Result (percentage)*	*Turnout (percentage)*
North Somerset	n/a	6,300	4 April	76.5 Yes	66.2
LB Tower Hamlets	Island Gardens & Westferry/IOD	569	8 April	76.6 Yes	54.8
LB Tower Hamlets	Island Homes	1,305	8 April	65.5 Yes	42.7
LB Tower Hamlets	St. Georges Estate	317	8 April	66 Yes	52.6
LB Tower Hamlets	Sheltered Housing Stock	238	27 May	60.2 Yes	82.9
Hyndburn	n/a	3,636	9 June	79.2 Yes	72.3
LB Islington	Ring Cross	240	12 July	78.7 Yes	71. 6
Sedgefield	n/a	9,867	19 July	58.1 No	73.2
LB Tower Hamlets	Parkside Estates	1,671	22 July	50.4 Yes	45.7
Teesdale	n/a	920	26 July	88.2 Yes	80.5
Macclesfield BC	n/a	5,262	17 August	62.2 Yes	77.4
Sefton	n/a	11,162	18 August	55.05 No	68.2
LB Tower Hamlets	Glamis Estate	209	22 September	69.2 Yes	51.1
LB Tower Hamlets	Wapping Estates	606	22 September	57.5 No	55.4
LB Tower Hamlets	Chicksand West	245	22 September	88 Yes	76.7
LB Tower Hamlets	Lincoln	312	22 September	57.4 No	54.5
LB Tower Hamlets	Mansford	699	22 September	64.0 Yes	47.9
Rossendale BC	n/a	3,833	8 November	82.6 Yes	62.4
Sheffield	Shiregreen	2,700	11 November	85.9 Yes	70.7
Aylesbury Vale	n/a	7,382	11 November	74.4 Yes	71. 3
Manchester City Council	West Wythenshawe	6,650	2 December	88.7 Yes	74.8
Derwentside	n/a	7,000	5 December	75.74 Yes	66.1
Waverley BC	n/a	5,140	9 December	52.75 No	68.6
West Lanes DC	n/a	7,590	12 December	57 No	61
Sefton	n/a	11,162	13 December	71. 4 Yes	54.7
LB Lambeth	Stockwell Park Estate	1,164	19 December	79.1 Yes	72
LB Tower Hamlets	Barleymow Estate	181	21 December	55.7 No	68
LB Tower Hamlets	Lansbury Estate	648	21 December	61. 5 Yes	56.4
LB Tower Hamlets	Clichy and Stepney Green Estates	1,035	21 December	62.6 No	52.6
LB Tower Hamlets	Cranbrook	534	21 December	71.8 No	47.2
LB Tower Hamlets	Exmouth Estate	667	21 December	78 Yes	52
LB Tower Hamlets	Granby & Hereford	471	21 December	63.5 No	52.2
LB Tower Hamlets	Longnor, Norfolk and Osier Estates	539	21 December	54.3 No	48.6

Total ballots: 39

Industrial Development (Public Inquiries)

Mr. Illsley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether local authorities are required to take action to prevent *(a)* continued construction and *(b)* the operation of large-scale industrial developments that have been called in by his Department for consideration by public inquiry. [64150]

Yvette Cooper: If development has started without planning permission the local planning authority has a wide range of discretionary enforcement powers to enable them to deal with unauthorised development that is harming amenity in the neighbourhood. It is for the local planning authority to decide in each case which is the most appropriate course of action taking account of local circumstances.

Investments/Property Portfolio

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what obligations local authorities have to maximise the rate of return from their investments and property portfolio. [66338]

Yvette Cooper: Local authorities have no obligation to maximise returns from any form of investment. We have issued guidance on investments, under section 15 of the Local Government Act 2003, to which local authorities are required to have regard. It recommends that authorities give priority to the security and liquidity of their investments. They are free to seek the highest rate of return consistent with those priorities.

Local Authority Business Growth Incentive

Mr. Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much each local authority gained under the Local Authority Business Growth Incentive in 2005–06; and what proportion of the amount retained by each local authority has been reinvested in supporting further business growth to date. [66121]

Mr. Woolas: The amount of Local Authority Business Growth Incentive (LABGI) grant payments made to each authority can be found on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website at: http://www.local.odpm.gov.uk/finance/labgi/endrat.xls.

All monies awarded under the LABGI scheme are unringfenced and we do not hold information on their use. It is for local authorities to decide how their LABGI reward is spent. Some may invest in further business growth while others may choose to invest in better public services for their communities or to keep down council tax pressures.

Local Government Finance Act

Mr. Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) how many businesses have *(a)* applied for and *(b)* successfully applied for a reduction in business rates under section 49 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 in each of the last five years. [66100]

(2) how many businesses have received small business rate relief in each local council area since it was introduced. [66101]

Mr. Woolas: The information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Ministerial Residence

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether a second homes council tax discount was claimed from Westminster city council from May 1997 to December 2005 for his official residence at Admiralty house. [59183]

Jim Fitzpatrick: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Meriden (Mrs. Spelman) by my right hon. Friend, the Deputy Prime Minister on 12 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 782W-83W.

Planning

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many appeals there were against planning decisions in *(a)* North East Lincolnshire and *(b)* North Lincolnshire in each of the past five years; and how many appeals were (i) allowed and (ii) dismissed in each year. [67056]

Yvette Cooper: The following tables show the number of planning appeals (i) allowed and (ii) dismissed and the total number of appeals decided relating to both authorities in each of the last five years.

(a) North East Lincolnshire

	Decided	*(i) Allowed*	*(ii) Dismissed*
2000	17	9	8
2001	26	13	13
2002	28	4	24
2003	38	13	25
2004	37	12	25
2005	46	12	34

(b) North Lincolnshire

	Decided	*(i) Allowed*	*(ii) Dismissed*
2000	33	10	23
2001	43	16	27
2002	27	7	20
2003	31	6	25
2004	38	14	24
2005	63	22	41

Regional Administration

Mr. Syms: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the *(a)* sources of income and *(b)* percentage of income derived from each source for each of the Government Offices of the Regions in each year since their creation. [64953]

Yvette Cooper: The Government Offices have only been required to identify income in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister accounts for the past two years and the details are as follows:

(a) The sources of income as recorded by the Government Offices are minor occupiers, outward secondees, jointly funded projects, Technical Assistance funding and accommodation tariffs. There is also a miscellaneous category that picks up costs not specific to any of the above—such as rates rebates and additional OGD funding for specific projects.

(b) The percentage of income are as follows:

Percentage

Government Offices	*Minor occupiers*	*Outward secondees*	*Jointly funded projects*	*Technical Assistance*	*Tariffs*	*Miscellaneous*
2004–05						
North East	9.82	54.26	7.13	24.96	3.84	—
North West	61.59	15.16	8.10	14.10	0.87	0.19
Yorks and Humber	46.76	42.08	5.10	3.95	1.44	0.66
West Midlands	14.04	85.03	0.92	—	—	—
East Midlands	15.45	61.70	6.59	14.94	1.12	0.20
East	45.62	29.01	17.46	—	7.68	0.22
South East	—	56.44	6.72	14.84	22.01	—
South West	52.62	19.60	18.59	—	8.49	0.70
London	15.69	48.75	18.21	8.42	—	8.92
2005–06						
North East	7.56	57.29	15.11	17.18	2.76	0.10
North West	34.63	34.06	9.77	17.77	2.43	1.33
Yorks and Humber	38.82	34.23	9.30	16.08	1.57	—
West Midlands	20.75	59.23	2.67	17.35	—	—
East Midlands	10.41	54.89	0.29	33.08	—	1.33
East	48.98	39.92	0.50	—	7.70	2.89
South East	—	61.20	7.37	14.08	17.10	0.24
South West	62.33	14.15	9.67	6.81	2.48	4.56
London	8.12	33.94	21.17	9.01	—	27.76

Mr. Syms: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the annual income has been of each of the Government Offices of the Regions in each year since their creation. [64957]

Yvette Cooper: The Government Offices have only been required to identify income in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister accounts for the past two years and the details are set out as follows:

£

Government Office	2004-05	2005-06
North East	548,938	899,499
North West	1,637,812	888,179
Yorkshire and Humber	797,334	935,082
West Midlands	448,602	485,022
East Midlands	527,200	796,923
East	660,030	724,463
South East	651,932	889,376
South West	2,395,026	2,097,501
London	1,203,651	1,425,885

Shared Ownership/Key Worker Schemes

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether there is a statutory definition of key worker; and what definition his Department uses. [66302]

Yvette Cooper: There is no statutory definition of a key worker. For the purposes of the Key Worker Living (KWL) programme, a key worker is someone employed by the public sector in health, education or community safety delivering an essential public service in a frontline role where there are serious recruitment and retention problems. Within this broad definition sponsor Government Departments and Police and Fire Authorities specify the groups at which help should be targeted based on recruitment and retention issues in critical frontline services.

Supporting People

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister for what reason he has refused funds to local authorities for the Supporting People programme. [65541]

Mr. Woolas: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has not refused funds to any Supporting People local authority.

Telephone Advice Lines

Mr. Love: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many telephone advice lines his Department and its non-departmental public bodies support; how many telephone advisers each employs; and how much funding is provided to each by *(a)* his Department and its non-departmental public bodies, *(b)* other Government Departments, *(c)* the private sector and *(d)* the voluntary sector. [66591]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The central Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not support any telephone advice lines. Similar information relating to the Office's regional offices, agencies, non-departmental public bodies or other bodies that the Office sponsors is available only at disproportionate cost.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Attendance Allowance

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what recent estimate he has made of the average period of time between an application for attendance allowance and the application being approved. [63499]

Mrs. McGuire: The administration of attendance allowance is a matter for the chief executive of the disability and carers service, Mr Terry Moran. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Terry Moran:

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent estimate he has made of the average period of time between an application for attendance allowance and the application being approved.

The Minister for Disabled People, Anne McGuire MP, promised you a substantive reply from the chief executive of the disability and carers service.

The information requested is in the following table:

Average length of time in days to clear attendance allowance normal rules claims for the period April 2005 to February 2006.

Year to date	Cleared year to date	Actual average clearance time (in days)
April 2005 to February 2006	339,334	18.0

Benefits

Mr. Burrowes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the estimated costs are of carrying out full benefit entitlement checks for pensioners at home. [66699]

Mr. Timms: The information requested is not available. The Department's systems do not currently record separately the costs of this activity.

Capita

James Brokenshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the value of contracts held by his Department with *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries was in the last three financial years. [61474]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 29 March 2006]:* The Department is currently unable to confirm value of contracts held for 2005–06. This information will not be available until July 2006.

(a) Contracts held with Capita plc

Winter fuels contract

	£ million
2002–03	3.72
2003–04	3.72
2004–05	3.97

Record storage contract commenced July 2004, estimated contract value £70 million per annum until 2011.

Office services contract[1]

	£ million
2002–03	21.49
2003–04	26.47
2004–05	28.03

[1] Ends December 2006

Consultancy and professional services contracts through framework agreements

	£ million
2004–05	1.82

(b) Value of contracts held with subsidiaries

Lonsdale Travel—air and ferry travel contract[1]

	£ million
2004–05	5.51

[1] Contract awarded to Lonsdale company acquired by Capita in November 2005

The Rent Service, an Executive agency, which became part of DWP April 2004 held various contracts for the provision of training sourced through SCAT.

Capita Business Services Ltd.

	£
2004–05	113,910

Health and Safety Executive, an Executive agency of DWP contract values are:

	£
Capita Health Solutions	
2002–03	156,927
2003–04	39,681
2004–05	4,178
Montague Evans Consultancy Services	
2002–03	19,885
2003–04	21,548
2004–05	0
Capita Business Services Ltd.	
2002–03	70,052
2003–04	3,839
2004–05	51,818
Symonds Group Ltd.	
2002–03	19,850
2003–04	3,885
2004–05	37,707

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much business his Department has placed with *(a)* Capita Group plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries in each of the past five years; what the total value is of outstanding contracts placed with Capita Group plc and its subsidiaries by his Department; for which current tenders (i) Capita Group plc and (ii) its subsidiaries have been invited to bid; and whether (A) Capita Group plc and (B) its subsidiaries have seconded staff (1) temporarily and (2) on a longer term basis to (x) his Department and *(y)* its agencies. [61139]

Margaret Hodge: The information is as follows:

Contracts that were in existence in the last five years and the payments made on those contracts

	£
2001–02[1]	
Winter fuels	3.72 million
Office services	20.968 million

Contracts that were in existence in the last five years and the payments made on those contracts

	£
2002–03	
Winter fuels	3.72 million
Office services	21.494 million
With subsidiaries	
Capita Health Solutions	156,927
Montagu Evans	19,885
Capita Business Services Ltd.	70,052
Symonds Group Ltd.	19,850
2003/04	
Winter fuels	£3.72 million
Office services	26.473 million
With subsidiaries	
Capita Health Solutions	39,681
Montagu Evans	21,548
Capita Business Services	3,839
Symonds Group Ltd.	3,885
2004–05	
Winter fuels	3.97 million
Office services	28.031 million
Consultancy and professional services contracts through framework agreements	1,817,328
With subsidiaries	
Lonsdale Travel Air and Ferry contract[2]	5.51 million
Capita Health Solutions	4,178
Capita Business Services	51,818
Symonds Group Ltd.	37,707
The Capita Group	113,910
2005–06[3]	
Office services	—
Records storage	—
Consultancy and professional services contracts through framework agreements	—
With subsidiaries	
Lonsdale Travel Air and Ferry contract	—
Veredus Executive Resourcing	—

[1] DWP was formed in July 2001. These contracts relate to the former DSS only.

[2] Contract awarded to Lonsdale, company acquired by Capita in November 2005.

[3] Spend for this year will not be available until July 2006.

Total value of outstanding contracts with Capita or its subsidiaries:

Record storage estimated contract value £70 million per annum until 2011.

Consultancy and professional services—£1.21 million.

Executive recruitment—£1.21 million.

Lonsdale Travel Air and Ferry Contract—unable to provide contract value as it depends upon usage.

The Department has currently invited Capita to submit tenders for two consultancy and professional services contracts through framework agreements.

The Department is unable to provide information about secondees from Capita or its subsidiaries as this information is not held centrally.

Contracts (Voluntary Sector)

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many contracts are let by his Department to voluntary sector organisations; how many of those are let on an annual basis; and how many of those had received finalised contracts for 2006–07 by 31 March. [63208]

Margaret Hodge: Information is available in the format requested on contracts let after September 2005. Since then Jobcentre Plus has let 15 contracts to voluntary and community sector organisations. This does not include companies limited by guarantee. Of these 15 contracts, none are let on an annual basis. Further tenders are currently being considered for the new deal provision. None of these will be let on an annual basis.

The Pension Service currently only has one contract with a voluntary sector organisation. It is not an annual contract but a one-off ad hoc agreement.

The DWP Financial Inclusion Team let a number of contracts (around 41) in 2005–06 to voluntary and community sector organisations to assist customers with the opening of suitable accounts into which to have their benefits or pensions paid. None of these contracts are let on an annual basis.

Correspondence

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when the Minister for Pensions will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for West Worcestershire of 7 March 2006. [67319]

Mr. Plaskitt: I replied to the hon. Member on 27 March 2006.

Council Tax

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will re-introduce council tax rebates for pensioners. [66500]

Mr. Timms: The £200 payment to help with council tax bills was for 2005–06 only. We have no plans to make a payment for 2006–07. However, council tax benefit is available to pensioners on a low income. When pension credit was introduced in October 2003, we committed almost £½ billion a year to increasing the amounts on which housing benefit and council tax benefit are based: this meant that around two million pensioner households became either entitled to council tax benefit for the first time or qualified for more help.

Departmental Leave (Stress)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many staff have been on sick leave suffering from stress in the Department in each of the last three years; and what percentage of the total staff number this represents. [63527]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department for Work and Pensions records sickness absence related to a range of mental health conditions under the category "Anxiety, Depression and Other Mental Health Issues". This classification includes stress-related absences but also other mental health problems such as, for example, schizophrenia and depression.

The following table contains information about the number of employees who were absent in the years 2003 to 2005 due to anxiety, depression and other mental health issues:

	Number of staff absent in year	*Percentage absent*
2003	13,906	9.4
2004	14,313	10.1
2005	10,478	7.8

For the years 2003 and 2004, it is possible to extract data on the number of employees who were absent due to illness attributed to stress. Data for 2005 was not recorded in a way that enables this information to be retrieved.

The following table contains information about the number of employees who were absent for reasons specifically attributed to stress:

	Number of staff	*Percentage absent*
2003	7,239	4.9
2004	7,545	5.3

Employment Schemes (Surrey)

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people have participated in *(a)* new deal for 25 plus, *(b)* Project Work, *(c)* Jobsearch Provision and *(d)* Employment Zones employment schemes in (i) Surrey, (ii) Guildford and (iii) Waverley in each year since 1997. [66165]

Margaret Hodge: Information on the numbers of people who have participated in new deal 25 plus in Surrey, Guildford, and Waverley in each year since 1997 is in the table.

New deal 25 plus

	Individual starts		
Period	*Surrey*	*Constituency of Guildford*	*Waverley local authority*
July-December 1998	370	—	—
January-December 1999	570	30	20
January-December 2000	370	20	30
January-December 2001	350	20	10
January-December 2002	410	20	20
January-December 2003	490	20	20
January-December 2004	620	30	30
January-December 2005	580	20	10
January-February 2006	140	20	10
Total	3,900	180	150

Notes:
1. Data for Surrey consist of the constituencies of East Surrey, Epsom and Ewell, Esher and Walton, Guildford, Mole Valley, Reigate, Runnymede and Weybridge, South West Surrey, Spelthorne, Surrey Heath, and Woking.
2. New deal 25 plus started in July 1998.
3. Latest data are to February 2006.
4. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.

Source:
DWP Information Directorate

Project Work was a pilot which ran in 31 areas from February 1997 and was developed by the previous administration. It has not operated since 1998–99 and starts data are not available.

Jobsearch Provision is normally used to describe the services offered by Programme Centres. These provide individually tailored job search help, including CV preparation, interview skills, telephone techniques, and

help with application forms. Information on starts to Programme Centres is not available at the level requested.

Employment Zones are not operating in Surrey.

In-work Credit

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his latest estimate is of the impact on employment of the in-work credit; how many people are receiving the credit; what the cost of the credit was in the last year for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [64013]

Margaret Hodge: The in-work credit pilots are running in 22 Jobcentre Plus districts.

Eligible participants are paid £40 a week over and above their total income when they start work for 16 hours or more a week. The payment is tax-free and is paid for a maximum of 52 weeks. It is payable on top of any other in-work benefits which eligible parents may be entitled to, for example working tax credit and housing benefit. The in-work credit is primarily paid to lone parents but in April 2005, it was extended to other eligible parents in four London Jobcentre Plus districts.

A thorough evaluation is being undertaken to assess the impact of the pilot on eligible parents, including movements off benefit and into work. We expect to publish a quantitative report using the first 12 months of programme data at the end of the year. In addition, qualitative evaluation will explore the impact of the pilots on the attitudes, motivations and actions of participants, and will also examine the effectiveness of delivery. We expect to publish this report in spring 2007.

In November 2005, the latest date for which information is available, more than 11,000 eligible parents were in receipt of the in-work credit. Spend on the in-work credit between April 2004 and October 2005 was approximately £13 million.

New Deal

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what training programmes are available as part of the new deal for those *(a)* under and *(b)* over 25 years. [66149]

Margaret Hodge: The new deal aims to help people into sustainable work as quickly as possible, and, where appropriate, personal advisers can refer people to relevant training if this will increase the likelihood of an individual gaining employment.

The mandatory new deal programmes new deal for young people (NDYP) and new deal 25 plus (ND25 plus) contain a formal training element. People aged 18 to 24 who have been claiming jobseeker's allowance (JSA) for six months can access training, including basic skills training, through the NDYP full time education and training option. This can lead to a recognised qualification up to S/NVQ Level 2 or equivalent.

People aged 25 and over who have been claiming JSA for 18 out of the last 21 months can undertake training through the ND25 plus education and training opportunities. This can lead to a recognised qualification up to S/NVQ Level 3 or equivalent. Participants can also access basic employability training to address basic skills needs, and work-focused training if they lack the specific work related skills needed by local employers. Training in the mandatory new deal programmes is delivered across employment sectors for varying lengths of time, and is tailored to the needs of individuals and local employers. In exceptional circumstances one-off or specialist provision approved by Jobcentre Plus may be available where resources allow.

The voluntary new deal programmes do not contain a formal training element. However, people on new deal for lone parents (NDLP) and new deal for partners (NDP) can take up the training opportunities that are available through NDYP and ND25 plus. They can also access training available through the Learning and Skills Council, or through other local agreements. They can also be referred to other training such as basic skills or English for Speakers of Other Languages and, as with the mandatory new deals, one-off or specialist provision approved by Jobcentre Plus may be available where resources allow.

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of those entering new deal in 2003 were *(a)* still claiming job seeker's allowance and *(b)* still on the new deal at the end of December 2005. [54978]

Margaret Hodge: People joining the new deal will not necessarily be claiming jobseeker's allowance (JSA). Some, particularly those joining the voluntary new deals, could be claiming income support or other benefits.

Of those who entered the new deal in 2003, who were claiming JSA, only 2 per cent. were still on the same JSA claim at the end of November 2005, the latest date for which benefit information is available. An additional 26 per cent. of those who started new deal in 2003, who were claiming JSA, ceased to claim JSA but were recorded as starting a new claim before November 2005.

6 per cent. of those who started the new deal in 2003, including those on a range or different benefits, were still on new deal at the end of August 2005, the latest date for which information is available.

It is the case in a dynamic labour market that some people will move into and out of employment after leaving new deal. However, new deal helps people stay in work longer than those in the general labour market and people on the programme have still added to their skills and experience, making it easier for them to find a job in the future.

Notes:

Data is inclusive of new deal for young people, new deal 25 plus, new deal for lone parents, new deal 50+, new deal for partners and new deal for disabled people, and is available up to August 2005.

Pathways to Work

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of the £360 million over two years allocated to the roll out of Pathways to Work is intended to cover *(a)* the cost of condition

management programmes, *(b)* the £40 per week back to work credit, *(c)* staff training and *(d)* in-work support. [67259]

Margaret Hodge: The information is not available. We are still working on plans for the national roll-out of Pathways to Work and will announce these in due course.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people have been subject under the Pathways to Work pilots to a mandatory work-focused interview; and in how many cases such an interview has been waived in the case of those with *(a)* certain infectious and parasitic diseases, *(b)* neoplasms, *(c)* diseases of the blood and blood forming organs and certain diseases involving the immune mechanism, *(d)* endocrine, nutritional and metabolic diseases, *(e)* mental and behavioural disorders, *(f)* diseases of the nervous system, *(g)* diseases of the eye and adnexa, *(h)* diseases of the ear and mastoid process, *(i)* diseases of the circulatory system, *(j)* diseases of the respiratory system, *(k)* factors influencing health status and contact with health services, *(l)* diseases of the digestive system, *(m)* diseases of the skin and subcutaneous system, *(n)* diseases of the musculoskeletal system and connective tissue, *(o)* diseases of the genitourinary system, *(p)* pregnancy, childbirth and the puerperium, *(q)* certain conditions originating in the perinatal period, *(r)* congenital malformations, deformations and chromosomal abnormalities, *(s)* symptoms, signs and abnormal clinical and laboratory findings, not elsewhere classified and *(t)* injury, poisoning and certain other consequences of external causes. [64496]

Margaret Hodge: There have been a total of 148,290 Pathways to Work starts by new customers who are subject to a mandatory initial work-focused interview. 5,750 of these have been waived. The available information, by medical condition, of those who have had their initial work-focused interview waived is in the table.

	Number of initial mandatory work-focused interviews waived
Certain Infectious and Parasitic Diseases	20
Neoplasms	380
Diseases of the blood	0
Endocrine, Nutritional and Metabolic Diseases	30
Mental and Behavioural Disorders	1,060
Diseases of the Nervous System	170
Diseases of the Eye and Adnexa	20
Diseases of the Ear and Mastoid Process	10
Diseases of the Circulatory System	190
Diseases of the Respiratory System	70
Diseases of the Digestive System	60
Diseases of the Skin and Subcutaneous Tissue	10
Diseases of the Musculoskeletal system and Connective Tissue	340
Diseases of the Genitourinary System	40
Pregnancy, Childbirth and the Puerperium	30
Certain Conditions Originating in the Perinatal Period	0
Congenital Malformations and Deformations	10
Symptoms, Signs and Abnormal Clinical and Laboratory findings	300
Injury Poisoning and other consequences of external causes	120
Other conditions	170
Not yet classified[1]	2,720
Total	5,750

[1] The data on medical condition for Pathways to Work participants is incomplete. It is drawn from incapacity benefit data that appears in the National Benefits Database, and this database lags behind other Pathways Evaluation Database sources by some three to four months.

Notes:

1. The statistics are taken from the Pathways to Work Evaluation Database.
2. Data is to the end of October 2005.
3. Figures have been rounded to the nearest 10.

Pension Protection Fund

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the amount that would be needed to be raised by the Pension Protection Fund levy if it was set without regard to affordability, and at a level which was expected to remain constant, as a proportion of deficit, in future years. [65496]

Mr. Timms: No such estimate has been made.

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 21 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 235W, on pensions, what *(a)* interest rates and *(b)* mortality assumptions were used in arriving at the estimates for the amount of the increase in the Pension Protection Fund levy between 2003 and 2005 attributable to these two sources. [65500]

Mr. Timms: In their 2003 and 2005 levy estimates GAD adjusted a set of Minimum Funding Requirement valuations. The factors GAD used in making those adjustments reflected buy-out costs used by insurers. Interest rates and mortality assumptions are implicit in those costs and cannot be separated out.

In the PPF's £575 million estimate no unique interest rate assumption was used. The PPF set the levy by reference to a significant number of scenarios each of which was based on a range of factors including interest rates.

The mortality assumptions the PPF used were based on standard actuarial tables published by the Continuous Mortality Investigation Bureau, specifically the PA92 tables with the medium cohort mortality improvement rates.

Post Office Card Account

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many Post Office card account holders there are in each constituency in Wales. [67396]

Mr. Plaskitt: Information showing the number of DWP benefit and pension payment accounts paid by direct payment into a Post Office card account for each parliamentary constituency has been placed in the Library.

Teleclaiming

Mr. Rooney: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what guidance he has issued to his staff on making reasonable adjustments to the teleclaiming system for people with disabilities. [66069]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 26 April 2006]:* As part of the new Jobcentre Plus process, we encourage all new claims to be made over the telephone. We do however recognise that this is not suitable for some of our customers and alternative arrangements are in place, including:

arranging a face-to-face interview at the customers local Jobcentre Plus office, or if more appropriate, a home visit;

arranging for a third party/nominated advocate to represent them on the telephone;

the completion of a clerical claim form;

the use of our Textphone/Minicom service which is available for customers who are deaf or hard of hearing.

This advice and guidance has been communicated to Jobcentre Plus staff and is part of their learning and development.

HEALTH

Adverse Drug Reactions

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many suspected unexpected serious adverse reactions have been reported to the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency, and its predecessor organisations, in each year since 1997. [66006]

Jane Kennedy: Clinical trials are designed to evaluate the safety and efficacy of new drugs and new indications for approved drugs. The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) receives applications for over 1,000 new trials each year involving a planned number of new trial participants of approximately 90,000 to 95,000. Serious unexpected suspected adverse reactions (SUSARs) occur during clinical trials and are reported to the MHRA.

The number of SUSARs received between 1997 and 2005 is shown in the table.

	Number of reports
1997	250
1998	564
1999	431
2000	439
2001	606
2002	452
2003	336
2004	335
2005	359

In 2005, it would appear that the total number of SUSARs received involved an estimate of less than 0.4 per cent. of the total planned number of patients participating in clinical trials for that year. These occurred with a wide range of drugs being investigated in a wide range of medical conditions, many of which were serious, such as cancers, etc.

Blood Products

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what imported blood products were licensed by the Medical Healthcare products Regulatory Authority between 1976 and 1990; on what date they were licensed; and if she will make a statement. [65510]

Jane Kennedy: A range of blood products which were manufactured outside of the United Kingdom, including human albumin, immunoglobulins, plasminogen, factor VIII and factor IX were authorised by the Department and its subsequent Next Steps Agency, the Medicines Control Agency, during the period 1976 to 1990. This information was derived from the current database held by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). The names of the products, the product licence number and date of authorisation are shown as follows:

Blood products that were licensed in the United Kingdom during 1976–90 and imported were manufactured in Austria or the United States of America. The following is a list currently held in the MHRA database.

IA Specific	*Product Name*	*Date granted*
PI	00215/0009 Immuno Human Albumin Solution BP Injection 20%W/V	8 September 1976
PI	00231/0045 Albuminar-25 Normal Serum Albumin Human USP	25 September 1980
PI	00231/0056 Albuminar-5 Normal Serum Albumin Human USP	20 August 1981
PI	00231/0057 Albuminar-20 Normal Serum Albumin Human USP	20 August 1981
PI	03070/0007 Hyate C Lyophilised Powder For Injection 400 To 700 Units/Vial	3 December 1984
PI	04447/0005 Alpha Viii Injection 250iu/5ml	19 February 1985
PI	00032/0107 Atgam Injection 50mg/ml	11 April 1985
PI	00215/0021 Immuno Factor Viii Inhibitor Bypassing Fraction Powder For Injection 500u	17 October 1985
PI	00215/0022 Immuno Factor Viii Inhibitor Bypassing Fraction Powder For Injection 1000u	17 October 1985
PI	00055/0109 Gamimune-N Intravenous Immunoglobulin 5% In 10% Maltose Ph 4.25	29 August 1986

IA	Specific Product Name	Date granted
PI	00215/0025 Immuno Lys-Plasminogen, Vapour Heated Freeze-Dried Bulk Powder 10g	28 February 1989
PI	00215/0023 Endobulin Injection 50mg/MI 0.5g 1.0g 2.5g 5.0g 7.5g 10.0g	27 June 1989
PI	00231/0090 Monoclate-P Injection 250iu/Viai	13 December 1989
PI	00231/0091 Monoclate-P 500, International Units Per Nominal Potency	13 December 1989
PI	00231/0092 Monoclate-P 1000, IU Per Vial Nominal Potency	13 December 1989
PI	04447/0007 Albutein 5% Infusion	22 January 1990
PI	04447/0008 Albutein 20%	22 January 1990
PI	04447/0009 Albutein 25%	22 January 1990
PI	04447/0014 Venoglobulin Injection	16 March 1990

Data submitted in support of the applications were considered satisfactory with regard to quality, safety and efficacy requirements.

Bowel Cancer Screening

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the change in bowel cancer screening capacity in England since 1 April. [66896]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The national bowel cancer screening programme will be rolled out nationally over the next three years. We started the roll-out as promised in April. Capacity will be built up progressively over the next three years. It is too soon to estimate what changes in capacity have already occurred.

British Fluoridation Association

Susan Kramer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much funding her Department has given to the British Fluoridation Association in the last five years for which data is available. [65066]

Caroline Flint: Funding provided by the Department to the British Fluoridation Society in the last five years is shown in the following table.

	Funding (£)
2001–02	82,000
2002–03	84,050
2003–04	85,000
2004–05	87,000
2005–06	90,000

Cancer

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients normally resident in Hull North have been treated for cancer in the past 12 months. [65464]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is shown in the table.

Count of finished consultant episodes and patients for selected primary care trusts (PCTs) of residence where the primary diagnosis is cancer in national health service hospitals, England 2004–05

PCT of residence	*Finished consultant episodes*	*Patient counts*
Eastern Hull	3,151	1,600
West Hull	4,204	1,829

Notes:
Finished consultant episode (FCE)

A FCE is defined as a period of admitted patient care under one consultant within one health care provider. Please note that the figures do not represent the number of patients, as a person may have more than one episode of care within the year.

Patient counts

Patient counts are based on the unique patient identifier called the hospital episode statistics identifier (HESID). This identifier is derived based on patient's date of birth, postcode, sex, local patient identifier and NHS number, using an agreed algorithm. Where data is incomplete, HESID might erroneously link episodes or fail to recognise episodes for the same patient. Care is therefore needed, especially where duplicate records persist in the data. The patient count cannot be summed across a table where patients may have episodes in more than one cell.

Diagnosis (primary diagnosis)

The primary diagnosis is the first of up to 14 (seven prior to 2002–03) diagnosis fields in the HES data set and provides the main reason why the patient was in hospital.

PCT and strategic health authority (SHA) data quality

PCT and SHA data was added to historic data-years in the HES database using 2002–03 boundaries, as a one-off exercise in 2004. The quality of the data on PCT of treatment and SHA of treatment is poor in 1996–97, 1997–98 and 1998–99, with over a third of all finished episodes having missing values in these years. Data quality of PCT of general practice (GP) practice and SHA of GP practice in 1997–98 and 1998–99 is also poor, with a high proportion missing values where practices changed or ceased to exist. There is less change in completeness of the residence-based fields over time, where the majority of unknown values are due to missing postcodes on birth episodes. Users of time series analysis including these years need to be aware of these issues in their interpretation of the data.

Ungrossed data

Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data that is the data is ungrossed.

Source:

Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre.

Capita Group

James Brokenshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many contracts her Department holds with *(a)* Capita plc and *(b)* its subsidiaries which still have a potential duration of five years or more. [61467]

Mr. Byrne: There are currently no contracts with Capita plc and its subsidiaries which have a potential duration of five years or more.

Carers (Respite)

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which *(a)* bodies and *(b)* budgets will bear the cost of respite support to be provided for carers as set out in paragraph 5.55 of the 'Our Health, Our Care, Our Say' Health White Paper. [65996]

Mr. Byrne: We are currently exploring options to develop additional support to carers, including the provision of short-term, home-based respite support in crisis or emergency situations.

Carers already have the right to an assessment of their own needs and local authorities have responsibilities to meet those needs, including the provision of breaks from caring if necessary.

Clinical Trials

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidelines she has issued on the conduct of clinical trials in England and Wales. [65175]

Jane Kennedy: All clinical trials that are conducted in England and Wales are regulated by the Medicines for Human Use (Clinical Trials) Regulations 2004 which implemented the Clinical Trials Directive (2001/20/EC) into United Kingdom law. This directive came into force in the UK on 1 May 2004. At the time the legislation came into force, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) issued comprenensive guidance and advice on the new regulatory framework to all stakeholders including those involved in the conduct of clinical trials. The Department also issued specific guidance about sponsorship responsibilities in publicly funded trials under the new regulatory framework. The Department's research governance framework for health and social care which is the core standard for health care draws attention to the law regulating clinical trials and to the principles of good clinical practice. In addition, the European Commission has issued detailed guidance on the requirements under the directive.

Community Hospitals

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions on community hospitals she has had with primary care trusts since the publication of the White Paper, "Our Health, Our Care, Our Say". [55967]

Mr. Byrne: The Department has not sent any communications, with specific reference to community hospitals, directly to primary care trusts (PCTs) since the publication of the recent Health White Paper "Our Health, Our Care, Our Say: a new direction for community service" in January 2006.

The Department has received local correspondence, Parliamentary Questions, Treat Official cases and Private Office cases relating to community hospitals. At times, in order to respond to these items of correspondence, the Department requests briefing from the relevant strategic health authority (SHA). SHAs may contact PCTs to gather the required information.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many community hospitals closed in each year between 1979 and 1997. [64222]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not available centrally.

Correspondence

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for West Worcestershire of 15 March. [67128]

Mr. Byrne: The letter was replied to on 26 April 2006.

Dental Services

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the legal costs to the Department of dental contracts which are in dispute. [66892]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The appeal functions of the Secretary of State in relation to the General Dental Services and Personal Dental Services Transitional Provisions Order 2005, the national health service (General Dental Services Contracts) Regulations 2005 and the national health service (Personal Dental Services Agreements) Regulations 2005 have been delegated to the NHS Litigation Authority. The formal applications for dispute resolution presently received will be undertaken within the authority's current resources.

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether dentists working as vocational trainees will be paid for their work in 2005–06. [67220]

Ms Rosie Winterton: From the introduction of the vocational training scheme in 2002 to date, dental vocational trainees have been paid a training allowance/salary. In 2005–06, the allowance was £27,372 per annum.

Departmental Websites

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list *(a)* the websites operated by her Department and *(b)* the reports placed on the internet in March 2006, indicating in each case whether paper copies were also made available. [65206]

Mr. Byrne: The Department operates the following externally facing websites:

1. Department of Health (www.dh.gov.uk)
2. National Screening Committee (www.nsc.nhs.uk)
3. NHS Identity (www.nhsidentity.nhs.uk)
4. Bristol Inquiry (www.bristol-inquiry.org.uk)
5. Care Standards Tribunal (www.carestandardstribunal.gov.uk)
6. Carers (www.carers.gov.uk)
7. London's Health (www.londonshealth.gov.uk)
8. Minority Health (www.minorityhealth.gov.uk)
9. Royal Commission on Long Term Care for the Elderly (www.royal-commission-elderly.gov.uk)
10. Royal Liverpool Children's Inquiry (www.rlcinquiry.org.uk)
11. MMR The Facts (www.mmrthefacts.nhs.uk)
12. Care Services Improvement Partnership (www.csip.org.uk)
13. 18 Weeks Delivery Programme (www.18weeks.nhs.uk)
14. 5-a-day (www.5aday.nhs.uk)
15. Breastfeeding (www.breastfeeding.nhs.uk)
16. Expert Patients Programme (www.expertpatients.nhs.uk)
17. Healthy Start (www.healthystart.nhs.uk)
18. Immunisation (www.immunisation.nhs.uk)
19. NHS Comms Link (www.nhscommslink.nhs.uk)
20. NHS Live (www.nhslive.nhs.uk)
21. NHS Photo Library (www.photolibrary.nhs.uk)
22. Your Life! (www.yourlife.nhs.uk)

23. Your Health, Your Care, Your Say resources (www.yoursayresources.nhs.uk)
24. Caring about Carers (www.carers.gov.uk)
25. Minority Health (www.minorityhealth.gov.uk)
26. NHS Identity (www.nhsidentity.nhs.uk)
27. Playing Safely campaign site (www.playingsafely.co.uk)
28. Social Work Careers (www.socialworkcareers.co.uk)
29. Talk to Frank campaign site (www.talktofrank.com)
30. C.A.L.M. campaign site (www.thecalmzone.net)
31. Think About Drink campaign site (www.wrecked.co.uk)
32. NHS Modernisation Agency (www.wise.nhs.uk)
33. UK National Screening Committee (www.nsc.nhs.uk)
34. Giving Up Smoking (www.givingupsmoking.co.uk)
35. Health and Social Care Awards (www.healthandsocialcareawards.org)
36. NHS Editorial Library (www.editorial-library.nhs.uk)
37. Face It: Hepatitis C Information (www.hepc.nhs.uk)
38. Health Needs Mapping (www.healthmapping.nhs.uk)
39. Nursing UK (www.nursinguk.nhs.uk)
40. The National Research Register (www.nrr.nhs.uk)
41. The Research Findings Register (www.refer.nhs.uk)
42. NHS Jobs (www.jobs.nhs.uk)
43. North Western Deanery (www.nwpgmd.nhs.uk)
44. The Shipman Inquiry website (www.the-shipman-inquiry.org.uk)
45. The Victoria Climbié Inquiry website (www.victoria-climbie-inquiry.org.uk)
46. NHS Housing (www.housing.nhs.uk)
47. National Leadership Network (www.nationalleadershipnetwork.org)

Department reports are published on the main corporate website, www.dh.gov.uk.

The Department does not keep a list of individual reports added to its website. The information shown in the table was put together using the site search functionality. It identifies items described as 'reports' added to the site during March 2006. For completeness, other publications added to the site during the same period are also listed. We have indicated where alternative versions including paper copies of the report or publication were also made available.

There were 11 reports and 34 other publications in total. These figures exclude press releases, bulletins, circulars and letters, directions, committee minutes, leaflets, full and partial regulatory impact assessments.

Department of Health reports

Report title	*PDF version*	*Paper copy*
Changes to regulatory framework for adult social care services	Yes	No
Consultation on simplification of reimbursement rules for NHS dispensing contractors: Summary of responses	Yes	No
Creating the future: Modernising careers for salaried dentists in primary care—Stakeholder consultation response report	Yes	No
Expert Advisory Group on AIDS annual report 2005	Yes	No
Let me in—I'm a researcher!	Yes	Yes
Making a difference: Safe and secure data sharing between health and adult social care staff	Yes	No
Partnerships for Older People Projects: Making the shift to prevention	Yes	Yes
The evidence base for the National Service Framework for Renal Services modules one and two: Part one—Dialysis and transplantation	Yes	No
The evidence base for the National Service Framework for Renal Services part two: Chronic kidney disease, acute renal failure and end of life care	Yes	No
UK consultation on European Commission proposal for a programme of community action in the field of health and consumer protection 2007 to 2013: Summary of responses	Yes	No
Winter report 2005–06	Yes	No

Other Department of Health publications

Publication title	*PDF version*	*Paper copy*
A national framework to support local workforce strategy development: A guide for HR directors in the NHS and social care	Yes	Yes
Choice of scan Phase 2: guidance	Yes	No
Community nurses' handbook revised edition	Yes	Yes
Controlled drugs: Monitoring and inspection guidelines—Core activities for CD monitoring and inspection work—Primary care	Yes	No
DfES Personal, social and health education certification for community nurses handbook	Yes	Yes
Direct payments for people with mental health problems: A guide to action	Yes	No
From segregation to inclusion: Commissioning guidance on day services for people with mental health problems	Yes	Yes
Gershon efficiency programme 2004 to 2008: High level delivery plan	Yes	No
Government response to the Health Committee's report on changes to primary care trusts	Yes	Yes
Government response to the House of Commons Health Committee's First Report of Session 2005–06: Smoking in Public Places	Yes	Yes
Guidelines for the investigation and management of mucopolysaccharidosis type VI	Yes	No
Initial guide for the commissioning of in-patient and residential rehabilitation drug and alcohol treatment interventions as part of treatment systems	Yes	No
Looking for a school nurse	Yes	Yes
Measuring Childhood Obesity: Guidance to Primary Care Trusts	Yes	No
National heart and lung transplant standards	Yes	No
NHS continuing health care: Action following the Grogan judgment	Yes	No

Other Department of Health publications

Publication title	*PDF version*	*Paper copy*
NHS Trust: model standing orders, reservation and delegation of powers and standing financial instructions March 2006	Yes	No
Partnerships for Older People Projects Grant—Guidance note for applications for 2007–08	Yes	No
Payment by results: Implementation support guide 2006–07 (technical guidance)	Yes	No
Practice based commissioning: achieving universal coverage	Yes	Yes
Primary Care Trust: model standing orders, reservation and delegation of powers and standing financial instructions March 2006	Yes	No
Recognising, understanding and addressing performance problems in healthcare organisations providing care to NHS patients	Yes	No
Safer management of controlled drugs : Monitoring and Inspection guidelines—Core Activities for CD Monitoring and Inspection Work—Primary Care	Yes	No
Safer management of controlled drugs: Guidance on strengthened governance arrangements	Yes	No
Safer management of controlled drugs: Private CD prescriptions and other changes to the prescribing and dispensing of controlled drugs	Yes	No
School nurse: practice development resource pack 2006: Specialist Community Public Health Nurse	Yes	Yes
Shared learning: Managing and minimising Failure To Attends (FTAs)	Yes	No
Strategic Health Authority: model standing orders, reservation and delegation of powers and standing financial instructions March 2006	Yes	No
Supporting people with long term conditions to self care	Yes	Yes
Supporting women into the mainstream: Commissioning women-only community day services	Yes	Yes
Sustainable development action plan 2006	Yes	No
Transition: getting it right for young people	Yes	Yes
Vocational services for people with severe mental health problems: Commissioning guidance	Yes	Yes
Volunteers across the NHS: Improving the patient experience and creating a patient-led service	Yes	Yes

Disabled Parents

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many direct payments were taken up by disabled and sick adults for use in purchasing social care services that support them in their parenting role in the latest year for which figures are available; [67243]

(2) what steps her Department has taken to encourage local authorities to promote direct payments to disabled parents; [67244]

(3) what assessment her Department has made of the effectiveness of the direct payment system for disabled parents to purchase appropriate support for their family and parenting responsibilities. [67245]

Mr. Byrne: Figures for the number of direct payments taken up to support disabled and sick adults in their parenting role are not held centrally.

Local authorities have a duty to make a direct payment to everyone, including sick and disabled parents, who has been assessed as needing social care services and who are able to manage them, even if they need assistance to do so. Councils should fully consider the particular support needs sick and disabled parents may have with their parenting role as part of the assessment process.

The Department has not carried out an assessment regarding the effectiveness of the direct payments system for disabled parents. However, we have commissioned the personal social services research unit (PSSRU) at the London School of Economics to evaluate the implementation of direct payments. PSSRU will report on their findings later in 2006.

District Community Midwives

Mr. Devine: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what pay banding district community midwives have been awarded under Agenda for Change in *(a)* Newcastle, *(b)* Blackpool, *(c)* Leeds, *(d)* Lambeth, *(e)* Southampton, *(f)* Bristol and *(g)* Swansea. [64775]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested relating to national health services organisations in Newcastle, Blackpool, Leeds, Lambeth, Southampton and Bristol is not collected centrally. Information for the NHS in Swansea is a matter for the Welsh Assembly.

Employment Costs (Nurses/Doctors)

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much it costs on average to employ a *(a)* nurse and *(b)* doctor for each of the first 10 years of service from qualification. [54512]

Mr. Byrne: Information on the costs of employing staff by length of service from qualification is not held centrally.

Food

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average daily expenditure per patient is on food by NHS trusts for which data is available. [65104]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 26 April 2006]:* The average daily cost of feeding one patient in 2004–05 was £6.07 for all national health service trusts.

Gender Reassignment Operations

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 27 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 446W, on gender reassignment operations, what is meant by combined operations for *(a)* male to female and *(b)* female to male gender reassignment operations. [57184]

Mr. Byrne: The office for population censuses and surveys 4.2 codes X15.1 and X15.2, combined operations are intended to cover cases where the patient

has one or more operation at the same time. As part of gender reassignment surgery these may include reconstruction of the genitals, the removal of female breasts, the shaping of a male contoured chest, and the shaping of a female contoured chest. There is no precise definition as to what combined operations may consist of.

Gene Therapy Clinical Trials

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to fund the MDEX consortium gene therapy clinical trials. [66613]

Jane Kennedy: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given on 30 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 167W.

General Practitioners

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average take-home pay was for general practitioners in *(a)* England and *(b)* Kingston-upon-Hull, North in each of the last 10 years; and if she will make a statement. [65434]

Mr. Byrne: Information on the average take-home pay for general practitioners in England and Kingston-Upon-Hull is not collected centrally. However, figures based on information for Great Britain only are available.

	Intended average net remuneration/income (£)
1994–95	41,890
1995–96	43,165
1996–97	44,483
1997–98	46,031
1998–99	48,037
1999–2000	52,606
2000–01	54,219
2001–02	56,510
2002–03	61,618
2003–04[1]	67,040

[1] Forecast figures.

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many single-handed general practitioner practices there are in *(a)* Kingston-upon-Hull and *(b)* East Yorkshire. [65435]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is shown in the table.

General practitioner practices[1] for North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire strategic health authority, as at 30 September 2005

Number (headcount)

			All practices	*Single handed*
Q11	North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire		253	51
	5KJ	Craven, Harrogate and Rural District Primary Care Trust (PCT)	26	0
	5E3	East Yorkshire PCT	23	2
	5E5	Eastern Hull PCT	28	17
	5KH	Hambleton and Richmondshire PCT	18	1
	5AN	North East Lincolnshire PCT	34	15
	5EF	North Lincolnshire PCT	22	6
	5KK	Scarborough, Whitby and Rydedale PCT	27	2
	5E2	Selby and York PCT	33	3
	5E6	West Hull PCT	27	5
	5E4	Yorkshire Wold and Coast PCT	15	0

[1] Figures relate to practitioners, excluding general practitioner (GP) registrars and GP retainers, who are single handed, that is had no partners although their practice may have a GP registrar or GP retainer.
Source:
NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre, general and personal medical services statistics

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the annual *(a)* mean and *(b)* median net income of general practitioners has been in each year since 1997. [64851]

Mr. Byrne: The mean net income of general practitioners, 1996–97 to 2003–04, Great Britain is set out in the following table:

	Intended average net income (£)
1996–97	44,483
1997–98	46,031
1998–99	48,037
1999–2000	52,606
2000–01	54,219
2001–02	56,510
2002–03	61,618
2003–04(Forecast figure)	67,040

Note:
Median net income figures are not held centrally.

Gershon Review

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what extra resources in 2006–07 are being released to her Department arising from efficiency gains generated by the Gershon process. [58162]

Mr. Byrne: From the start of the Gershon programme in March 2004 up to December 2005, the Department had realised savings of £2,205 million. We currently expect that savings for the final quarter of 2005–06 and the following two years will continue at a rate that will ensure as a minimum that the Department remains on track to realise our £6,500 million target by March 2008.

These savings are all released into front line service provision providing additional service and better quality care.

Health and Social Care Information Centre

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Health by what process Dr. Foster was selected as the private partner for the new venture with the Health and Social Care Information Centre; and what steps were taken to ensure this process met the Department's procurement guidelines. [54682]

Mr. Byrne: An independent review of the health informatics market concluded that Dr. Foster was the most suitable private sector partner to work with the NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre. A formal due diligence exercise confirmed that although Dr. Foster was relatively new to the market place, it had a robust position. Opinion canvassed among a number of stakeholders confirmed Dr. Foster's strong brand and market position.

Legal opinion supported the approach that the joint venture was not a procurement and there was no legal requirement for a competitive exercise provided that value for money could be demonstrated. The business case has been approved by Secretary of State for Health.

Health Trainers

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average salary of a health trainer is expected to be; and how many hours on average a health trainer is expected to work per week. [65949]

Caroline Flint: It has been estimated that a health trainer would earn in the region of £14,000 working full-time. However, it is up to individual primary care trusts to make decisions about where they allocate resources and how many health trainers they will need to meet the needs of their local population.

Health Treatment Centres

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list each *(a)* NHS treatment centre, *(b)* independent sector treatment centre and *(c)* joint-venture treatment centre led by (i) the NHS and (ii) a private provider; which private provider is involved in each centre; and what the cost to the NHS was of establishing each centre. [61713]

Mr. Byrne: Details for each scheme and the centrally held capital costs of establishing each national health service treatment centre have been placed in the Library. There is one joint venture, the BUPA Redwood Treatment Centre at Redhill. Information on the cost of establishing independent sector treatment centres is not held centrally, as the costs of establishing such centres are borne by the providers themselves.

Public Information

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether she plans to make the obligation on primary care trusts to provide up-to-date, authoritative information to the public as described in paragraph 3.25, page 61, of her White Paper, "Our Health, Our Care, Our Say", Cm 6737, a statutory requirement; whether she plans to provide additional resources to primary care trusts to enable them to meet this commitment; and if she will make a statement. [49521]

Mr. Byrne: Our aim is that patients should be able to exercise choice in deciding the general practice with which to register. We expect primary care trusts (PCTs) to support patients in this by providing transparent and comparable information on all practices within their areas and intend to place a duty on them to do so. PCTs will be expected to fund any consequential costs from within their allocations.

Heart and Lung Transplant

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the average cost is of a heart and lung transplant within the NHS; [65843]

(2) what the average NHS waiting time for a heart and lung transplant was in England in each of the last five years for which records are available. [66042]

Mr. Byrne: The average costs of cardiothoracic transplants are approximately £75,000 for heart transplant, £80,000 for lung and £85,000 for combined heart and lung. This includes the care from admission for transplant to discharge from hospital. It does not include the costs of further follow-up care and drug treatment.

The most recent data available (1999 to 2003) estimates the median waiting time for cardiothoracic transplants as follows: 137 days for heart transplants and 394 days for lung. There were too few patients on the combined heart and lung transplant waiting list during this period for a robust estimate to be made. The median is the accepted way of reporting waiting times for transplantation.

Home Oxygen Service

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what representations she has received from pharmacists regarding the possibility of her Department reimbursing pharmacists for costs incurred of delivering oxygen to the homes of patients with prescriptions dated after 31 January; and what plans she has to reimburse pharmacists for these costs; [66629]

(2) in how many primary care trusts pharmacists are being paid to deliver oxygen to the homes of patients with prescriptions dated after 31 January. [66631]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 27 April 2006]:* The Department has received a number of representations on this specific issue. However, payments to pharmacy contractors for the delivery of cylinder oxygen to patients prescribed home oxygen therapy are a matter for discussion between local primary care trusts and pharmacy contractors. Where pharmacy contracts continue to provide this service against a prescription, they will receive payment under current national health service arrangements.

Information on the number of pharmacy contractors providing a cylinder service is not held centrally.

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she plans the changeover from pharmacists providing the home oxygen service to arrangements introduced by her Department in February to be complete. [66630]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 27 April 2006]:* The national health service is updating plans for completing the transfer to new arrangements for the home oxygen service later this year. These plans include continuing delivery of a cylinder service by pharmacists until patients transfer to new suppliers. Patients come forward for further oxygen supplies at different times, depending on their individual needs but we expect new suppliers to have contacted most patients to confirm a start date for delivery of their oxygen supplies by the summer. However, a small number of patients, with infrequent use of oxygen therapy, may not come forward until later in the year at which point they will transfer to the new supplier. The changeover will be complete once all patients receiving oxygen therapy have transferred to new suppliers.

Hospital Patients (Telephone Calls)

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she will announce the *(a)* membership and *(b)* terms of reference of the review group into the price of telephone calls to hospital patients. [64257]

Mr. Byrne: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given on 6 April 2006.

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to ensure that patients and their families are informed of the charges for the use of hospital telephones. [64259]

Mr. Byrne: The bedside television and telephone systems are run by three major private providers and offer additional services for the patient. Patients and relatives who wish to use the services are made aware of the charges at the time they sign up to use the system and by literature posted around the hospital. Incoming callers to the bedside telephone are advised at the onset of the telephone call of the call charge to be levied by two of the providers operating the service.

Hospital payphones and televisions in day rooms are available for patients who do not wish to use the service.

Hosptial Tariffs

Dr. Pugh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what comparative market forces factor is allowed within the tariff for each hospital in England. [64330]

Mr. Byrne: The market forces factor adjustment for individual national health service trusts and foundation trusts has been published alongside the national tariff for 2006–07 and can be downloaded from the Department's website. A copy has been placed in the Library.

Independent Sector Treatment

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 20 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1670W, to the right hon. Member for Holborn and St. Pancras (Frank Dobson), on independent sector treatment, for what reasons the percentage cost per procedure above the NHS equivalent cost for 2004–05 provided in the answer differs from the figure provided in table 1.3.2 of her Department's written evidence to the Health Committee of 1 December 2005, HC 736-iii; and whether either of these figures includes the capital costs of the independent sector treatment centre programme. [60415]

Mr. Byrne: The reply on 20 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1670W, was the average percentage cost above the national health service equivalent cost of all independent sector treatment centres (ISTCs) in the first wave of the procurements. Across the full period of the wave one ISTC contracts, the average cost above the equivalent NHS cost is 11.2 per cent.

The figures provided in the Department's written evidence in table 1.3.2 covered only those schemes that were operational, that is treating patients, during 2004–05: the facility at Daventry, the mobile cataract units, BUPA Redwood (this is a joint venture between the independent sector and the NHS) and the general supplementary contract for the provision of additional capacity using the incumbent independent sector. For those schemes only, the percentage cost was 6.2 per cent. below the equivalent NHS costs in 2004–05.

All comparisons made between provider price and NHS equivalent cost take account of the capital costs of the programme.

McKinsey's

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much has been spent by *(a)* her Department and *(b)* strategic health authorities on (i) management consultants and (ii) contracts with McKinsey's in (A) 2002, (B) 2003, (C) 2004 and (D) so far in 2005. [37419]

Mr. Byrne: The total cost external consultancy procured by the Department, where in-house resources were not available, is shown in table 1 following.

Table 1

	Amount (£000)
2002–03	7,266
2003–04	10,031
2004–05	12,800
2005–06(To date)	[1]4,658

[1] The 2005–06 spending is lower because we have reviewed the data for this period and rectified miscoding of the category codes so that it represents the true expenditure on external consultants up to the 31 January 2006.

The Department does not collect information that would allow for an analysis of the type of consultant engaged.

The fees paid to McKinsey's in the last four financial years (to date) are shown in table 2 following.

Table 2

	Amount (£000)
2002–03	0
2003–04	0
2004–05	240
2005–06 (To date)	1,275

Information relating to the strategic health authority's expenditure on management consultants and with McKinsey's in particular is not held centrally.

Mental Health Services

Mr. Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the funding made available in 2006–07 for mental health services covering the Sevenoaks constituency is, broken down by main cost area. [67508]

Caroline Flint: The requested information is not collected centrally. It is for primary care trusts in conjunction with strategic health authorities to decide on local delivery and planning of services.

Ministerial Visits

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the towns in *(a)* England and Wales, *(b)* Scotland and *(c)* the European Union that she has visited in an official capacity in each month since 1997; what the purpose was in each case; what the (i) date, (ii) time, (iii) location and (iv) duration was of each meeting; if she will place in the Library the text of any speech made; and if she will make a statement. [65002]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. Published speeches by my right hon. Friend are available on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/NewsHome/Speeches/fs/en.

NHS Audiologists

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS audiologists there are in Kingston upon Hull; and if she will make a statement. [65467]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is shown in the table.

National health service hospital and community health services: qualified audiology staff in the North and East Yorkshire and East Lincolnshire strategic health authority (SHA) area as at 30 September 2005

	Headcount
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire SHA	40
Of which:	
Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust	14

Source:
NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre, non-medical workforce census 2005.

NHS Hospital Food

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average *(a)* daily, *(b)* monthly and *(c)* annual expenditure on patient food was for NHS hospitals serving West Lancashire residents in the last year for which figures are available. [64230]

Mr. Byrne: Data on monthly expenditure on patient food is not collected centrally and details of annual expenditure on patient food service are only collected on a voluntary basis for national health service benchmarking purposes. However, data is collected on the average daily cost of feeding one patient and this information is shown in the following table.

The daily cost of feeding one patient, is derived from the central estates return information collection, and is the average of the average daily expenditure on patient food per patient reported by trusts. These amounts include the gross cost of provisions and salary and non-salary costs involved in its preparation and serving.

Organisation	Average daily cost of feeding one patient (£)
Lancashire Care National Health Service Trust	6.83
Mersey Care NHS Trust	6.00
Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust	7.49
West Lancashire Primary Care Trust (PCT)	No data

Notes:
The above data is based on that provided by NHS organisations to the Department and has not been amended centrally. The completeness and accuracy of this data is the responsibility of the provider organisations.

Nuffield Speech and Language Unit

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of the funding of placements of children at the Nuffield speech and language unit in each of the last five years was from *(a)* local education authorities and *(b)* primary care trusts. [65296]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is not collected centrally.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what discussions she has had with the Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust about the future of the Nuffield speech and language unit; [65290]

(2) what assessment she has made of *(a)* the work undertaken and *(b)* the results achieved by the Nuffield speech and language unit. [65294]

Jane Kennedy: No discussions have been held between Ministers and the Royal Free Hampstead national health service trust about the future of the Nuffield speech and language unit. It is for the local NHS to make assessments on the work undertaken and results achieved in services provided for the local community, as this is where knowledge and expertise lie. However, my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Community Care (Liam Byrne) held a discussion with the hon. Member during a debate on this matter held on 25 April.

Obesity

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what advice her Department gives to GPs about the use of the register of obese patients they are required to establish under the provisions of the new General Medical Services Contract; whether the advice includes promoting awareness of slimming on referral and participation in programmes operated by commercial slimming organisations; and if she will make a statement. [63595]

Mr. Byrne: The new quality and outcomes framework for 2006–07 includes an indicator which rewards practices for maintaining an obesity register. The recording of body mass index for the register will take place in the practice as part of routine care. It is part of normal routine clinical practice for general practitioners to provide advice to patients who are identified as obese.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make it her policy when placing material in the Library of the House in response to a parliamentary question to supply a copy of the material to the hon. Member who tabled the question; and if she will make a statement. [64207]

Mr. Byrne: It has been our practice to send a copy to the hon. Member asking the question.

Primary Care Trusts

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much money had been committed by each primary care trust to purchasing private services at the end of December 2005; and how much has been budgeted by each primary care trust for such activity for the financial year 2005–06. [60822]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what her Department's employer contribution rates to the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme are; what assumed rate of return underlies those contribution rates; and what the contribution rate would be if the assumed rate of return was in line with current redemption yield on index-linked gilts. [61998]

Mr. Byrne: As the hon. Gentleman is aware the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme is overseen by the Cabinet Office. It is therefore appropriate, in this instance, that the Cabinet Office respond to him directly. He should have received a reply from them in response to his questions.

Public Involvement (Health)

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects *(a)* to publish (i) the recommendations of the expert panel on the future of patient and public involvement in health and (ii) the evidence submitted to the expert panel and *(b)* to announce her Department's decision on the future structures for patient and public involvement in health. [66895]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The expert panel which is considering patient and public involvement in health, reported to Ministers in the Department at the end of April 2006. Ministers are considering the recommendations and will announce the Department's decision on the future structures for patient and public involvement shortly. The panel's report and the evidence submitted to the panel will be published at the same time as this announcement.

Pulmonary Hypertension

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have died from pulmonary hypertension while on the NHS waiting list for a heart and lung transplant in England in each of the last five years for which records are available. [66045]

Mr. Byrne: The number of people who died each year waiting for a suitable organ to come available for transplant as treatment for pulmonary hypertension is shown in the following table:

Donor organ awaited	*2001*	*2002*	*2004*	*2004*	*2005*	*Total*
Heart and lung	5	3	3	4	3	18
Lung only	1	1	—	1	2	5
Total	6	4	3	5	5	23

Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the total expenditure of the Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust was in each year between *(a)* 2001–02 and *(b)* 2005–06. [65288]

Jane Kennedy: The table shows data from 2001–02 to 2004–05, which is the latest year for which information is available.

Figures given are the total operating expenses of the Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust for each of the relevant years. Figures for 2005–06 cannot be supplied; they will be available in the autumn.

Total operating expenses of the Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust

£000

	Amount
2001–02	238,223
2002–03	265,071
2003–04	296,023
2004–05	342,330

Salt Intake

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what analysis her Department conducted of the food industry's objections to the Food Standards Agency's proposed target salt levels as set out in their consultation document of August 2005. [65769]

Caroline Flint: As part of its normal consultation process, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) compiled and reviewed the comments of all respondents to the salt targets consultation, a summary of which is published on the FSA's website at www.salt.gov.uk/index.shtml.

The FSA analysed industry objections to targets for specific food categories in light of a wide range of information including:

technical, food safety and quality limitations;

advice from independent food technologists;

the levels of salt reductions already made in specific foods, and those necessary to enable consumers to meet dietary intake targets.

Comments and evidence gathered from all aspects of the FSA's stakeholder consultations were used to inform the FSA's decisions on final targets.

Section 64 Funding

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what her Department's policy is on funding under section 64 of the Health Services and Public Health Act 1968 for 2006 to 2008; [66894]

(2) whether successful candidates for section 64 funding have been selected for 2006 to 2008. [66898]

Mr. Byrne: Decisions on applications for awards in 2006–07 are currently under consideration and organisations will be informed as soon as this process is complete. During 2006–07 a review of department of health funding for the third sector will take place and an announcement on funding for 2007–08, which will include information on section 64 General Scheme of Grants will soon be made.

Sexual Health

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what level of expenditure will be committed to support the *(a)* improvements to sexual health services announced by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Public Health on 20 July, *(b)* bowel cancer screening programme announced by the Minister of State for Health Services on 2 August and *(c)* announcement of extra support for research into incurable diseases announced by the Minister of State for Quality and Patient Safety on 2 December; how much expenditure there has been on each; and whether the expenditure is financed from the Centrally Funded Initiatives and Services and Special Allocations budget of her Department in each case. [39345]

Mr. Byrne: On 20 July 2005, my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health (Caroline Flint) announced an additional £15 million capital funding to make improvements to genitourinary medicine services. The funding was allocated to strategic health authorities last September.

The Government have stated their commitment to a national bowel cancer screening programme, for which funding has been agreed. On 30 January 2006, the new Health White Paper, "Our Health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services", reaffirmed that the programme will be rolled out from April 2006.

The statement made by the Minister of State, Department of Health, my right hon. Friend the Member for Liverpool, Wavertree (Jane Kennedy) on 2 December 2005 was part of the overall United Kingdom Government response to the UK stem cell initiative report. This included a number of commitments over the next decade from the Government Departments and the research councils. The Department fully intends to meet a commitment to provide an additional £100 million for national health service research and development compared with 2003–04 levels and the eligible service support costs of clinical stem cell research within the NHS.

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the provision of sexual health services in Kingston-upon-Hull North. [65438]

Caroline Flint: It is for strategic health authorities and primary care trusts to determine how services are provided within their area.

I am advised that sexual health services in Hull operate using a hub and spoke model, with Conifer House in the city centre as the main centre and clinics held across the city and the East Riding. The services sees approximately 3,000 patients per month.

Data for 2004 for sexually transmitted infections, including HIV, contraception and abortion are available from the following websites:

Health Protection Agency

www.hpa.org.uk/hpa/publications/hiv_sti_2005/pdf/MtI_FC_report.pdf

NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre

www.ic.nhs.uk/pubs/contraceng2005/sb0506.pdf/file

Department for Health

www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/11/75/74/04117574.pdf

Southport and Ormskirk Hospital Trust

Dr. Pugh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the major capital investment projects at Southport and Ormskirk Hospital Trust approved by the Department of Health since 1997. [64915]

Mr. Byrne: There have been a number of major capital schemes at the Southport and Ormskirk Hospital National Health Service Trust since 1997. However, as none of these schemes fell beyond the relevant delegated limits, approval was granted by the relevant local NHS organisation rather than by the Department.

Stillbirths

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what *(a)* financial assistance and *(b)* support is available for mothers who deliver a stillborn baby. [65412]

Mr. Byrne: Mothers who deliver a stillborn baby after the start of the 25th week of pregnancy are entitled to receive statutory maternity pay. In certain circumstances, financial help is available from the Social Fund to cover funeral costs. To receive such a funeral payment, parents must meet certain eligibility criteria.

It is for individual national health service trusts to ensure there are appropriate support services for mothers who deliver a stillborn baby locally. Such support is likely to include an appointment with the consultant to discuss what is known about the reason for the baby's death, and bereavement counselling. The hospital may also offer to arrange the burial or cremation free of charge.

Stoma Appliances

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 27 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 807W, to the hon. Member for Tewkesbury (Mr. Robertson) on stoma appliances, on what date her Department expects to *(a)* publish a summary of responses and *(b)* respond to the consultation on the provision of stoma appliances and other services. [65946]

Jane Kennedy: It is anticipated that a summary of responses to the consultation will be published shortly.

The Department will be having further discussions regarding incontinence and stoma appliances in order to identify how best to achieve transparency between item price and service costs. The Department will also explore with industry how to ensure that those contractors that provide valued services are fairly remunerated for the services they provide.

We will be arranging a series of meetings with patient groups, the national health service and providers in order to accomplish this.

In relation to reagents and dressings it is planned to consult again with the market. This consultation will cover a sub-set of dressings and a sub-set of reagents in part IX of the Drug Tariff.

Trust Spending (Gloucestershire)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much each health trust operating within Gloucestershire spent in each year since 1997 in *(a)* cash and *(b)* real terms. [66361]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 27 April 2006]:* Operating expenses of national health service trusts in Gloucestershire, both in cash terms and in real terms at 2004–05 prices are shown in the table.

£000

NHS trust name	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Gloucestershire Ambulance								
Cash	7,334	7,564	8,079	8,593	9,218	10,241	11,197	15,015
Real	8,611	8,656	9,067	9,519	9,965	10,730	11,431	15,015
East Gloucestershire								
Cash	92,376	98,573	109,849	118,831	130,409	—	—	—
Real	108,454	112,803	123,282	131,638	140,983	—	—	—
Gloucestershire Royal								
Cash	74,672	80,057	98,626	98,040	107,515	—	—	—
Real	87,669	91,614	110,686	108,606	116,232	—	—	—
Severn								
Cash	50,812	53,334	57,457	60,977	67,646	—	—	—
Real	59,656	61,033	64,483	67,549	73,131	—	—	—
Gloucestershire Partnership								
Cash	—	—	—	—	—	65,199	70,459	76,740
Real	—	—	—	—	—	68,314	71,931	76,740
Gloucestershire Hospitals								
Cash	—	—	—	—	—	237,018	253,914	72,893
Real	—	—	—	—	—	248,342	259,218	72,893

TGN1412

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions she has held with the North West London Hospitals NHS Trust on the recovery of the costs of care from *(a)* Parexel and *(b)* TeGenero for the treatment of those patients who suffered an adverse reaction to the treatment TGN1412. [65999]

Jane Kennedy: No discussions have been held between Ministers and the North West London Hospitals national health services Trust on the recovery of the costs of care from Parexel and Tegenero for the treatment of those patients who suffered an adverse reaction to the treatment TGN1412.

Vaccines

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether purchasing of vaccines recommended for use by the NHS is carried out *(a)* centrally and *(b)* by individual primary care trusts. [65697]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 25 April 2006]:* Vaccines which are purchased centrally and by individual primary care trusts are shown in the following table.

Vaccine	*Purchased*
Anthrax vaccine	Centrally
Bacillus Calmette-Guerin (BCG) vaccine	Centrally
Diphtheria vaccines (combined with either Tetanus, Pertussis, Polio or Hib)	Centrally
Measles, Mumps and Rubella vaccine	Centrally
Meningococcal vaccine	Centrally
Smallpox vaccine	Centrally
Tick-borne encephalitis vaccine	Direct from supplier
Typhoid	Direct from supplier
Varicella Zoster vaccine (Chickenpox)	Direct from supplier
Yellow fever vaccine	Direct from supplier
Cholera vaccine	Direct from supplier
Haemophilus influenzae type B (Hib) vaccine	Direct from supplier

Vaccine	Purchased
Hepatitis A vaccine	Direct from supplier
Hepatitis B vaccine	Direct from supplier
Pneumococcal vaccine	Direct from supplier
Influenza vaccine	Direct from supplier, centrally bought contingency stock
Rabies vaccine	Direct from supplier for travel, centrally bought for occupational use

York Hospital

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many finished consultant episodes there were *(a)* in total and *(b)* in each specialty at York hospital in each year since 1996–97. [64325]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is shown in the table.

Count of finished consultant episodes by main specialty, provider of treatment = RCB York Health Services National Health Service Trust, NHS Hospitals England, 1996–97 to 2004–05

Main specialty code	Main specialty description	1996–97	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
&	Not known	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,687
100	General surgery	7,290	6,929	7,618	7,620	7,493	7,440	8,034	8,727	8,972
101	Urology	4,390	4,319	4,441	4,432	4,860	4,719	4,817	5,345	5,326
110	Trauma and orthopaedics	4,375	4,274	4,560	4,468	4,660	4,649	5,158	5,566	5,548
120	Ear, nose and throat	2,211	1,833	2,134	2,166	2,193	2,301	2,050	2,041	2,075
130	Ophthalmology	1,923	1,885	2,175	2,288	2,253	2,272	2,290	2,534	3,134
140	Oral surgery	1,215	1,268	1,351	1,368	1,244	1,223	1,354	1,409	1,491
141	Restorative dentistry	422	397	364	333	336	339	—	—	—
160	Plastic surgery	—	—	—	—	—	—	*	—	—
170	Cardiothoracic surgery	—	—	*	—	—	—	—	—	—
180	Accident and emergency	1,361	731	460	134	—	*	29	7	356
190	Anaesthetics	1,174	2,345	2,469	2,292	1,906	1,918	1,882	1,879	1,900
300	General medicine	10,604	10,961	11,592	12,002	12,888	14,076	15,561	16,536	18,003
303	Haematology (clinical)	814	1,043	1,310	1,391	938	824	667	684	991
330	Dermatology	132	113	170	148	127	103	75	62	49
360	Genito-urinary medicine	—	*	—	—	—	—	—	*	—
370	Medical oncology	—	*	*	126	348	269	190	165	166
400	Neurology	441	409	404	397	429	510	520	670	508
410	Rheumatology	290	351	318	265	190	184	172	256	233
420	Paediatrics	3,291	3,321	3,741	4,168	3,908	4,158	4,124	4,651	4,898
430	Geriatric medicine	4,311	4,561	5,254	5,021	5,216	5,448	6,160	7,756	9,316
502	Gynaecology	13,572	13,471	13,257	9,306	9,312	9,463	9,310	9,738	10,664
610	General practice with maternity function	201	125	493	1,737	1,648	1,359	1,581	1,631	—
620	General practice other than maternity	519	522	480	437	411	370	—	—	—
700	Mental handicap	76	42	38	40	35	46	—	—	—
710	Mental illness	993	874	904	694	686	614	—	—	—
711	Child and adolescent psychiatry	53	44	42	48	50	53	—	—	—
715	Old age psychiatry	677	643	663	685	616	612	—	—	—
800	Radiotherapy	*	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
810	Radiology	—	—	*	*	—	—	*	*	—
822	Chemical pathology	67	72	121	190	80	80	38	40	214
824	Histopathology	—	—	—	*	—	—	—	—	—
Total		60,404	60,536	64,367	61,758	61,827	63,032	64,015	69,699	75,531

Notes:

Finished consultant episode (FCE)

A FCE is defined as a period of admitted patient care under one consultant within one health care provider. The figures do not represent the number of patients, as a person may have more than one episode of care within the year.

Ungrossed data

Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data, that is the data is ungrossed.

Low numbers

Due to reasons of confidentiality, figures between 1 and 5 have been suppressed and replaced with "*" (an asterisk).

Source:

Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre.

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 3 May 2006

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Departmental Websites

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list *(a)* the websites operated by his Department and *(b)* the reports placed on the internet in March 2006, indicating in each case whether paper copies were also made available. [65211]

Mr. Thomas: DFID maintains the following websites:

DFID website (http://www.dfid.gov.uk)

DFID India (http://www.dfidindia.org/)

DFID Bangladesh (http://www.dfidbangladesh.org/)

Good Humanitarian Donorship (http://www.goodhumanitariandonorship.org/)

Developments Magazine (http://www.developments.org.uk/

R4D—Research for Development portal (www.research4development.info)—this portal was launched on 31 March and contains material which was published previously so contents have not been included in the following table.

The reports published on DFID websites for March 2006 were as follows:

Name of report	*Paper copy also available*
Disaster risk reduction policy	Yes
Implementation of the Commission for Africa recommendations and G8 Gleneagles' commitments on poverty—the UK's contribution	Yes
DEEP IMPACT: an investigation of the use of information and communication technologies for teacher education in the global south—Education Paper 58	Yes
Partnership Programme Agreement—ActionAid Global Progress Report 2004[1]	Yes
Pakistan Decision Report—Poverty Reduction Budget Support (PRBS)	No
Nepal Annual Report 2005	Yes
Sending money home: UK to India leaflet	Yes
How can microfinance help rebuild livelihoods in Afghanistan?	No
Pioneering East African drama reaches 5m	No
Bangladeshi communities take ownership of hygiene issues	No
Training the trainers	No
Q. When is a sardine not a sardine? A. When the European Community says it's not: Peru's use of the Geneva-based Advisory Centre on World Trade Organisation Law to challenge a European Community decision	No
Paddle your own canoe: a case study of fishing communities around Lake Chad	No
Rebuilding livelihoods and maintaining peace: clay-brick making in Sri Lanka	No
How Gambian producers gained better access to markets	No
Promoting fair trade tourism in South Africa	No
Supporting greater transparency in Bolivia	No
How partnership opens airwaves for Bolivian youth	No
Right to Identity: Turning schoolchildren into citizens	No
Supporting a safer community in La Paz	No
Evaluation of DFID Country Programmes: Country Study Ghana 2000–2005	Yes
Project Completion Reports Synthesis Report 2005: An analysis of projects and programmes in Prism 2000–2005	Yes

[1] This was actually an ActionAid report. We published it on our website to raise awareness

Where paper copies were not made available and where an inquirer has difficulties accessing material via the internet, our public inquiry point can provide hard copy on request.

Disabled Children

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps he is taking to help provide education for disabled children in developing countries; and if he will make a statement. [67703]

Mr. Thomas: All children, including those with disabilities or living in difficult circumstances, should have the opportunity to fulfil their right to access and complete a good quality education.

Tackling exclusion, including exclusion based on disability within the education system, is part of our work with partner governments. Copies of DFID's policy paper entitled 'Reducing poverty by tackling social exclusion' which sets out our broad based approach to tackling social exclusion across all sectors, have already been deposited in the Libraries of the House. This strategy highlights specific issues of discrimination which explain a large part of the disadvantages faced by children with a disability.

DFID provides its funding for poverty reduction in support of partner governments' own plans for poverty reduction. In fulfilling our financial commitments to partner governments, including the significant commitment announced on 10 April that DFID will spend some £8.5 billion in support of education in developing countries over the next 10 years, the UK Government have taken a significant step forward in improving the opportunity for inclusive education to become a realistic goal for partner governments. We encourage partner governments to ensure that as wide a range as possible of stakeholders participate in the consultations on national poverty reduction strategies, including groups representing disabled people. Issues of social exclusion and targeted interventions for excluded groups will be addressed in the discussions our Country Offices will have with governments on developing 10-year plans for education.

DFID's social exclusion strategy also emphasises the importance of the role of civil society in tackling all forms of social exclusion and the importance of DFID's partnerships with organisations involved in advocating for the rights of disadvantaged groups.

Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development which developing countries with oil, gas or mining industries have not signed up to the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative; and what steps the Government are taking to encourage them to do so. [66837]

Mr. Thomas: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) Guide on Resource Revenue Transparency defines 45 developing countries (and eight developed countries) as rich in hydrocarbons or mineral resources. Of these, 19 countries have committed to implement the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI). The Government are presently in discussion with a further ten countries who have not yet begun implementation.

The Government believe that improved transparency over revenue management will bring a number of benefits to any resource rich country—in terms of improved governance, greater economic and political stability and an improved investment climate. The EITI International Advisory Group, which is supported by a Secretariat housed in the Department for International Development, is currently considering other incentives to encourage participation in EITI, and how these might be strengthened.

Ministerial Cars (Fuel Costs)

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the fuel costs were for ministerial cars used by his Department in each of the last five years. [67125]

Mr. Thomas: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Minister of State for Transport on 27 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 1226W.

Pharmaceutical Industry

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent discussions he has had with pharmaceutical companies on the pricing of cancer drugs in the developing world. [66824]

Mr. Thomas: DFID has engaged extensively with the pharmaceutical industry as part of our work to increase access to medicines in developing countries. In January 2005, we published a set of recommendations for the industry, that specifically looked at pricing policies, investment in research and development for diseases affecting developing countries, and ways of working in developing countries. These recommendations built on existing good practice in the industry. Many companies have made significant progress in making their medicines more available and affordable in developing countries.

To date, our discussions have focused on major communicable diseases such as HIV, malaria and TB, and on neglected tropical diseases, such as sleeping sickness. However, discussions with the industry have also emphasised the degree to which treatments for non-communicable diseases such as cancers really should also be the subject of differential pricing offers given the significant public health needs in developing countries. There are in fact higher rates of cervical cancer deaths in Ghana than in the UK.

This is an area we will continue to work on with the industry.

Sakhalin II Development

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what his policy is on the funding for Shell's proposed Sakhalin II development and the requirements of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development's Environmental policy; and if he will make a statement. [67239]

Mr. Thomas: The UK Government have been following this project very closely through their role as a shareholder and Board member of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). The UK Export Credits Guarantee Department (ECGD) is also considering the request from Sakhalin Energy Investment Company (SEIC) to provide export credit guarantees.

The Government are fully aware of the social, environmental, commercial and energy security issues associated with this project. The EBRD, the ECGD and other members of the lender group are also treating these issues very seriously. The lender group's involvement in this project so far has improved its social and environmental standards.

In December 2005, EBRD Management agreed that all documentation required to commence a public consultation process was "fit for purpose". A 120 day public consultation period ended on 28 April. EBRD Management is now considering all written responses received and additional representations from public consultation meetings.

Should EBRD Management recommend to its Board that the project should receive EBRD funding, then at that point the UK Government will decide whether to support an EBRD loan. The Government will also consider all the representations it has received and carefully assess all aspects of the project before reaching a final decision.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Corporate Hospitality

David Simpson: To ask the Solicitor-General on how many occasions he has accepted corporate hospitality in the last 12 months. [67517]

The Solicitor-General: Paragraph 5.28 of the Ministerial Code sets out the rules on the registration of hospitality.

Vixen Tor Climbing Incident

John Mann: To ask the Solicitor-General when he expects the Crown Prosecution Service to report on the Vixen Tor climbing incident. [67928]

The Solicitor-General: CPS Devon and Cornwall discontinued this case on 25 November 2005, at Plymouth magistrates court. CPS Devon and Cornwall wrote to the complainants on 30 November 2005, explaining the decision. As a consequence of further correspondence, a further letter of explanation was sent on 28 April 2006.

WALES

Electoral Reform

11. **Angela Watkinson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what representations he has received on electoral reform in Wales. [66192]

Nick Ainger: My right hon. Friend and I receive many representations on electoral reform in Wales. The Electoral Administration Bill, currently being considered in another place, includes a wide range of measures aimed at improving the registration process, while also reducing the risk of electoral fraud and ensuring that elections are made more accessible to voters.

Police Force Restructuring

12. **Mr. Amess:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make a statement on police force restructuring in Wales. [66193]

Mr. Hain: In line with HMIC's assessment, my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary and I believe that an all-Wales strategic force is the most effective way of delivering a safe and secure Wales, protected against threats such as terrorism, serious and organised crime and drug trafficking.

Press Freedom

13. **Michael Gove:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make a statement on the steps he is taking to ensure the freedom of the press in Wales. [66194]

Nick Ainger: Wales Office Ministers actively maintain contact with all sections of the media in Wales. We would obviously listen carefully to any concerns over press freedom that might be raised.

Engagements

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will list his visits to Wales together with the purpose of each such visit since 1 January. [67598]

Mr. Hain: On a weekly basis I meet with the first Minister and hold other ad hoc meetings in Cardiff. In addition to regular appointments and surgeries in my constituency, I have made the following visits:

2006

	Visit
19–20 January	N Wales visit—Address CBI Reception Corus living solutions, Ipsen Biopharm Ltd, Rhyl Cycling Club
26 January	Holocaust Memorial Day in Cardiff
12 February	Rugby, Wales *v.* Scotland, Cardiff
10 February	Picture Financial, EADS, International Rectifier—Newport
16–17 February	N Wales visit—Kimberly Clark, Flintshire County Council, RedWeb St. Asaph, Daily Post
24 February	Workplace Health Connect launch in Newport
1 March	St. Athan—visit 1st Battalion Welsh Guards/and opening of Senedd
2 March	Respect Action Plan—Launch Dispersal Zone—visit to school in Swansea
18 March	Rugby, Wales *v.* France, Cardiff
23 March	Solace Wales Conference Cardiff

Olympic Delivery Authority

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what discussions he has had with *(a)* the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport and *(b)* the Welsh Assembly Government on the appointment of members of the Olympic Delivery Authority. [67912]

Mr. Hain: The Olympic Delivery Authority has a specific task, to deliver the Olympic Park, in Stratford, and associated infrastructure developments, in time for the 2012 Games.

Appointments were made in accordance with the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments' Code of Practice.

The Nations and Regions Group has representatives from each nation and English region, and is charged with ensuring that the whole of the UK benefits from the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The Olympic Delivery Authority will be working closely with the Nations and Regions Group.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Agriculture (Sustainability/Climate Change)

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with *(a)* the horticultural industry and *(b)* farmers on the environmental effects of their work. [65371]

Mr. Morley: The Department has had discussions with both the horticultural and farming industries on this subject.

The horticulture sector is making efforts on a number of fronts to reduce carbon emissions. Under the new Climate Change Agreement, growers will be entitled to an 80 per cent. discount on the levy provided they meet prescribed energy saving targets. Under the new Energy Scheme, it is possible for businesses to claim capital allowances on items such as thermal screens and insulation, variable speed pumps, certain heating equipment (including combined heat and power plant) and lighting. In addition, both Defra and the Horticultural Development Council carry out research

into energy efficiency issues and the Carbon Trust (funded by Defra) provides advice and organises free energy services to assist in the identification of energy saving steps that can be implemented in nurseries.

The Government are very much aware of the link between farming and the environment. The Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food (SFFS) was launched in England in 2002 and sets out the basis for a new relationship in which Government works in partnership with the farming industry in England to make farmers more market, and less subsidy focused, while managing their businesses in more environmentally and socially responsible ways.

Achievements under SFFS include: CAP reform which, by breaking the link between subsidy and production, means there is no incentive to overproduce; the cross compliance element of the Single Payment Scheme where subsidies are linked to the delivery of environmental and animal welfare standards; the launch of Environmental Stewardship to which all farmers are eligible to apply to earn payments for undertaking environmental management of their land; and the launch of the Rural Developments Service Farm Advice Unit which oversees delivery of technical and environmental advice to farmers.

In addition, the Department is working closely with the agricultural industry to reduce it's contribution to climate change. The Department has set up the Agricultural Change and Environment Observatory to monitor, and where possible anticipate, changes in agriculture and at farm level, and to asses consequent implications for the environment. A Stakeholder Advisory Group has been set up with the aim of advising priorities for the work of the programme, providing feedback on emerging results and their implications, identifying new and emerging areas on which the Observatory could usefully focus their work and to provide a channel of communication with a wider stakeholder community. Further information can be found on Defra's website at: http://www.defra.gov.uk/farm/observatory/background.htm

A vital element of Defra's policy on agriculture and climate change is to raise awareness within the industry of the issues and possible actions to be taken. The Rural Climate Change Forum has been established to provide a high level forum for dialogue with Government, and authoritative advice and leadership to rural stakeholders.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the contribution made by *(a)* farmers and *(b)* horticulturalists in reducing UK carbon emissions. [65372]

Mr. Morley: The agriculture and forestry sector contributes 7 per cent. of UK greenhouse gas emissions. The major focus is on non-CO_2 gases, with, in 2004, this sector accounting for 46 per cent. of methane and 66 per cent. of nitrous oxide emissions, but only 1 per cent. of the carbon dioxide. Annual total emissions fell by 22 per cent. between 1990 and 2004, with methane emissions reducing by 13 per cent., and nitrous oxide emissions by 17 per cent.

The new UK Climate Change Programme, published March 2006, has assessed the role of the agriculture and forestry sector in addressing climate change and seeks to raise awareness of the issues across the sector and develop measures for the sector to allow it to play a full part in tackling climate change. Substantial savings are expected, assuming the proposed measures are implemented to their full potential.

The horticulture sector is also making efforts on a number of fronts to reduce carbon emissions. Under the new Climate Change Agreement, growers will be entitled to an 80 per cent. discount on the levy provided they meet prescribed energy saving targets.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps are being taken by her Department to work with farmers to reduce the impact of climate change on British agriculture. [65747]

Mr. Morley: On 7 February 2005 Defra held a seminar to help raise awareness in the stakeholder community, and identify potential practical adaptation strategies within UK agriculture to tackle the impacts of climate change. The outcomes from this event were fed into the first ever Joint Informal Council on Environment and Agriculture, held in September 2005 under the UK presidency of the EU. The joint meeting focused on the significant challenges and opportunities that climate change presents to European agriculture.

A vital element of Defra policy on agriculture and climate change is to raise awareness within the industry of the issues and possible actions to be taken. The Rural Climate Change Forum has been established to provide a high level forum for dialogue with Government, and authoritative advice and leadership to rural stakeholders.

The new UK Climate Change Programme, published on 28 March 2006 signals a step change in the recognition we are giving to the agriculture sector in addressing climate change. The new programme has assessed the role of the agriculture and forestry sector in addressing climate change and seeks to raise awareness of the issues across the sector and develop measures to allow it to play a full part in tackling climate change.

The UK National Adaptation Policy Framework is currently being developed. It will help to provide a more strategic approach to adaptation, identifying key risks and opportunities common across a number of policy areas and to coordinate approaches where possible. The first phase of the framework will be structured on a sectoral basis, and these sectors will include Agriculture, Horticulture and Forestry as well as water resources, biodiversity and nature conservation. As the framework develops it will also reflect cross-cutting issues.

We are also committed to continuing to develop a robust evidence base in order to be able to support policy development and inform land managers of the best technologies and information available to help them adapt to climate change.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps are being taken by her Department to ensure the sustainability of British agriculture. [65748]

Jim Knight: British farming is valued for the contribution it makes to the economy and to the environment, through producing our food, safeguarding and enhancing our landscapes, and increasingly to contribute to tackling the problems of a changing world—such as meeting our energy needs. Through the strategy for sustainable farming and food, the Government have put in place a comprehensive and long-term plan to deliver a profitable and sustainable future for farming in this country.

Key to successful delivery of the strategy is the partnership between Government and industry, based on a commitment to shared goals. Through this partnership much has already been achieved, including: the delivery of CAP reform which, by breaking the link between subsidy and production, will help bring farmers closer to their markets; the cross compliance element of the single payment scheme through which subsidies are linked to the delivery of environmental and animal welfare standards; the launch of environmental stewardship, for which all farmers are eligible to apply to earn payments for undertaking environmental management of their land; and launch of "Partners for Success" a regulation and charging strategy for the farming sector, through which Government will continue to work with industry to regulate better and smarter.

An independent delivery group chaired by Sir Don Curry will continue to oversee and drive forward delivery of the strategy over the next three years.

Ammonium Nitrate Fertiliser

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what records are held by the Government on the commercial sale of ammonium nitrate fertiliser. [65279]

Mr. Morley: The Government do not hold records on the commercial sale of ammonium nitrate fertiliser. I understand that records of commercial sales are kept by Industry (the Agricultural Industries Confederation).

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether the Government plans to introduce restrictions on *(a)* the commercial sale of and *(b)* the levels of nitrate in ammonium nitrate fertiliser. [65280]

Mr. Morley: The Government have no immediate plans to restrict either the commercial sale of, nor the levels of nitrate in, ammonium nitrate (AN) fertiliser.

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend, the then Minister for Rural Affairs of 25 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1493W, which outlined the measures taken at the time to control the supply of AN fertilisers. Subsequent to that response, the Government invited the Agricultural Industries Confederation (AIC) to develop a voluntary fertiliser assurance scheme, to ensure robust safety, security and traceability of all inorganic agricultural and horticultural fertilisers throughout the supply chain up to the farm gate. The resulting Fertiliser Industry Assurance Scheme, (FIAS), was launched on 9 January 2006. Details of the Scheme can be found on the AIC website at www.agindustries.org.uk.

The voluntary and statutory measures governing the manufacture and supply of AN fertilisers are kept under continuous review and further measures will be taken if necessary.

Beef Exports

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what Government support has been given to the farming industry to assist the resumption of beef exports. [65059]

Jim Knight: Ministers and officials are working closely with industry representatives to ensure that the appropriate mechanisms are in place to ensure that beef exports can resume as soon as possible.

On 3 May, my noble Friend Lord Bach, the Minister for Sustainable Farming and Food, is hosting a further high level meeting with the those involved in the beef supply chain to consider the issues of interest to the beef sector, including the resumption of exports. On 4 May, he will be visiting the major Italian food fair (CIBUS) to help promote our beef exports.

The Government are also providing financial assistance for exports as part of the £5.5 million funding for a Beef Market Restoration Programme announced last October.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on the threat to biodiversity if biofuels are produced as a single crop. [66625]

Biofuels

Mr. Morley: The Department is in regular contact with the Department of Trade and Industry to discuss a whole range of issues related to bio-energy, including the impacts on biodiversity. Most transport biofuel feedstocks will be grown in rotation as part of a mix of several crops on the farm. Production from a mix of feedstocks and replacing crops for food would have a neutral effect on biodiversity. Any replacement of spring sown break crops with winter oilseed rape would have a negative effect on crop diversity and farmland birds. If arable crops replaced natural-regeneration set-aside, this would reduce habitat diversity. In the longer term, as technology improves, straw and wood could be used for bioethanol production without significantly affecting biodiversity.

Research suggests that, in comparison with arable crops, energy crops such as short rotation coppice grown for heat and power generation can encourage biodiversity, particularly for birds and insects.

Correspondence

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when the Minister for Rural Affairs, Landscape and Biodiversity will respond to the letter from the hon. Member for North Essex dated 17 November 2005 concerning the Chappel Memorial Green Trust; and if she will make a statement. [64886]

Jim Knight: I apologise for the delay in replying to the hon. Member's letter. A response was issued on 25 April 2006.

Departmental Websites

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list *(a)* the websites operated by her Department and *(b)* the reports placed on the internet in March 2006, indicating in each case whether paper copies were also made available. [65212]

Jim Knight: DEFRA directly operates a number of websites, including the main DEFRA website (http://www.defra.gov.uk/) and the Government's sustainable development website (http://www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/). A number of other websites are operated by or on behalf of the Department, its agencies and non-departmental public bodies, but detailed information is not held centrally for these, and an accurate, comprehensive list could not be obtained without incurring disproportionate cost.

Several thousand pages of documents on the DEFRA website were updated or published during March 2006. As such it would be difficult to identify those which might be regarded as "reports". Specific information about the availability of paper copies of these documents is not readily available.

DEFRA ensures that reports are, where appropriate, made available as printed copies as well as online. If a report is published only via the website (and not in printed form), this is based on an assessment of factors such as the audience for the document (general or specialist), the nature of the material and its anticipated lifetime, whether speed of distribution electronically is particularly important, and cost-efficiency issues.

Disabled People

Tom Levitt: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on her Department's progress in fulfilling its statutory obligation as a public body to promote the rights of disabled people. [65817]

Jim Knight: I am replying in my new role as Minister responsible for Diversity and Equality in DEFRA.

Disability Equality Duty

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 placed new duties on public authorities to promote equality for disabled people, the Disability Equality Duty.

The legislation requires DEFRA to publish a departmental disability equality scheme outlining how it will meet the duty. In order to reflect the creation of the single equality body the Commission for Equality and Human Rights and also reduce the burden to the business DEFRA has decided to do this as a joint equality scheme (JES) that will fully address both race and disability issues. The JES can be adapted to include other legislation as it comes on line, for instance gender and age.

DEFRA's diversity and equality unit (DEU) wrote to all business units earlier this year seeking information on the impact of the equalities legislation on their areas of work and the actions they would take to address this. The information provided has been used to develop a draft JES, including a departmental action plan covering a three-year period from 2006–09. At the end of the three year period, DEU will have responsibility for reviewing the scheme. As a result of the review the DEU will launch a revised scheme, which will run for a further three years.

In addition, the Secretary of State will report annually on progress for the JES covering core DEFRA and all its Executive Agencies and NDPBs. It will also set out actions for the future.

Other Issues That Promote Equality For Disabled People

DEFRA has a staff network for employees with disabilities that provides advice for policy makers on disability issues. The Department is a member of the Inter-Departmental Disability Group sharing best practice between Government Departments and is also a member of the Employers' Forum for Disability.

DEFA has good relations with its Executive Agencies and NDPBs and is working with them on promoting the service delivery aspects of disability such as access to the countryside and how disabled people are consulted about new rural and environmental initiatives.

EU INSPIRE Directive

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will place in the Library a copy of *(a)* the Regulatory Impact Assessment and *(b)* the supplementary explanatory memorandum on the implementation of the EU INSPIRE directive. [66272]

Mr. Morley: Copies of the Regulatory Impact Assessment and the supplementary explanatory memorandum on the implementation of the EU INSPIRE directive were sent to the International Affairs Section of the House of Commons Library in 2005 via a Cabinet Office circulation list for explanatory memoranda. Copies of both documents are available in the Library.

In addition, the Regulatory Impact Assessment will soon be available on the Intra-governmental Group on Geographic Information website <http://www.iggi.gov.uk>.

Farm Numbers

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many farm holdings there were in the UK in each of the last 20 years. [65060]

Jim Knight: The number of agricultural and horticultural holdings in England recorded for the years 1986 to 2005 are shown below. Figures for the other UK countries fall under the jurisdiction of the devolved authorities.

	Number of agricultural and horticultural holdings
1986	154,735
1987	155,785
1988	156,647
1989	157,393
1990	150,652
1991	150,966

	Number of agricultural and horticultural holdings
1992	151,718
1993	153,422
1994	153,426
1995	146,112
1996	145,637
1997	144,777
1998	145,093
1999	147,220
2000	167,855
2001	177,934
2002	187,871
2003	190,687
2004	192,824
2005	195,908

Notes:
(a) Figures prior to 2000 are for main holdings only, from 2000 onwards main and minor holdings are included. A holding is defined as minor if it meets all of the following conditions:
1. the total area is less than 6 hectares
2. the labour requirement is estimated to be less than 100 standard person-days
3. there is no regular full-time farmer or worker
4. the glasshouse area is less than 100 square metres
5. the occupier does not farm another holding

(b) There has been an increase in the number of holdings in later years. This reflects changes in registration requirements with many smaller holdings now appearing on the system.
Source:
June Agricultural Census and June Agricultural Survey.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many farms there are in *(a)* Coventry and *(b)* the West Midlands Region. [65942]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 27 April 2006]:* The number of agricultural and horticultural holdings in Coventry and West Midlands Region are shown as follows.

	Number
Coventry	89
West Midlands Region	25,851

Note:
Not all holdings were actively farming at the time of the survey. 66 economically active agricultural and horticultural Holdings were registered in Coventry, 18,314 were registered in West Midlands Region.
Source:
June 2005 Agricultural and Horticultural Survey (England)

Farm Tenants

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what opportunities exist for farm tenants to diversify as a result of recent changes to landlord/tenant legislation; and what plans the Government has to respond to further changes proposed by the Tenancy Reform Industry Group. [65536]

Jim Knight: A Regulatory Reform Order to amend the Agricultural Holdings Act 1986 and the Agricultural Tenancies Act 1995 was laid before Parliament on 30 March 2006. The order is currently going through the parliamentary scrutiny process, but, if adopted, the amendments should make it easier for tenant farmers to diversify. In particular, the amendments would enable potential successors to a tenancy to carry out diversified activities on a holding with the consent of the landlord, without jeopardising the right to succession to the tenancy. The amendments should also facilitate tenant diversification by encouraging landlords to agree to improvements to the holding and by making it easier to restructure holdings held under a 1986 Act tenancy.

In addition to the proposed, Defra in conjunction with the Tenancy Reform Industry Group, has published a Code of Good Practice for agri-environment and diversification projects within agricultural tenancies. This sets out a framework to help tenants and landlords come to agreement on proposals for diversification or participation in an agri-environment scheme. Where tenants and landlords are unable to agree in accordance with the Code of Good Practice, Defra has provided funding for an adjudication scheme, free at the point of use, to enable the proposal to be considered by an independent adjudicator. The adjudication scheme is administered by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors. The Code of Good Practice is available on the Defra website at http://www.defra.gov.uk/farm/tenancy/trig/trig-cogp.pdf

The Tenancy Reform Industry Group put forward its recommendations to Government in June 2003 and has not since put forward any further proposals for change. The Government responded to the Group's recommendations in December 2003. The Government keeps in close contact with the Tenancy Reform Industry Group on landlord/tenant issues and will continue to do so.

Forestry

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what considerations formed the basis of the decision to extend the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification scheme probation period. [65243]

Mr. Morley: The Government currently accepts certificates from the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) scheme as a means of assuring central departments that their demand for timber from legal and sustainable sources is being met. That acceptance is provisional on recent changes made to the PEFC scheme being implemented by the national schemes endorsed by PEFC.

An initial examination of some of the national schemes showed that the various national decision making processes were not identical. Subsequent information supplied by the schemes indicated that the processes adopted may nevertheless result in compliance with the PEFC Council requirements but the situation was not clear-cut and called for further consideration.

The Central Point of Expertise on Timber (CPET) will soon undertake a review of all the forest certification schemes assessed by CPET in 2004. The Government have decided that this review will, in addition to examining published scheme requirements, consider evidence of failure to adopt scheme system requirements. The Government would prefer to take a decision on PEFC's probationary status in the light of any new evidence that this review may unearth.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs who was involved in the decision to extend the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification scheme probation period. [65248]

Mr. Morley: Ministers took the decision taking account of a range of views, including external stakeholders.

Johnson McNeil

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether Johnson McNeil is employed by her Department or one of its agencies. [R] [65101]

Jim Knight: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 24W.

Market Towns Initiative

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the market towns which have participated in the market towns initiative; between which dates each participated; and which towns have applied for funding but have been unsuccessful. [65951]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 26 April 2006]:* The national Market Towns Initiative (MTI) was launched in FY 2000–01 and provided £32 million to Regional Development Agencies (RDAs), and £5 million to the Countryside Agency (CA) to support community-led market town regeneration in the regions. The initiative was therefore not established as a national funding programme, but as a means of enabling regional partnerships to target towns in their region according to regionally agreed selection criteria. The aim was to provide support to 100 towns but, by the time the national initiative ended in FY 2003–04, over 230 towns had benefited.

The final list of towns that were chosen to participate in the national MTI is available on the Countryside Agency website http://www.countryside.gov.uk/Images/list_tcm2-15794.pdf

Participation dates and details of towns that were unsuccessful is held in archive files in the regions and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Following the end of the national MTI, responsibility for market towns was devolved to the regional and local level, with the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) primarily providing support for market towns through their mainstream activities.

Meat Hygiene Service

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the *(a)* possible effects on the terms and conditions of and *(b)* cost impacts on veterinary surgeons of each of the options for proposed changes to veterinary supervision arrangements within the Meat Hygiene Service. [66081]

Caroline Flint: I have been asked to reply.

The options for proposed changes to veterinary supervision arrangements within the meat hygiene service are set out in the 12-week public consultation launched on 11 April 2006.

Effects on terms and conditions of veterinary surgeons and costs of the preferred options for change are being explored as part of the consultation process. A regulatory impact assessment will be completed in light of comments received during the consultation and from more detailed engagement with those stakeholders that are directly affected by the proposed changes, such as veterinary contractors.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she commission an independent assessment of the likely impact of each of the options for proposed changes to veterinary supervision arrangements within the Meat Hygiene Service. [66082]

Caroline Flint: I have been asked to reply.

No. The options for proposed changes to veterinary supervision arrangements within the meat hygiene service (MHS) are set out in the 12-week public consultation launched on 11 April 2006.

Development of the proposals has been informed by Professor Wall's independent inquiry into the failure of the MHS in 2004 to ensure all relevant at risk 24 to 30 month bovines had been tested for bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) and recommendations to minimise the risk of failure recurring (with three recommendations in particular directed towards improving the veterinary structure). The proposals have also been informed by two subsequent reports commissioned by the Food Standards Agency and the MHS from DNV Consulting and the independent advisory group's requirements relating to the over 30 month rule change.

The various reports are publicly available and comments are invited on the proposed changes as part of the consultation process. A regulatory impact assessment will be completed in light of comments received during the consultation and from more detailed engagement with those stakeholders that are directly affected by the proposed changes, such as veterinary contractors.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the TUPE implications are of each of the options for proposed changes for veterinary supervision arrangements within the Meat Hygiene Service. [66083]

Caroline Flint: I have been asked to reply.

The options for proposed changes to veterinary supervision arrangements within the meat hygiene service (MHS) are set out in the 12-week public consultation launched on 11 April 2006.

These acknowledge that there are possible TUPE employment rights issues arising from the preferred option (and from other options considered by the MHS in its review), but these are similar to those currently being managed through the existing Official Veterinarian

contract arrangements, and with the use of other contract or Agency staff more generally. These issues will be explored further during the consultation process.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make it her policy when placing material in the Library in response to a parliamentary question to supply a copy of the material to the hon. Member who tabled the question; and if she will make a statement. [64216]

Jim Knight: Government best practice is that departments should supply a copy of material placed in the Library in response to a Parliamentary question to the hon. Member who tabled it.

Single Farm Payments

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many farmers *(a)* in England and *(b)* in Windsor constituency will receive late payments for 2005 from the Rural Payments Agency. [64799]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* The payment window for all 2005 single payment scheme claims runs from 1 December 2005to 30 June 2006. Claims from farmers in the Windsor constituency cannot be separately identified.

The Rural Payments Agency aims to make a full or partial payment to all eligible customers by the end of this payment window. As in previous years, with predecessor schemes, there will be a small number of difficult cases which cannot be resolved and paid within this time frame.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will take steps to issue written guarantees that payments will be forthcoming to farmers awaiting single farm payments and facing possession proceedings. [65821]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 25 April 2006]:* Applicants under the 2005 Single Payment Scheme (SPS) have already been sent a statement giving the gross value of their SPS entitlements. The acting Chief Executive of the RPA will also write shortly to applicants confirming the intention to make full or substantial partial payments in respect of all eligible applications by the end of June.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many single farm payments in *(a)* Stroud constituency and *(b)* Gloucestershire have (i) been cancelled, (ii) yet to be cancelled and (iii) been invalidated. [65823]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 25 April 2006]:* The Single Payment Scheme is not operated by region therefore it is not possible to answer questions relating to specific geographical areas on payments made, cancelled, waiting to be cancelled or invalidated.

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she expects the problems with the computerised mapping system for single farm payments to be fully resolved. [64800]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* The process of digitising land and amending existing digitised records is an ongoing process. Responsibility for this process rests with the Rural Payments Agency (RPA). Around 98 per cent. of mapping requests required to support 2005 Single Payment Scheme (SPS) claims are now complete. RPA expects further mapping work to be received in to support 2006 SPS claims, together with applications for Environmental Stewardship.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) when David Diamond, a beef farmer of Portford Lane, South Brent, holding number 10/296/0205, will receive his Single Payment Scheme payment; [65012]

(2) if she will take steps to arrange an emergency payment to Mr. David Diamond, a beef farmer of Portford Lane, South Brent, following delay in payment under the Single Farm Payment Scheme payment; and if she will make a statement. [65022]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* For all Single Payment Scheme applicants, the payment window runs from 1 December 2005 to 30 June 2006. The Rural Payments Agency (RPA) intends to make a full or partial payment to all eligible customers by the end of this window.

Mr. David Diamond's claim is currently being processed, and will be paid in due course. However, if Mr. Diamond is suffering financial hardship he or his representatives can approach the Rural Stress Information Network, with whom RPA is liaising over genuine hardship cases.

Tallow

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much tallow was burned as a fuel in the UK in each of the last five years; and what assessment she has made of the potential effect on the animal by-product regulation on tallow burning. [65551]

Mr. Morley: Information on the quantity of tallow burned as waste by incineration and co-incineration is not available. The EU Animal By-products Regulation 1774/2002(EC) which came into effect in 2003 requires tallow when burnt to be disposed of as waste by incineration or co-incineration in accordance with the Waste Incineration Directive 2000/76/EC.

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what assessment she has made of the potential effect of a ban on tallow burning on fossil fuel emissions targets; [65552]

(2) what assessment she has made of the potential of a ban on the sale of tallow on the cost-effectiveness of the disposal of offal in rendering plants. [65553]

Mr. Morley: There is no ban on the sale or burning of tallow, so no assessments of this kind have been made.

Installations may burn tallow provided they comply with regulatory requirements. If, as is usually the case, the tallow is waste within the definition given in the EU Waste Framework Directive, the regulatory requirements

include one for a permit issued under the Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations 2000 incorporating the requirements of the EU Waste Incineration Directive.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the enforcement of the ban on burning tallow. [66627]

Mr. Morley: Installations may burn tallow provided they comply with regulatory requirements. If, as is usually the case, the tallow is waste within the definition given in the EU Waste Framework Directive, the regulatory requirements include one for a permit issued under the Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations 2000 incorporating the requirements of the EU Waste Incineration Directive.

The enforcement of these regulations is a matter for the Environment Agency and the local authorities.

Water Shortages

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether the Government has implemented the Labour Party's 1996 proposals on water policy. [66241]

Mr. Morley: A number of actions fell to the Government following the Water Summit of May 1997 which was convened to carry forward manifesto commitments. The legislative changes necessary to implement those actions have been made.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the penalties are for a domestic householder breaking a hosepipe ban. [66244]

Mr. Morley: Breach of a hosepipe ban is an offence under section 76 of the Water Industry Act 1991. The maximum penalty on conviction in a magistrates court is a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale.

DEFENCE

Armed Forces Bases (Charges)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what charges are levied at British bases in Germany for *(a)* accommodation, *(b)* heating and *(c)* lighting on (i) British troops, (ii) civil servants and (iii) schoolteachers; and if he will make a statement. [66664]

Mr. Touhig: Accommodation charges for service personnel are recommended annually by the independent Armed Forces Pay Review Body (AFPRB), and a copy of their 2006 report has been placed in the Library of the House. Where levied, charges vary depending on the type and grade of accommodation occupied and, for service families accommodation (SFA) whether it is furnished, part furnished or unfurnished. Single living accommodation (SLA) charges include a rental element plus heating and lighting; whereas SFA charges include a rental element, but occupants are responsible for heating and lighting payments. In Germany, SFA fuel charges are protected by MOD's fuel and light scheme which aims to ensure that occupants of SFA are no better or worse off financially than they could reasonably expect in the UK.

UK civil servants, including schoolteachers, on normal tours of duty in Germany, are provided with accommodation without charge as part of their overseas terms and conditions of service. Heating and lighting are also provided without charge up to a specified annual consumption limit. Any usage over and above this limit is charged for at actual rates.

The exception to this is UK civil servants, including schoolteachers, specially recruited for overseas service on or after 1 September 2001. The 2001 review of overseas terms and conditions of service withdrew the provision of free accommodation and utilities for these staff five years after taking up their appointment. The first staff affected by this rule will arise on or after 1 September 2006. The charges for accommodation and utilities will be broadly the same as those that are applied to service personnel, and details of these charges are to be published shortly.

Defence Coalition Support Account

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what representations his Department has received from the US regarding the establishment of a Defence Coalition Support Account. [54442]

John Reid: In its 2006 Quadrennial Defence Review the US Department of Defence stated that it would seek to establish a Defence Coalition Support Account. Although there were discussions with MOD officials on the QDR there were no specific representations on a Defence Coalition Support Account.

Drug Testing

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many people in each of the armed forces have tested positive for controlled substances in each of the past five years, broken down by rank; [66997]

(2) how many people in each of the armed forces have gone on the Early Intervention Programme (Drugs) in each year since it began; and how many have subsequently been retained in the armed forces, broken down by rank; [66998]

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many people in each of the armed forces have failed a drugs test following successful completion of the Early Intervention Programme (Drugs), broken down by rank. [66999]

Mr. Touhig *[holding answer 2 May 2006]:* The information required is contained in the following tables.

Royal Navy

Compulsory drug testing	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Officers/cadets positive	0	1	1	0	1
WO/Senior Rates positive	4	3	0	1	0
Junior Rates positive	46	38	55	46	46

No RN personnel have attended the Early Intervention Programme (Drugs) (EIP(D)).

Army

Compulsory drug testing	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Officers/cadets positive	0	3	1	1	1
WO/SNCOs positive	1	4	3	4	1
JNCOs/Privates positive	633	506	513	623	790

Early Intervention Programme (Drugs) (EIP(D))	*[1]2003 (September-December)*	*2004*	*2005*	*2006 (January-March)*
JNCOs/Privates on programme	37	113	101	43
JNCOs/Privates retained in the Service	99 retained in total			

[1] The EIP(D) commenced in September 2003.

No officers/cadets or WO/SNCOs have attended the programme. Final decisions are still pending upon 94 individuals as to whether they will be retained following completion of the EIP(D).

Of those retained after successfully completing the programme, 14 JNCOs/Privates have subsequently tested positive and have been discharged.

Royal Air Force

Compulsory drug testing	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Officers/cadets positive	0	0	0	0	0
WO/NCOs positive	3	2	0	1	3
Airmen positive	15	8	20	23	18

One RAF airwoman attended the EIP(D) in 2004. The individual has been retained.

Equal Pay

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps are undertaken within his Department to ensure that women are obtaining equal pay to men doing work of equal value. [65846]

Mr. Touhig: In line with all Departments and agencies, the Ministry of Defence conducted an equal pay audit in 2003. We were satisfied that there was no direct discrimination within our civilian pay systems. We do however have very long pay scales which can distort average salaries. We have monitored the situation annually throughout the MOD's four-year pay deal from 2002 to 2005 and we intend to shorten the pay scales as part of this year's pay deal.

Pay rates for service personnel are recommended by the independent Armed Forces Pay Review Body (AFPRB). In making their recommendations, the AFPRB is kept informed of the impact of current employment legislation on service personnel through the evidence it receives.

Hospitals (Military Personnel)

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many hospital wards in the UK are reserved for military personnel only. [67000]

Mr. Touhig: There are no hospital wards in the UK that are reserved for military personnel only.

Military Medals

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what military medals have been issued by the Government since 8 May 1945 for which eligibility may still be claimed; and *(a)* on what date and *(b)* for what they were issued. [67502]

Mr. Touhig: There have been 51 campaign related military medals issued by the British Government since 8 May 1945 that can still be claimed. A detailed list is shown in the following tables.

World War II

Medal	*From*	*To*
1939 to 1945 Star	3 September 1939	2 September 1945
Atlantic Star	3 September 1939	8 May 1945
Air Crew Europe Star	3 September 1939	5 June 1944
Africa Star	10 June 1940	12 May 1943
Pacific Star	8 December 1941	2 September 1945
Burma Star	11 December 1941	2 September 1945
Italy Star	11 June 1943	8 May 1945
France and Germany Star	6 June 1944	8 May 1945
Defence Medal	3 September 1939	2 September 1945
War Medal 1939 to 1945	3 September 1939	2 September 1945
India Service Medal 1939 to 1945	3 September 1939	2 September 1945

General Service Medal (GSM) 1918 to 1962 awarded since World War II

Medal	*From*	*To*
South East Asia 1945–46	3 September 1945	30 November 1946
Bomb and Mine Clearance 1945–1949	3 September 1945	31 December 1949
Minesweeping (Naval GSM)	3 September 1945	30 September 1951
Bomb and Mine Clearance 1945–1956	3 September 1945	10 November 1956
Palestine 1945–1948	27 September 1945	30 June 1948
Malaya	16 June 1948	31 July 1960
Yangtze (Naval GSM)	20 April 1949	20 April 1949
HMS Consort (Naval GSM)	20 April 1949	21 April 1949
HMS London (Naval GSM)	21 April 1949	21 April 1949
HMS Black Swan (Naval GSM)	21 April 1949	21 April 1949
HMS Amethyst (Naval GSM)	21 April 1949	21 April 1949
Canal Zone	16 October 1951	19 October 1954
Africa GSM with Clasp Kenya	21 October 1952	17 November 1956
Bomb and Mine Clearance Mediterranean Clasp 1955–1960	1 January 1955	31 December 1960
Cyprus	1 April 1955	18 April 1959
Near East	31 October 1956	22 December 1956
Arabian Peninsula	1 January 1957	30 June 1960
Brunei	8 December 1962	23 December 1962

General Service Medal 1962 awarded

Medal	*From*	*To*
Borneo	24 December 1962	11 August 1966
Radfan	25 April 1964	31 July 1964
South Arabia	1 August 1964	30 November 1967
Malay Peninsula	17 August 1964	11 August 1966
South Vietnam	24 December 1962	29 May 1964
Northern Ireland	14 August 1969	Ongoing
Dhofar	1 October 1969	3 September 1976
Lebanon	7 February 1983	9 March 1984
Mine Clearance (Gulf of Suez)	15 August 1984	15 October 1984
Gulf	17 November 1986	28 February 1989
Kuwait	8 March 1991	30 September 1991
Northern Iraq/Southern Turkey	6 April 1991	17 July 1991
Air Operations Iraq RESINATE South	16 July 1991	18 March 2003
Air Operations Iraq RESINATE North	16 July 1991	30 April 2003

Medals for individual campaigns or operations

Medal	*From*	*To*
Korea Medal	2 July 1950	27 July 1953
Rhodesia Medal	1 December 1979	20 March 1980
South Atlantic Medal	2 April 1982	12 July 1982
Gulf Medal	2 August 1990	7 March 1991
Iraq Medal	20 January 2003	Ongoing

Operational Service Medal with ribbon from 1 January 2000

Medal	*From*	*To*
Sierra Leone	5 May 2000	31 July 2002
Afghanistan (Op Veritas)	11 September 2001	Ongoing

Accumulated Campaign Service Medal

Medal	*From*	*To*
Accumulated Campaign Service Medal	14 August 1969	Ongoing

War Pensions

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many war pensions have been successfully claimed in each of the last five years; and how many of these were awarded for *(a)* physical injury and *(b)* mental health conditions. [55609]

Mr. Touhig *[holding answer 2 March 2006]*: It is not possible to provide the data broken down by physical injury and mental health conditions as there are too many individual cases, some with multiple conditions, to practically assign them to the above categories.

However, we can provide the number of cases where an ongoing war pension was awarded in each of the past five years for the 12 month period 1 October to the following 30 September for each of the last five years.

	New pensions awarded
2000–01	2,585
2001–02	2,440
2002–03	1,965
2003–04	1,800
2004–05	1,670

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Children's Services

Mr. Kemp: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission (1) what *(a)* nursery and crèche places and *(b)* other facilities are provided for the children of employees of the House of Commons; [67277]

(2) what recent representations the Commission has received on the provision of nursery and crèche places on the House of Commons estate. [67295]

Nick Harvey: The House provides child care vouchers in respect of children of staff of the House and Members' staff up to the age of 12. In addition a subsidised summer play scheme has run for several years where staff of the House and Members' staff can reserve places for their children during the school holiday period. The Commission decided in 2003 that a voucher scheme was preferable to an on-site nursery or crèche facilities because of its greater flexibility and the fact that most parents prefer young children to be cared for at or near home.

The Commission has had no recent representations other than a question asked on 24 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1303–04, by the hon. Member for Cardiff, North (Julie Morgan).

Parking Spaces

Jim Dowd: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission how many parking spaces on the House of Commons estate are reserved for specific individuals; which individuals are concerned; where the spaces are; and why each such space is provided. [67031]

Nick Harvey: There are 15 parking spaces reserved for specific individuals on the Parliamentary Estate.

In Speaker's Court the following seven individuals each have a reserved space allocated to them to enable them to fulfil their duties: the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, the Speaker of the House, the

Leader of the House, the Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the Liberal Democrats, and the Government Chief Whip.

There are a further eight spaces reserved for residents of the estate; Mr. Speaker has three such spaces reserved in Speaker's Court, the Clerk of the House, the Serjeant at Arms and the Speaker's Secretary each have a reserved space allocated to them by Richmond Terrace and the Head Office Keeper and Senior Office Keeper each have a reserved space allocated to them within Commissioners Yard, Norman Shaw buildings.

TRANSPORT

A1079

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what average number of vehicles used the A1079 road each day in the latest period for which figures are available; how many vehicles the A1079 was originally designed to carry; and if he will make a statement. [66530]

Dr. Ladyman: The latest available figures relate to 2004, when the estimated average number of vehicles using the A1079 road each day was 15,300. The A1079 is managed by the local highways authority and the Department does not hold information about the number of vehicles it was designed to carry.

A6

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to make a decision on the A6 Bypass South East Manchester multi-modal study road scheme in Stockport. [67248]

Dr. Ladyman: We are currently considering the scheme appraisal for the SEMMMS New Relief Road. We are also considering advice from the North West region on the priority it attaches to the conventional funding element of this and other schemes in the North West. We plan to make an announcement in due course.

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the potential for displacement of traffic onto the M60 Motorway between junction 25 and the M60/A57 interchange as a result of the proposed A6 Bypass road scheme. [67252]

Dr. Ladyman: An outline assessment has been undertaken into the potential impacts of the A6 Hazel Grove Bypass and other South East Manchester multi modal study road schemes on the M60 and the M60/M67/A57 Denton interchange. The Greater Manchester local authorities are in the process of updating their transport model which will allow a more detailed appraisal of these and other impacts to be assessed.

Airport Security

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps his Department is taking to ensure that those involved with terrorist groups do not obtain security clearance enabling them to work at airports. [67672]

Derek Twigg: The Department has in place a regulation that requires that persons who wish to be employed to undertake security duties at UK airports must obtain security clearance, to counter-terrorist check (CTC) level. CTC clearance covers a check of police and Security Service records, a check of the person's identity, and employment/education references for the past five years. Non-security staff wishing to be employed airside at a UK airport are required to undergo all of these checks except that of Security Service records.

Car Tax Forms

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport under what circumstances a sub-post office is allowed to hold the V14 reclaim of car tax form. [67762]

Dr. Ladyman: In order to hold V14 forms, Post Office branches must also be authorised to sell motor vehicle licences (MVLs) to the customers on behalf of DVLA.

Over 4500 Post Office branches provide the MVL services and each of these is authorised to hold the V14 form.

Driving Standards Agency

Mr. Crausby: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many complaints the Driving Standards Agency has received from participants in the motorcycle theory tests. [66966]

Dr. Ladyman: In 2005–06 the Driving Standards Agency (DSA) recorded 2,310 complaints relating to the theory test. The recorded data cannot be broken down by driving licence category.

Fire Precautions (Sub-surface Railway Stations) Regulations

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent discussions his Department has had with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister regarding the Fire Precautions (Sub-surface Railway Stations) Regulations 1989. [66352]

Derek Twigg: Officials in the Department have been kept fully informed of the progress being made by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to reform general fire safety legislation.

Flights (Domestic/International)

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* domestic and *(b)* international flights originated from the UK in each of the last five years. [67037]

Derek Twigg: Information on domestic and international flights originating from the UK for the last five years is published in Table 2.2a of the Department's annual publication, Transport Statistics Great Britain 2005 edition, which is also available on the Department for Transport website.

Government Car Service

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Lewes (Norman Baker) of 13 March 2006, *Official*

Report, column 1886W, on the Government Car Service, what make and model of car has been made available to each Government Minister; how many hours a day a chauffeur is available to them; what the monthly cost is of this provision; and how much is accounted for by *(a)* running costs of the vehicle, *(b)* costs of the chauffeur and *(c)* all other costs. [63981]

Dr. Ladyman *[pursuant to the reply, 19 April 2006, Official Report, c. 701–2W]:* The total contracted cost of providing ministerial transport in 2005–06 was £5,783,200. All other figures given in my reply are correct.

Highways Construction Works

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of *(a)* the prevailing inflation rate for highways construction works and *(b)* the causes of the level of such inflation. [66269]

Dr. Ladyman: The Highways Agency use the ROADCON and ROCOS indices published by the DTI for assessing the impact of historic inflation on highway works. As these indices are published in arrears, the Highways Agency has commissioned further work to provide an assessment of current inflation and a forward look.

Inflation in highway construction is driven both by demand and the costs of basic resources for carrying out the works.

Intelligent Speed Adaptation

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what research his Department has funded on intelligent speed adaptation technology on roads. [66270]

Dr. Ladyman: A research project into external vehicle speed control (the technology now more commonly known as intelligent speed adaptation or ISA) was carried out on behalf of the Department for Transport, local government and the regions between 1997 and 2000. The results are available on the Department for Transport website and copies of the executive summary have been placed in the Library.

A further project into the longer term effects of intelligent seed adaptation on driver behaviour began in 2001 and is expected to end in December 2006. The reports will be available when the project has been completed.

An additional project entitled "Intelligent Speed Adaptation Research (National and International)" supports the main ISA project and allows for the provision of expert technical advice on ISA, on an ad hoc basis, as the need arises.

The Department also took part in "SpeedAlert"—a European project which looked at issues surrounding the implementation of speed advice systems. The consortium's final report has been completed and copies placed in the Library.

Level Crossings

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what action he is taking *(a)* to remove panel gapping on railway level crossings and *(b)* to improve level crossing safety generally; and if he will make a statement. [65704]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 26 April 2006]:* Panel gapping removal at railway crossings is an operational matter for Network Rail.

Network Rail and the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR), the safety regulator for the railway, are both actively engaged in work to make level crossings safer and reduce risk. The ORR has a policy for reducing the risks which focuses on:

Ensuring that the railway industry is itself doing everything that is reasonably practical to ensure that all those who use level crossings are not exposed to unacceptable risks to their health and safety.

Working with Government Departments, other agencies and stakeholders to maintain and where possible improve the standards of safety for level crossing users.

Seeking the closure or upgrade of level crossings where this is reasonably practicable and not supporting the construction of new level crossings other than in exceptional circumstances.

Martin Centre for Architectural and Urban Studies

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what funding his Department and its agencies have provided to the Cambridge University Martin Centre for Architectural and Urban Studies on research into the Sustainability of Land Use and Transport in Outer Neighbourhoods; and what submissions it has received so far from the research body. [66651]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department has no record of having provided any funding to this organisation, or of having received any submissions from it.

Media Monitoring and Training

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much agencies of his Department spent on *(a)* media monitoring, *(b)* media training and *(c)* marketing in each year since 1997; and how much his Department spent on (i) marketing in each year since 2002–03 and (ii) (A) media monitoring and (B) media training in 2005–06. [63662]

Derek Twigg: The requested figures are set out as follows. However, records of costs from 1997–98 until 2001–02 are not readily available due to departmental and Agency re-organisations. Figures for 2005–06 are provisional outturn figures subject to audit.

DfT Agencies

				£000 *(rounded)*
	2002–03	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06*
Media monitoring	151	148	200	174
Media training	31	53	97	16
Marketing	11,096	16,807	14,496	13,740

DfT Central

			£000 (rounded)	
	2002–03	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06*
Media monitoring	210	206	205	306
Media training	2	2	9	0
Marketing	17,600	16,400	16,200	20,400

Marketing costs include campaign advertising and wider publicity.

In each year reported, over 80 per cent. of DfT central's expenditure marketing expenditure was on the 'THINK! road safety' campaign.

Motorway Signage

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his answer of 1 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 730W, on motorway signage, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that information provided on variable message signs is current and accurate after functions are transferred to regional control centres. [66980]

Dr. Ladyman: The Highways Agency is responsible for about 2200 Variable Message Signs (VMS) on England's motorway and trunk road network.

About 350 'information' VMS are located at key decision points (i.e. before major junctions). They are used to inform drivers about major incidents and advise diversion routes. These VMS are operated by the National Traffic Control Centre (NTCC) in Birmingham. The NTCC gathers information on conditions on the network from its control centre in Birmingham. This is a 24/7/365 operation.

About 1850 'safety' VMS are located mostly on motorways to manage traffic locally in the event of incidents and emergencies, and to provide warnings of slow moving or stationary traffic in order to protect queuing traffic. Operation of these signs is currently transferring from the police to the Highways Agency's Regional Control Centres (RCCs).

There are seven RCCs which monitor conditions on the motorway and trunk road network within their regions of England and allocate resources such as Traffic Officers to manage incidents. They set messages on VMS for safety reasons, to inform drivers and to assist with incident management. Incidents (and VMS settings) are monitored from control rooms and messages displayed on VMS are reviewed and removed as necessary. Currently only one RCC, the West Midlands RCC, is working at full capacity and it has an established system for monitoring consistency and timeliness of sign setting to support the Agency's goal of demonstrably improving the accuracy of VMS. The system involves checking timeliness of response both when incidents are identified and when cleared. Results are used to identify and implement improvements.

Noise Limits (Airports)

John Penrose: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the maximum *(a)* safe and *(b)* desirable limits on peak aircraft noise (Lmax dBA) for airports; and what the existing equivalent continuous noise level (Leq) limits are. [66968]

Derek Twigg: The Department for Transport has not made any general estimate of safe or desirable limits on peak aircraft noise for all airports.

The departure noise limits at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted, set by the Secretary of State, are 94 dBA Lmax between 0700 and 2300; 89 dBA between 2300 and 2330, and 0600 and 0700; and 87 dBA in the night quota period, 2330–0600. The noise limits relate to a fixed reference distance 6.5 km from start-of-roll. The full reasons for applying these limits are set out in the document 'Noise limits for aircraft departing from Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted airports: decision of December 2000' which is available in the House Library.

At other airports noise management is the responsibility of the airport operator. All civil aircraft operating in the UK must comply with relevant international noise certification requirements.

The Department for Transport has not set limits on equivalent continuous noise level (Leq). However, based on research, the Government use various levels of Leq as indicators of disturbance or of potential annoyance, or as criteria for mitigation measures, including advice for land use planning purposes. For example, the Government use 57 dBA Leq as the level of daytime noise marking the approximate onset of significant community annoyance.

Daytime noise contour criteria for mitigation schemes were set out in the 'Future of Air Transport' White Paper. In particular, we expect operators of larger airports (those with over 50,000 air transport movements per year) to offer relocation assistance to households subject to daytime noise of more than 69 dBA Leq and to offer acoustic insulation to non-domestic noise-sensitive buildings, such as schools and hospitals, exposed to daytime noise levels of 63 dBA Leq or more.

John Penrose: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether *(a)* measurements of and *(b)* limits on peak aircraft noise (Lmax dBA) are in place for airports other than Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted. [66969]

Derek Twigg: The Department for Transport does not collect comprehensive information about noise control measures at airports other than Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted. However, existing practice at a number of larger airports is set out as follows:

Manchester airport sets departure noise limits of 92 dBA Lmax in the day and 85 dBA Lmax at night (2300–0659).

Birmingham international airport sets departure noise limits of 92 dBA Lmax in the day and 87 dBA Lmax at night (2330–0600).

London Luton airport sets departure noise limits of 94 dBA in the day and 87 dBA at night (2330–0600 Monday to Saturday, 2330- 0700 Sunday).

These noise limits apply at the noise monitors and departing aircraft are monitored against the relevant limit. Airports also have noise and track-keeping systems, which are required to assess breaches of departure noise limits, in place.

John Penrose: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he plans *(a)* to introduce new and *(b)* to change existing (i) measurements of and (ii) limits on peak aircraft noise (Lmax DBA) for airports. [67042]

Derek Twigg: The Government sets departure noise limits at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted airports which are designated for the purposes of section 78 of the Civil Aviation Act 1982. We will consider exercising similar powers at other airports if there is evidence that a major noise problem is not being dealt with adequately through local controls; otherwise, such limits are the responsibility of the airport operator.

The present noise limits at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted have applied since early 2001 and have been subject to further review. The results were published in the Civil Aviation Authority's Environmental Research and Consultancy Department (ERCD) Report 0207, "Departure Noise Limits and Monitoring Arrangements at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted Airports", in April 2003. The main findings were summarised in our April 2003 consultation paper on night flying restrictions, together with a broad indication of how we would take them into account. This has been taken forward in the Stage One and Stage Two consultation papers on night flying restrictions published in July 2004 and June 2005 respectively.

In the Stage Two consultation, we proposed possible changes to the departure noise limit applying in the night shoulder periods (11 pm to 11.30 pm and 6 am to 7 am). We also proposed that two additional noise monitors should be sited at Heathrow. We will announce our conclusions in due course. Copies of all the consultation papers and of ERCD 0207 were placed in the House Library.

Crossrail

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether a cost analysis has been carried out for the use of the Old Oak Common Depot and the Ilford Depot as part of the Crossrail project. [67080]

Derek Twigg: Such cost analyses form part of the further study being undertaken regarding the depot strategy for Crossrail. The results will be made available before petitioners objecting to the proposed depot at Romford are due to be heard by the Select Committee.

Oyster Cards

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to give train operating companies who are not at the end of a franchise incentives to incorporate pre-pay Oyster cards. [64469]

Derek Twigg: The South Western franchise will require the successful bidder to accept Oyster, including pre-pay, in Zones 1–6 and to retail and enable an ITSO (Integrated Transport Smartcard Organisation) based smartcard throughout the franchise. We have made it clear that we will adopt this approach with each of the London train operating companies upon franchise renewal. This decision on technology has given a firm foundation from which train operators and suppliers can move forward.

We do not believe that it should be necessary to wait for a full round of franchise renewals before Oyster pre-pay is generally accepted by Train Operator Companies in London. We believe that this clear policy will allow train operators to adopt Oyster pre-pay sooner rather than later and have asked the industry for their further proposals.

Press Offices

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much has been spent by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies on press offices in each year since 1997. [63982]

Derek Twigg: Records of costs from 1997–98 until 2001–02 are not readily available due to departmental and Agency re-organisations and the information could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Figures for 2005–06 are provisional outturn figures subject to audit.

(a) The cost of DfT Central's press office (including pay and non-pay costs) for the years 2002–03 to 2005–06 is in the following table.

£ million

	2002–03	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06*
DfT(C) Pay	0.85	0.70	0.70	0.77
DfT(C) Non-pay	0.81	0.80	0.83	0.76

(b) Press office activities in most agencies are not carried out by staff or units solely dedicated to this purpose. Full records of costs are therefore not readily available for press office functions alone. However, agency press office function pay costs have been estimated for the years 2002–03 to 2005–06 in the following table.

DfT agencies (£ millions)

2002–03	*0.49*
2003–04	0.54
2004–05	0.62
2005–06	0.70

Road Construction

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he will make announcements on *(a)* the regional funding allocations and *(b)* new major schemes. [68100]

Dr. Ladyman: The Government are now considering the advice provided by the regions and will set out in due course how it will be utilised and developed upon in the comprehensive Spending Review. Decisions on new major schemes will be made as soon as possible within the context of the Government's overall response.

Road Pricing

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the costs have been of testing pay-as-you-go road pricing schemes. [67090]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department's DIRECTS (Demonstration of Interoperable Road-user End-to-end Charging and Telematics System) Project, which has just completed its 1-year trial in Leeds, has a current project value of £22.9 million. Within the project, three

out of seven different On-Board Unit designs contained example pay-as-you-go solutions. The costs of this component of testing cannot be separated out from the total.

Seatbelts

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what consultations his Department undertook between *(a)* 1976 and 1979 and *(b)* 1980 and 1986 on seatbelt wearing; if he will place in the Library the results of such consultations; and if he will make a statement. [66866]

Dr. Ladyman: Information is not readily available on consultations during these periods.

Severn River Crossings plc.

Jessica Morden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress has been made in discussions with Severn River Crossings plc. on allowing credit card payments for Severn crossing tolls. [66887]

Dr. Ladyman: Discussions are continuing with Severn River Crossings plc. and financial institutions about the legislative, technical, operational and financial issues involved.

Utility Companies

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what research his Department has undertaken into the scope for use of trenchless technology to reduce delays caused by utilities digging up roads. [65827]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department undertook some preliminary research into the use of trenchless technology in 2002, but no particular conclusions were reached and work has been halted.

Alison Seabeck: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what research his Department has undertaken to identify best practice among utility companies in the use of trenchless technology. [65828]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department for Transport did some preliminary work in 2002 to identify best practice on the use of trenchless technology, but no further work has been done.

Vandalism (Railways)

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many incidents of vandalism there have been in each year since 1997 on *(a)* trains, *(b)* stations, *(c)* railway tracks and *(d)* railway depots, broken down by police authority area. [62630]

Derek Twigg: This information requested has been placed in the Libraries of the House.

Wellingborough-London

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will bring forward plans to increase capacity on the Wellingborough to London railway line. [67033]

Derek Twigg: The Midland Main Line & East Midlands Route Utilisation Strategy (RUS) was published March 2004. Taking into account the proposed housing growth in the area, the Strategy's recommendations include running additional peak trains between London St. Pancras to Kettering as a better way of serving the North Northamptonshire to London market. The Department is developing the specification for the East Midlands franchise which will take account of the RUS's recommendations. A public consultation on the specification will be held this summer.

MINISTER FOR WOMEN

Traditionally Male Careers

Jim Sheridan: To ask the Minister for Women and Equality what discussions she has had with business organisations on encouraging school girls to consider careers in sectors which have until recently been seen as traditionally male. [68059]

Meg Munn: I have regular meetings with business organisations and use these opportunities to encourage them to work with their members to ensure that they do what they can to encourage girls to consider careers in non-traditional sectors.

The recent Women and Work Commission report, "Shaping a Fairer Future", identified the necessity of ensuring that girls and boys are not influenced by stereotypical ideas about occupations when considering their subject and career options. They recommend action to ensure that teacher training emphasises the need to challenge gender stereotypes, guidance to pre-school teachers about how to avoid gender stereotypes, and better careers guidance and work experience programmes which would enable girls to get a true picture of the rewards and challenges associated with different careers.

The Commission will reconvene in early 2007 to consider the Government's response to their report.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Academies

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much her Department has spent to date to promote academies; and how many people are employed *(a)* in her Department and *(b)* as consultants for that purpose. [64687]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested in this question relating to costs of promotion is not held in a form that could be retrieved except at disproportionate cost—the term 'promotion' could be interpreted to mean any activity in relation to the Academies programme and the scope of the question covers the six years the programme has been operating.

Within the Academies Group in the DfES there are as at today's date 81 staff and 19 consultants, these staff carry out a range of functions including policy, delivery, communications and educational support.

Bookstart

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what is the cost of Bookstart since the programme began; and how many books have been purchased so far under the scheme; [66742]

(2) how many books have been *(a)* delivered to and *(b)* collected by parents under the Bookstart scheme; and how many are awaiting collection. [66741]

Maria Eagle *[holding answer 27 April 2006]:* The cost of Bookstart since the programme began in 1992 is £20.72 million, of which £12.91 million is Government funding.

Since 1999, the Bookstart programme has purchased 13.1 million books and given more than 11.6 million books to parents. The difference in these two figures represents a rolling level of stock across the UK. We cannot further break down these figures. Pre-1999 figures are not available.

Each local authority conducts an end of year stocktake to estimate how much stock remains to be carried over to the next year. At the end of 2005–06, the estimated carry over figure was 130,000 or approximately 600 books per scheme.

British Edutrust Foundation

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what *(a)* meetings and *(b)* correspondence Ministers have had with the British Edutrust Foundation. [65277]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* Ministers have had no meetings or correspondence with the British Edutrust Foundation. Lord Adonis has met with Lord Bhatia, who is the recently appointed chair of the foundation, on a number of occasions as listed as follows:

Friday 28 October 2005 at an academies event in Bradford with leaders of Bradford Council.

Friday 11 November at Windsor Castle where Lord Adonis gave the key note speech at the British Muslim conference.

Three meetings at the Department on Wednesday 23 November 2005, Thursday 15 December 2005 and Tuesday 24 January 2006

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when the decision was taken that Rhodesway school in Bradford would become an academy sponsored by the British Edutrust Foundation. [65278]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* Ministerial clearance was given on 16 March for the release of funding for the feasibility phase to enable the British Edutrust Foundation to develop plans to establish a new academy to meet the local learning needs in Rhodesway in Bradford.

Child Protection

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills on what date she replied to the letter from Norfolk county council of 12 December 2005 regarding Paul Reeve. [47277]

Ruth Kelly: My Department received correspondence from Norfolk county council dated 21 December 2005 and acknowledged receipt, as requested, on 22 December 2005. My officials responded in full to Norfolk county council on 7 February 2006.

Departmental Advertising Costs

Mr. Donohoe: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much *(a)* her Department and *(b)* its agencies spent on advertising for job vacancies in each of the last five years. [65967]

Maria Eagle *[holding answer 25 April 2006]:* The information requested is not collected centrally in the format requested and can only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

When the business needs of the Department require an external recruitment campaign each case is considered separately. External recruitment agencies, drawn from the Cabinet Office Central Framework Agreement, support delivery of all campaigns based on a set of agreed criteria.

Education Maintenance Allowance

Stephen Hesford: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in Wirral, West have received the education maintenance allowance. [62353]

Maria Eagle: This is a matter for the Learning and Skills Council, who operate Education Maintenance Allowances for the DfES and hold the information about take-up of the scheme. Mark Haysom, the council's chief executive has written to the hon. Gentleman with the information requested and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 25 April 2006:

I am writing in response to your parliamentary question that asked "how many children in Wirral West have received Education Maintenance Allowance?"

Information on the number of young people who have applied, enrolled and received EMA is available at local education authority (LEA) level, but not at constituency level. By the end of February 2006, 3,294 young people in the Wirral LEA area had received one or more EMA payments in the academic year 2005/06.

I hope this information is helpful and addresses your question.

First Level 3

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many 19 to 25 year olds are studying for a first level 3 in *(a)* each region and *(b)* England. [66758]

Bill Rammell *[holding answer 27 April 2006]:* The following table shows the number of 19–25 year olds who were studying for a full NVQ level 3 or equivalent qualification[1] in Further Education and work based learning in the academic year 2004/05, by region.

[1] Does not include Access to HE qualifications or wholly privately funded study aims.

Region	*Full Level 3 learners*
North East	9,177
North West	23,830
Yorkshire and Humberside	15,205
East Midlands	13,603

Region	Full Level 3 learners
West Midlands	19,438
East of England	12,556
Greater London	12,687
South East	20,753
South West	16,942
Address unknown	3,230
England	147,421

Source:
Individualised Learner Record, 2004/05

We estimate that of the 147 thousand 19–25 year olds in England who were studying for a full level 3 in 2004/05, 70,000 were studying for a first full level 3 qualification. We do not have estimates for 'firstness' at a regional level.

Further/Higher Education

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of secondary school pupils went on to further or higher education in *(a)* Taunton constituency and *(b)* England in each year since 1997. [64347]

Bill Rammell: Figures on participation in further education by young people are not available for parliamentary constituencies, but are available for local authorities—including Somerset, 2004 is the latest available year. The figures are shown in the following table.

Percentage of 16 year olds in full-time education

	Somerset	England
1997	72	70
1998	73	70
1999	73	72
2000	73	71
2001	72	71
2002	75	72
2003	76	72
2004	75	73

The latest available figures on participation in higher education by constituency were published by the Higher Education Funding Council for England in January 2005 in "Young Participation in England", which is available from their website at: http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2005/05_03/ This report shows participation rates for young people who enter higher education aged 18 or 19, disaggregated by constituency, for the years 1997 to 2000. The figures for Taunton, and the comparable figure for England, are shown in the following table. HEFCE have not produced participation figures beyond 2000.

Young participation rate (YPR (A)) in higher education

	1997	1998	1999	2000
Year cohort aged 18 in Taunton	1,230	1,290	1,270	1,190
Participation rate for Taunton[1] (percentage	36	35	29	35
Participation rate for England (percentage)	29.2	28.8	29.2	29.9

[1] Participation rates for constituencies are reported to the nearest whole number.
Source:
Higher Education Funding Council for England.

The total numbers of entrants from Taunton for each year since 2001/02 are given in the following table:

Entrants to undergraduate courses from Taunton

	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05
Aged 18–19	480	490	460	495
Aged over 19	540	535	585	610
Total entrants	1,020	1,025	1,050	1,105

Note:
Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 5, so components may not sum to totals
Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

The Department uses the Higher Education Initial Participation Rate (HEIPR) to assess progress on increasing first-time participation of English students aged 18–30 in higher education towards 50 per cent.: the latest provisional figure for 2004/05 is 42 per cent. The HEIPR is not calculated at constituency level.

Headteachers (Age)

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average age is of a head teacher in England. [66740]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 27 April 2006]:* Provisional estimates show that in March 2003, the latest information available, the average age of full-time head teachers in maintained schools in England was 49.8 years.

Learning and Skills Council

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the funding for the Learning and Skills Council for adult learning was in *(a)* 2004–05, *(b)* 2005–06 and *(c)* 2006–07; and what factors she took into account when allocating funds. [51570]

Bill Rammell: The total overall spend on all adult programmes for 2004–05 was reported in the Learning and Skills Council's (LSC) Annual Report and Accounts as £2,999 million. Our planned funding for the LSC's major programmes only for adults for 2005–06 is £2,942 million and for 2006–07 is £2,946 million. Estimated spend on smaller programmes and experience of the previous two years suggests final funding for adults will be in the order of £3.2 billion each year. On 1 October 2005 the Government set out their priorities for post-16 education and training. This established our priorities for the learning and skills sector and the impact on funding in 2006–07 and 2007–08. While overall spend on adult learning will remain broadly constant the pattern of that learning will change. To meet our national priorities, we need to shift the pattern so that we provide a greater number of longer and more expensive courses for adults, to equip them with the range of skills they need for employability and further progression to higher levels of training. We have consistently said that public funding alone cannot and should not pay for all the training necessary in a competitive economy. To support this shift, there has to

be a new balance of responsibilities between Government, employers and learners so we do not accept that withdrawal of LSC funding means that courses automatically have to close. Where provision is valued by learners, where it is high quality, and where learners and employers are prepared to pay more, we expect colleges to consider providing courses on a full-cost recovery basis.

The Department's guidance to the LSC on the deployment of its funding allocations is outlined in the Secretary of State's annual grant letter to the LSC Chairman and for 2006 to 2008 in Priorities for Success the document that sets out our funding strategy for the next two years. This document is available on the LSC's website.

List 99

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people *(a)* are on List 99 and *(b)* have been added to the List in each of the last five years; and if she will make a statement. [44414]

Ruth Kelly: There were 4,045 people on list 99 when I made my first statement about arrangements for vetting those working with children on 19 January 2006. List 99 is continuously updated and the Department does not collect this data on an annual basis. The number added to the list in each of the last 5 years is as follows:

	Number added to List 99
2001	169
2002	135
2003	219
2004	321
2005	525

Newly Qualified Teachers

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average starting salary was for newly qualified teachers in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in Essex in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available. [64986]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested is not available below Government office region level.

The following table provides the average salary of newly qualified teachers in maintained nursery and primary and secondary schools in the East of England, 1995 to 2004, the latest information available.

The average salary for newly qualified teachers[1] to full-time teaching in maintained nursery and primary and secondary schools in the East of England, March 1995 to 2004

	Average salary (£)			
	Nursery/Primary		*Secondary*	
	Actual	*Adjusted[2]*	*Actual*	*Adjusted[2]*
1995	13,140	16,560	13,300	16,770
1996	13,660	16,740	13,930	17,070
1997	14,210	16,830	14,600	17,280
1998	14,680	16,880	15,010	17,260
1999	15,290	17,130	15,600	17,490
2000	15,800	17,360	16,170	17,770
2001	16,310	17,690	16,710	18,130
2002	17,570	18,600	17,980	19,040
2003[3]	18,100	18,570	18,870	19,370
2004[3]	18,630	18,630	19,490	19,490

[1] Includes new entrants to maintained schools in England, gaining qualified teacher status (QTS) in England and Wales during the calendar year before the year they are included. Those gaining QTS via employment based routes are excluded.
[2] Figures adjusted to 2004 prices are based on Her Majesty's Treasury GDP deflators.
[3] Provisional estimates.
Note:
Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
Source:
Database of Teacher Records

Official Visits

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the towns in *(a)* England and Wales, *(b)* Scotland and *(c)* the European Union that she has visited in an official capacity in each month since 1997; what the purpose was in each case; what the (i) date, (ii) time, (iii) location and (iv) duration was of each meeting; if she will place in the Library the text of any speech made; and if she will make a statement. [65003]

Maria Eagle: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only by incurring disproportionate cost.

All ministerial visits are conducted in accordance with the 'Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers'. The Government publish on an annual basis, lists of overseas travel by Cabinet Ministers costing over £500 which will include visits to the European Union. Lists covering 1997 to 2005 are available in the Libraries of the House. Information for 2005–06 is currently being compiled and will be published when it is ready.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make it her policy when placing material in the Library in response to a parliamentary question to supply a copy of the material to the hon. Member who tabled the question; and if she will make a statement. [64202]

Maria Eagle: Government best practice is that departments should supply a copy of material placed in the Library in response to a parliamentary question to the hon. Member who tabled it.

School Visits

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many schools *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials in her Department have visited in each month since 1997; for what purposes in each case; if she will list the (i) date, (ii) time, (iii) location and (iv) duration of each meeting; and if she will make a statement. [64987]

Maria Eagle: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only by incurring disproportionate cost.

Special Needs (Funding)

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will set out the funding for *(a)* special schools and *(b)* children with special needs for each of the past five years and the forecast allocations for each of the next five years. [65937]

Maria Eagle *[holding answer 27 April 2006]:* Planned expenditure by local authorities in England on the provision of education for children with special educational needs and the funding available for delegation to special schools after provision has been made for retained items is included in the attached table. Forecast future allocations for special schools or for children with special educational needs are not available.

The Education (Budget Statements) (England) Regulations: Budgeted net expenditure on the provision of education for children with special educational[1,2] needs since 2001–02; as reported by local authorities[3] as at 24 April 2006.

	Budgeted net expenditure on the provision of education for children with special educational needs[1,2]	*Cash terms[3] (£) Of which: Individual schools budget (ISB) for special schools[4]*
2001–02	2,908,380,000	939,548,000
2002–03	3,038,661,000	1,006,662,000
2003–04	3,466,180,000	1,086,666,000
2004–05	3,774,757,000	1,159,564,000
2005–06	4,120,549,000	1,243,204,000

[1] Includes planned expenditure on the provision for pupils with statements and the provision for non-statemented pupils with SEN, support for inclusion, inter authority recoupment, fees for pupils at independent special schools and abroad, educational psychology service, local authority functions in relation to child protection, therapies and other health related services, parent partnership, guidance and information, the monitoring of SEN provision and inclusion administration, assessment and co-ordination. Also included is the funding delegated to nursery, primary and secondary schools identified as "notional SEN" and the individual schools budget (ISB) for special schools.

[2] Funding delegated to LA maintained nursery, primary and secondary schools are only indicative of the amount that might be spent by schools on SEN.

[3] Figures are rounded to the nearest £1,000.

[4] Within the schools budget, the amount available for delegation to special schools after provision has been made for retained items is known as the Individual Schools Budget (ISB). Consequently the ISB for special schools does not include any expenditure on special schools which is planned to be retained centrally by the local authority. The ISB for special schools will also include some general education costs for pupils with SEN in addition to those costs specifically for SEN.

Student Loans

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what proportion of outstanding student loans are in accounts where debt recovery is inactive *(a)* in total and *(b)* where no repayments have been made over the last three years; and what the total value of such loans is in each case. [63517]

Bill Rammell: Debt recovery is not inactive on any accounts; the Student Loans Company (SLC) take appropriate action to collect repayments on all accounts.

There are 234,600 UK borrowers with a loan balance of £754 million with publicly-owned mortgage-style loans past the statutory repayment due date (SRDD)[1] who had made no repayments in the last three years (as at 31 March 2005). They represent 36 per cent. of borrowers who had loans past SRDD during the three-year period.

93 per cent. of those who made no repayments were not required to repay for the whole three-year period, because their gross annual income was below the relevant earning threshold. The remainder were subject to the SLC arrears recovery process. This includes several attempts to contact the borrower by letter and telephone, and where necessary passing the case to SLC's internal specialist tracing or arrears collection agents.

Ultimately the borrower may be contacted by an external debt collection agency and/or face legal action.

Data is not yet available on income-contingent loans. Borrowers are not required to make repayments if they are earning less than £15,000 and when due these repayments are generally collected automatically through the tax system.

[1] Borrowers are not required to repay before they reach the SRDD, which is the April following graduation or otherwise leaving their course.

University Academic Staff

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average annual earnings were of full-time members of the academic staff of universities in *(a)* West Lancashire and *(b)* Lancashire in the last year for which figures are available. [64290]

Bill Rammell: The latest information, and the corresponding figures for all higher education institutions in England, is given in the following table.

Average salary[1] of full-time HE academic staff with teaching responsibilities higher education institutions 2004/05

			Average salary (£)
	West Lancashire[2]	*Lancashire[3]*	*England*
Professors	45,800	56,100	59,100
Senior Lecturers and Researchers	38,300	31,500	41,500
Lecturers	31,800	30,600	33,000

[1] Average salary is derived from the gross basic salary per annum, in pounds sterling as stated in the contract at the reference date of HESA's staff count (July 31) or at the end date of the contract if earlier. It does not include any regular payments for additional duties, responsibility allowances or honoraria, regardless of their source. Figures have been rounded to the nearest 100.

[2] Includes Edge Hill College of HE.

[3] Includes Edge Hill College of HE, St Martin's College, University of Bolton, University of Central Lancashire, and the University of Lancaster.

Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Home Working

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many people in her

Department have been enabled to work from home in each of the last three years; and if she will make a statement. [67982]

Mr. Lammy: My Department has extended the option to work flexibly to all staff and aims to support them in balancing their work and home responsibilities. The Department is keen to see flexibility in working patterns being made available as widely as possible to enable staff to match their own needs with the requirements of the job.

My Department only holds records of homeworkers who require IT equipment. There is no record of the amount of people who work from home on an ad hoc basis or those not requiring equipment. Following are the figures for the last three years

	Number
2003–04	3
2004–05	8
2005–06	10

Olympic Delivery Authority

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions she has had with *(a)* the Secretary of State for Wales and *(b)* the Welsh Assembly Government on the appointment of members of the Olympic Delivery Authority; and what steps were taken to ensure representation on the authority from all parts of the UK. [67913]

Tessa Jowell: No specific discussions took place with *(a)* the Secretary of State for Wales or *(b)* the Welsh Assembly Government on the appointment of members of the Olympic Delivery Authority. In keeping with the provisions in the London Olympic Games and Paralympic Games Act 2006 the appointments were made by the Secretary of State after consultation with the Mayor of London.

The role specification sought people from a variety of backgrounds with a combination of skills and experience. It did not seek individuals with specific representative functions in relation to constituent countries of the UK . The roles were advertised in the national press and the posts attracted over 450 applications from across the UK. All appointments were made on the basis of merit following a fair and open competition.

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the process was for recruitment and selection of the members of the Olympic Delivery Authority; and *(a)* when and *(b)* in what publications the positions were advertised. [67914]

Tessa Jowell: The recruitment process took full account of the Nolan principles, and the Commissioner for Public Appointments' Code of Practice. It involved a number of formal steps, including the preparation of a role specification against which candidates would be considered, advertising in the national press and on the DCMS and Cabinet Office websites, and interview of selected candidates by a panel comprising Jack Lemley (chair of the ODA), a DCMS director, a representative from the Greater London Authority, and an OCPA approved independent assessor. Candidates were considered against the published criteria, and the selection panel made recommendations to the Secretary of State on whom to appoint. The Secretary of State, after consultation with the Mayor, has appointed 12 members who collectively most closely meet the needs of the board at this time.

The positions were advertised in *The Sunday Times* on 11 December and in *The Times Public Agenda* on 13 December. The vacancies were also advertised on the Cabinet Office and DCMS websites.

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the *(a)* job description and *(b)* person specification was for members of the Olympic Delivery Authority. [67915]

Tessa Jowell: The full role specification for members of the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) was published on the DCMS website until the closing date of 6 January 2006. I have arranged for copies to be deposited in the House Libraries.

The role specification provided details of the role and skills required of ODA members. It explained that the role of the board was to work in partnership with the chief executive, David Higgins, and his staff, helping to set the overall direction, policy and plans of the authority, in accordance with the Olympic plans and its statutory duties, and to provide advice and support to the executive team in accordance with best governance practice and guidance. All board members were required to demonstrate commitment to public service values and the principles of public life (particularly integrity and probity), be respected by or have credibility with their peers, have significant experience of leadership, management and governance at board levels within the public, not for profit or private sector, and possess an understanding of the public policy context and the role of Government. In addition it was agreed that board members should have skills or experience in one or more of a number of other areas including construction and programme management, transport, regeneration, local government, community issues, finance, media and communications, disability issues, legal issues and human resources.

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what responsibilities the Olympic Delivery Authority has for *(a)* Olympic preparations, *(b)* venues and *(c)* events outside London and the South East of England. [67916]

Tessa Jowell: Under section 4(1) of the London Olympic Games and Paralympic Games Act 2006, the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) may take any action that it thinks necessary or expedient for the purpose of:

(a) Preparing for the London Olympics

(b) Making arrangements in preparation for or in connection with the use or management, before during or after the London Olympics, of premises and other facilities acquired, constructed or adapted in preparation for the London Olympics, or

(c) Ensuring that adequate arrangements are made for the provision, management and control of facilities for transport in connection with the London Olympics.

Under the Act the ODA can carry out these functions anywhere in the UK.

The staging of Olympic events is the responsibility of the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games Ltd. (LOCOG).

Windsor Castle

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many individuals were employed at Windsor Castle in 2005–06. [67064]

Mr. Lammy: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport provides grant in aid funding for the maintenance of the occupied royal palaces in England. The grant in aid employed 40 staff at Windsor Castle in 2005–06. There are other staff who are employed by other funding sources, for which the Department is not responsible, and on which it therefore has no information.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Pension Supplement

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when a supplement to the basic pension for reaching the age of 80 years was first paid; and what its value would be if it had been increased in line with the retail price index. [67926]

Mr. Timms: The 25p a week addition to the State pension for recipients aged 80 or over was introduced in September 1971. It would now be worth £2.23 a week had it been uprated in line with the retail price index.

Since winter 2003–04 eligible households with a person aged 80 or over are entitled to an additional annual winter fuel payment of £100.

Benefits

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how long a national from another EU member state needs to have been resident in the UK before being eligible to receive *(a)* housing benefit and *(b)* income support; and how long the residency periods will be after Directive 2004/38/EC comes into force; [66123]

(2) what effect Directive 2004/38/EC will have on the requirements that EU nationals need to meet in order to be considered habitually resident in the UK; and if he will make a statement; [66136]

(3) pursuant to the answer of 18 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1371W, on the Free Movement of Persons Directive, when the Government will issue regulations to ensure that Directive 2004/38/EC will not result in any significant additional costs for the UK social security system; and what these regulations will do. [66156]

Mr. Plaskitt: Current housing benefit and income support regulations require that a person must have a right to reside and be habitually resident in the United Kingdom, The Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or the Republic of Ireland (generally known as the Common Travel Area). If a person does not have a right to reside then they are not habitually resident and are not entitled to those benefits. A person who has a right to reside must also show that they are habitually resident in the Common Travel Area unless they fall into an exemption category such as EU workers. There is no set time limit for being habitually resident and each case is considered on its own merits and the claimant's individual circumstances.

From 30 April 2006 persons who claim an income-related benefit including income support, income-based jobseeker's allowance, state pension credit, housing benefit and council tax benefit will still be required to have a right to reside as well as being habitually resident in the Common Travel Area.

The Social Security (Persons from Abroad) Regulations 2006 which come into force on that date will amend the 'right to reside' aspect of the test. This is to ensure economically inactive EU nationals who only have a right to reside under Directive 2004/38/EC for the first three months of their stay in the Common Travel Area, will not be entitled to those benefits. EU work seekers will have a right to reside and once they are habitually resident will be entitled to claim income-based jobseeker's allowance, housing benefit and council tax benefit but they will not be able to claim income support or state pension credit. EU workers will have a right to reside and will continue to be exempt from the habitual residence test.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the cost of council tax benefit was in *(a)* England and *(b)* Wales in each year since 1997–98; and what the estimated costs are for (i) 2005–06 and (ii) 2006–07. [66247]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is in the tables.

Council tax benefit expenditure, £ millions, nominal terms

	England	*Wales*
1997–98 (outturn)	2,014	94
1998–99 (outturn)	2,046	103
1999–2000 (outturn)	2,096	108
2000–01 (outturn)	2,146	119
2001–02 (outturn)	2,246	124
2002–03 (outturn)	2,381	131
2003–04 (outturn)	2,744	145
2004–05 (estimated outturn)	3,037	160
2005–06 (estimated outturn)	3,247	172
2006–07 (plans)	3,386	184

Council tax benefit expenditure, £ millions, real terms (2006–07 prices)

	England	*Wales*
1997–98 (outturn)	2,416	113
1998–99 (outturn)	2,393	121
1999–2000 (outturn)	2,404	124
2000–01 (outturn)	2,429	135
2001–02 (outturn)	2,482	137
2002–03 (outturn)	2,550	140
2003–04 (outturn)	2,863	151
2004–05 (estimated outturn)	3,100	163
2005–06 (estimated outturn)	3,247	172
2006–07 (plans)	3,386	184

Source:
DWP expenditure tables (table 8), consistent with Budget Report 2006.

The DWP expenditure tables can be viewed on the DWP website at the following address:

http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd4/expenditure.asp

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the take-up rate of council tax benefit was amongst pensioners in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the latest year for which figures are available. [66248]

Mr. Plaskitt: The latest available information is in "Income Related Benefits Estimates of Take Up in 2003–04", a copy of which is in the Library.

Joan Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) if he will amend housing benefit policy so as to make it possible for a non-dependent sibling of a landlord to claim housing benefit in circumstances where there is a genuine tenancy and rental income is required; and if he will make a statement; [65321]

(2) if he will take steps to make it possible for housing benefit to be paid to those living in a home with relatives in certain circumstances. [65527]

Mr. Plaskitt: There are no plans to amend the provisions for people who live with close relatives. Where a person lives with their landlord who is a close relative, such as a brother and sister, they are treated as not liable to make rental payments because there is usually no intention to create a legally enforceable liability in such circumstances. The tenant is typically making a contribution towards the general costs of the household of which they form a part without a genuine rental liability.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what improvements he is making in the administration of housing benefit. [67338]

Mr. Plaskitt: In 2002, we put in place a comprehensive strategy for reform of housing benefit, with the first priority being to improve administration across the board. We have already made significant progress with the average time taken by local authorities to process new claims having improved by over two weeks.

We have introduced a number of simplification measures to reduce complexity in the housing benefit rules, and provided investment, to help authorities make improvements in the administration of housing benefit. We are also piloting the new local housing allowance in 18 local authorities and the green paper, "A New Deal For Welfare: Empowering People to Work", sets out our intention to extend the scheme across the private rented sector.

Child Support Agency

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what response his Department makes to an individual's claim that levels of household debt is a reason for lack of co-operation with the Child Support Agency. [65786]

Mr. Plaskitt: There are provisions which may allow the Agency to take account of debts which were incurred during a relationship when making a maintenance assessment. However, levels of household debt are not a reason for lack of co-operation with the Child Support Agency. The Government are of the view that parents' prime financial responsibility is to maintain their children.

Fraud investigation

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much fraud investigators recovered for his Department in each of the last five years. [57635]

Mr. Plaskitt *[holding answer 10 March 2006]:* It is not possible to separate the total amount of overpaid benefit recovered into overpayments due to fraud and those due to other reasons.

Income Support

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what reports he has received on the restoration of the full rate of income support to young people under 25 years; and if he will make a statement. [65984]

Mr. Plaskitt: Since income support was introduced in 1988, a single person aged 18 to 24 has been paid at a lower rate than single people aged 25 and over. It would be a new initiative and not a restoration to pay single customers aged 18 to 24 at the same rate as single customers aged 25 and over.

I am not aware of any reports that have been produced that give consideration to payment of the full rate of income support to single young people under the age of 25.

Jobseeker's Allowance

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many jobseeker's allowance applications have taken *(a)* more than 12 days, *(b)* more than 18 days, *(c)* more than 24 days and *(d)* more than 48 days to process in the last month for which information is available; and if he will make a statement. [63681]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question asking how many Jobseeker's Allowance applicants have taken *(a)* more than 12 days, *(b)* more than 18 days, *(c)* more than 24 days and *(d)* more than 48 days to process in the last month for which information is available; and if he will make a statement. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

The information you have asked for is not available. Jobcentre Plus measures the time taken to process a claim for Jobseeker's Allowance as the Actual Average Clearance Time. This is measured against a Key Management Indicator which is agreed at the beginning of each year. For 2005/06, this was set at 12 working days. Latest figures show that for the year to February 2006 claims were processed in an average of 14.3 working days.

Jobcentre Plus is transforming the service it provides by making it available via the telephone, via the Internet and through the personal service offered to people in Jobcentre Plus offices. With change on this scale there can be difficulties at the beginning and, as a consequence, average clearance times have increased. This is clearly causing unacceptable delays for customers and we have taken action to address the delays.

On 30 January we launched a National Action Plan designed to reduce clearance times. The plan requires that:

all delivery units work through a Health Check and address the areas where they are under-performing;

senior managers regularly review and address poor performance; and

delivery units performing below the required level develop a recovery plan to improve performance.

Senior Operational Managers were required to provide a formal assurance at the end of February that all elements of the plan are being complied with, although it has been acknowledged that concentration on backlogs of work may initially cause average clearance times to rise. The Chief Operating Officer is monitoring performance very closely.

In order to focus management attention on this issue, the Actual Average Clearance Times measure, which will remain at 12 days for Jobseeker's Allowance claims, has been added to the suite of Jobcentre Plus Targets for 2006/07.

I hope this is helpful.

Occupational Pensions

Sandra Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he plans to publish his response to the Parliamentary Commissioner's report on the security of final salary occupational pensions. [68055]

Mr. Timms: In the oral statement made by my right hon. Friend Secretary of State on 16 March he undertook to publish a full response to the Ombudsman's report, including an explanation of the Government's estimate of the cost of implementing the Ombudsman's proposals.

We expect to publish that response shortly.

Pension Credit

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the cost of administering the pension credit was in each of the last seven financial years; and what estimate he has made of the administration costs in 2006–07. [66151]

Mr. Timms: Information is available only for the year to March 2005. I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 22 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 411W.

The Department does not estimate its future administration costs on the basis of individual benefits and allowances.

Pensioner Poverty

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners were living in poverty in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* according to the most recent data available. [67336]

Mr. Timms: The seventh annual 'Opportunity for all' report (Cm 6673) sets out the Government's strategy for tackling poverty and social exclusion and reports progress against a range of indicators.'

The following tables show the number and percentage of people over State pension age living in households in relative and absolute low income. These show that based on income measured after housing costs the number of pensioners in relative low income has fallen by one million between 1996–97 and 2004–05—there was a fall of half a million between 2002–03 and 2004–05, the years when pension credit came into effect.

Relative low income, i.e. based on contemporary income thresholds

	After housing costs		*Before housing costs*	
	Number (million)	*Percentage*	*Number (million)*	*Percentage*
1996–97	2.8	28	2.2	22
2004–05	1.8	17	2.0	19

Absolute low income, i.e. based on 1996–97 income thresholds held constant in real terms

	After housing costs		*Before housing costs*	
	Number (million)	*Percentage*	*Number (million)*	*Percentage*
1996–97	2.8	28	2.2	22
2004–05	0.7	7	1.0	10

Notes:

1. Figures are for Great Britain;
2. Results from Households Below Average Incomes publication.
3. Figures show the number and proportion of pensioners in households below 60 per cent. of median net income (after direct taxes including council tax).

Post Office Card Account

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in Scotland use a Post Office card account to receive their pension, broken down by *(a)* local authority and *(b)* constituency. [62812]

Mr. Plaskitt: The following tables show the number of state pension payment accounts being paid into a Post Office card account in Scotland broken down by *(a)* local authority and *(b)* constituency.

(a) State pension accounts broken down by local authority.

Local authority	*State pension accounts*
Aberdeen City	6,400
Aberdeenshire	9,100
Angus	3,500
Argyll and Bute	3,600
Scottish Borders The	4,400
Clackmannanshire	1,600
West Dunbartonshire	3,500
Dumfries and Galloway	7,200
Dundee City	5,200
East Ayrshire	5,700
East Dunbartonshire	2,500
East Lothian	3,500
East Renfrewshire	2,300
Edinburgh City of	11,500
Falkirk	5,500
Fife	12,800
Glasgow City	25,100
Highland	8,800
Inverclyde	3,600
Midlothian	2,500
Moray	3,600
North Ayrshire	5,900
North Lanarkshire	15,200
Orkney Islands	1,000
Perth and Kinross	4,800
Renfrewshire	7,000
Shetland Islands	700
South Ayrshire	5,100
South Lanarkshire	11,600
Stirling	3,100
West Lothian	4,700
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	1,700

(b) State pensions accounts broken down by parliamentary constituency.

Parliamentary constituency	*State pension accounts*
Aberdeen, North	3,200
Aberdeen, South	2,600
Airdrie and Shotts	4,100
Angus	2,700
Argyll and Bute	3,600
Ayr, Carrick and Cumnock	4,800
Banff and Buchan	4,500
Berwickshire, Roxburgh and Selkirk	3,700
Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross	2,900
Central Ayrshire	3,700
Coatbridge, Chryston and Bellshill	4,400
Cumbernauld, Kilsyth and Kirkintilloch, East	3,000
Dumfries and Galloway	4,600
Dumfriesshire, Clydesdale and Tweeddale	3,900
Dundee, East	2,800
Dundee, West	3,300
Dunfermline and West Fife	3,000
East Dunbartonshire	1,500
East Kilbride, Strathaven and Lesmahagow	3,400
East Lothian	3,500
East Renfrewshire	2,300
Edinburgh, East	2,700
Edinburgh, North and Leith	1,900
Edinburgh, South	1,800
Edinburgh, South-West	2,400
Edinburgh, West	2,600
Falkirk	3,700
Glasgow, Central	2,900
Glasgow, East	4,600
Glasgow, North	2,000
Glasgow, North-East	5,000
Glasgow, North-West	3,700
Glasgow, South	3,000
Glasgow, South-West	3,900
Glenrothes	3,600
Gordon	2,700
Inverclyde	3,600
Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey	3,100
Kilmarnock and Loudoun	4,000
Kirkcaldy and Cowdenbeath	3,400
Lanark and Hamilton, East	3,300
Linlithgow and East Falkirk	3,700
Livingston	2,800
Midlothian	2,500
Moray	3,600
Motherwell and Wishaw	4,700
Na h-Eileanan an Iar	1,700
North Ayrshire and Arran	4,200
North-East Fife	2,900
Ochil and South Perthshire	3,300
Orkney and Shetland	1,700
Paisley and Renfrewshire, North	3,400
Paisley and Renfrewshire, South	3,600
Perth and North Perthshire	3,100
Ross, Skye and Lochaber	2,800
Ruthergien and Hamilton, West	4,400
Stirling	3,100
West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine	2,600
West Dunbartonshire	3,500

Notes:

Figures are based on information available at 18 February 2006 and are rounded to the nearest 100.

Figures refer to accounts live and in payment on the specified date.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to encourage financial institutions to enable those using the Post Office card account to transfer to bank accounts with the facility to allow cash withdrawals at post office branches. [67303]

Mr. Plaskitt: There are already some 25 bank and building society accounts which can be used at post offices, and we hope there could be more in the future. I would encourage the remaining big banks to respond positively to the overtures from Post Office Ltd to make their current accounts accessible at post office branches.

Post Office Ltd. itself has already introduced one new savings account, and is developing other savings and banking products which are likely to be more attractive to many of its customers than the current Post Office card account.

We want people to continue to access their cash at the post office by using a bank account there or new post office products. We are working with Post Office Ltd to develop a joint strategy to move customers from the Post Office card account and with the best interests of our joint customers in mind.

Mr. Dunne: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether employees of the Pensions Service are telephoning pensioners to persuade them to cease using their Post Office card accounts. [65882]

Mr. Plaskitt: No, employees of the Pension Service are not telephoning pensioners to dissuade them from using their Post Office card accounts.

Spending Review (Efficiency Targets)

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what baseline figures he is using for assessing progress on his Department's targets to *(a)* modernise transactional processes, *(b)* make savings in procurement processes and *(c)* modernise and streamline back office functions of finance and human resources shared service functions; what progress has been made towards these targets to date; and what the total efficiency savings achieved to date are for these targets. [52929]

Mr. Plaskitt: The target for financial savings from the Department in the Spending Review 2004 was not linked directly to particular functional groups but rather illustrated categories of activity that would be planned to contribute to the total from changes planned in the Department. Based on our current planning assumptions, we expect that just under one half of our financial savings will come from improvements in transactional processing, around one quarter will come from the direct payment of benefits to customers, over one quarter of savings will come from improvements in central services and around one tenth from improved value for money in procurement. These assumptions are subject to change as plans develop to ensure that we maintain and improve customer services and achieve our PSA and efficiency targets.

Total efficiency savings made by DWP in 2004–05 are estimated at some £300 million.

These early savings are an encouraging indication of DWPs ability to meet the efficiency target set for the department in the 2004 Spending Review (being £962 million of annual efficiency savings by 2007–08 against our spending in 2003–04).

Sure Start

Ed Balls: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many women have received a Sure Start

maternity grant in *(a)* England and *(b)* the Wakefield district in each of the last two years; and what plans he has to extend provision. [65884]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information requested is in the table.

Number of Sure Start maternity grant awards

	Great Britain	*Wakefield Jobcentre Plus District*
2004–05	235,920	1,510
2005–06	237,510	1,600

Notes:

1. Figures are for all awards, irrespective of whether the award was made to the mother or her partner.

2. Figures have been rounded to the nearest 10.

Source:

Social Fund Policy, Budget and Management Information System.

We have no plans to widen eligibility beyond the current qualifying benefits.

Following the Court of Appeal judgment in the "Francis case" however, we are looking to change the legislation to allow payments to people who have been awarded residence orders in certain specified circumstances.

For any claims made prior to the legislative change, decision makers and appeal tribunals may consider whether the circumstances around any case are the same as in the Court of Appeal case.

Sure Start to Later Life

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he expects the pilots for A Sure Start to Later Life to be under way. [67955]

Mr. Timms: We announced in "Opportunity Age" our intention to pilot a LinkAge Plus service, providing a fully integrated service for older people. The Social Exclusion Unit Report 'A Sure Start to Later Life' also proposed a new approach to delivering services to and for older people, building on the principles of the Sure Start model for children and families, LinkAge Plus will deliver this service.

This programme will test ways of delivering fully integrated services for older people—from employment, health and benefits to leisure and learning. This will involve working with older people to identify effective models that meet their needs and aspirations and involving them in the design.

The programme plans to run up to eight pilots in England and a number of local authorities are currently helping us to develop the 'LinkAge Plus' concept further and advise on how it can be delivered practically on the ground.

Final announcements on the programme will be made shortly, including details of final pilot selection. We anticipate that the first pilot will start in July this year.

Turner Commission

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the Turner Commission recommendation for mandatory employer pension contributions. [67337]

Mr. Timms: We have been examining all the recommendations made by the Pensions Commission in detail, including this one. In looking at this option we are considering carefully the relationship between an employer's pension contributions and levels of scheme membership and of course are taking account of possible impacts on business and on the labour market. The Pensions White Paper is due to be published in the next couple of months, and it will set out our proposals for pension reform in full.

Workstep Programme

Mrs. Maria Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many places are available through the Workstep programme; how many people were referred to the programme in the last 12 months; and if he will make a statement on future plans for the programme. [63359]

Mrs. McGuire: The Workstep (including Remploy) programme provides around 30,000 places. In the year ending December 2005, 9,841 individuals were referred to the programme.

The Welfare Reform Green Paper "A new deal for welfare: Empowering people to work" announced the review of specialist employment programmes for disabled people, including Workstep, and the intention to consult on our proposals later in the year.

Separately on 16 March, the Government announced a review of Remploy Ltd in the context of the Government's strategy for supporting greater numbers of disabled people into employment.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Company Law Reform Bill

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether he has had discussions with the Corporate Responsibility Coalition on the Company Law Reform Bill; and if he will make a statement. [67591]

Alun Michael *[holding answer 2 May 2006]:* I have met the Corporate Responsibility Coalition to discuss the Company Law Reform Bill on two occasions since the publication of the Company Law Reform White Paper in March 2005. DTI officials have also had a number of discussions with the Corporate Responsibility Coalition as part of the ongoing consultation with interested parties on the Company Law Reform Bill.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what progress has been made on replacing Part 31 of the Company Law Reform Bill. [67595]

Alun Michael *[holding answer 2 May 2006]:* My noble Friend the Minister for Science and Innovation set out the Government's intentions for replacing Part 31 of the Company Law Reform Bill in another place on 30 March 2006. He announced that, the Government will take specific powers in clearly defined areas, in particular capital maintenance, company charges and reporting and accounting provisions.

Import Revenues

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what revenue was raised from imports into the UK in *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2005 of (i) rice—combined nomenclature code 1006, (ii) bananas—combined nomenclature code 0803, (iii) citrus fruit—combined nomenclature code 0805 and (iv) olive oil—combined nomenclature code 1509. [66408]

Dawn Primarolo: I have been asked to reply.

The customs duty declared in respect of imports into the UK of these commodities was as follows:

	£
Rice (1006)	
2004	10,894,782.71
2005	8,601,615.21
Bananas (0803)	
2004	17,177,058.03
2005	19,017,454.50
Citrus fruit (0805)	
2004	7,988,416.48
2005	7,338,083.55
Olive oil (1509)	
2004	82,304.11
2005	104,175.98

In addition VAT of £4,302.77 was paid on olive oil importations in 2004 and £24,958.84 in 2005.

This information does not take into account any adjustments to the data provided on declarations after importation.

National Minimum Wage

Mr. David Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much his Department spent on advertising in the press and radio on the question of the national minimum wage in *(a)* 2005 and *(b)* 2004. [67910]

Alun Michael: DTI spent the following on National Minimum Wage (NMW) press advertising via the Central Office of Information:

	£ (excl VAT)
2005	357,300
2004	352,996

In addition DTI spent £20,000 in both 2004 and 2005 (excl VAT) via Citizens Advice Northern Ireland on NMW press advertising in Northern Ireland.

There was no NMW radio advertising carried out in either year.

Post Office Card Account

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the revenue for post offices from *(a)* Post Office card account transactions and *(b)* bank account transactions. [67304]

Barry Gardiner: Revenue received by Post Office Ltd. for managing Post Office card account and bank account transactions are the subject of commercially confidential contracts with DWP and individual banks.

Public Procurement Procedures

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to his Answer of 1 February 2006, *Official Report*, columns 547–8W, on European public procurement law, what changes the two new European Commission public procurement directives made to public procurement procedures in the UK; and what estimate his Department has made of the financial effects on small and medium-sized enterprises of these changes. [66949]

Alun Michael *[holding answer 2 May 2006]:* The new procurement directives, simplify, clarify and modernise public procurement procedures. These were implemented in the United Kingdom on 31 January 2006. There are new provisions on framework agreements, competitive dialogue for complex procurements, central purchasing bodies and electronic procurement methods such as e-auctions and dynamic purchasing systems.

The directives allow contracts to be reserved for supported factories and businesses, and provide greater clarity on the extent to which social and environmental issues can be incorporated into procurements. There is also a requirement for the mandatory exclusion of companies that have been convicted of offences related to fraud and corruption. The rules applying to purchases by utilities now incorporate an exclusion mechanism where a sector is subject to normal competition.

Concerning the effects on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), the new directives, and the regulations that implement them, apply rules directly to purchasers rather than to suppliers. There are, therefore, no compliance costs to business from these new rules. The new procurement methods that the rules provide for, including electronic systems, together with the simpler and clearer rules generally, reduce the burdens of the procurement process and should encourage suppliers, including SMEs, to participate in public procurement opportunities either directly or as sub contractor.

ELECTORAL COMMISSION COMMITTEE

Electoral Registration (Advertising)

Chris Ruane: To ask the hon. Member for Gosport, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission whether he has measured the effects of the Electoral Commission's advertising campaign to raise electoral registration levels. [64715]

Bridget Prentice: I have been asked to reply, as my hon. Friend tabled this question to my Department, and its transfer to the Speaker's Committee was notified as a result of an administrative error.

My Department has not measured the effects of the Electoral Commission's advertising campaigns. However, the Electoral Commission does undertake evaluation of its campaigns.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Alcohol-free Zones

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the effect on antisocial behaviour of alcohol-free zones in towns. [66464]

Hazel Blears: Designated public place orders (DPPO) are an opportunity for alcohol free zones to be adopted according to local authority assessment of alcohol related crime and disorder on public highways or in parks. The use of a DPPO tends to be part of a wider local strategy to tackle antisocial behaviour and drink related disorder. Therefore, to evaluate the effectiveness of DPPOs on their own would not be practical.

Anti-Semitic Incidents

Mr. Leech: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many anti-Semitic incidents were reported in Greater Manchester in 2005. [54705]

Paul Goggins: This information is not collected centrally. However, we understand from the Anti-Semitic Incidents Report 2005 by the Community Security Trust that

'. . . Of the 455 incidents reported in the UK to the Community Security Trust in 2005, 132 (29 per cent.) were in Greater Manchester.'

Business Crime Partnerships

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to add to the offences covered by business crime partnerships. [66610]

Hazel Blears: We take crimes against business very seriously, and are determined to tackle these crimes which can cause so much damage to the economic and social fabric of our communities.

Although business crime partnerships are voluntary groups and therefore independent of Government, we recognise the very real part they have to play in preventing and reducing crime.

The Home Office has supported the work of the British Retail Consortium in developing in developing business crime reduction partnerships, and has provided over £900,000 of funding for them to set up and run the Action Against Business Crime (AABC) Group. This Group provides central co-ordination and support for a national network of business crime reduction partnerships in town centres, shopping centres and industrial estates across England and Wales in their work to prevent business crime.

Child Protection

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will ensure that detained children within families about whom there are child protection concerns are not removed from the UK until those concerns have been satisfactorily resolved. [66791]

Fiona Mactaggart: We take the issue of child protection very seriously and we make every effort not to place children at risk. Where there are child protection concerns within a family whom we intend to remove, we would not remove a child with the potentially abusive family member(s). Instead will liaise with the authorities in the receiving country to see if other appropriate care arrangements can be made and to ensure that the appropriate Social Services are aware of any concerns in a particular case.

All operational and case working staff involved in the family removal process have been advised that if an officer suspects at any time that a child is or has been the victim of abuse, the police must be alerted immediately. In such cases where a police investigation is ongoing, removal may be stayed pending the outcome of the criminal proceedings.

Crime (Peterborough)

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what assistance is being given to Cambridgeshire Constabulary to tackle incidents of youth crime and antisocial behaviour in Peterborough constituency; and if he will make a statement; [66335]

(2) what progress is being made with the Government's Respect Agenda in the Peterborough constituency; and if he will make a statement. [67444]

Hazel Blears: Peterborough is one of 50 Action Areas in the country where the local authority, police and other agencies have agreed to provide a high level response to tackling antisocial behaviour.

Peterborough Youth Offending Service works closely with Cambridgeshire Constabulary on a range of strategies and partnerships to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour by young people. These include the Prolific and Priority Offender (PPO) Strategy, joint work to reduce vehicle crime and criminal damage by young people, Safer School Partnerships (police in schools), and the monitoring of high risk young people on community sentences. In addition, Peterborough Youth Offending Service is working with the police on a Knife Amnesty and Weapons Awareness Week (w/c 20 May) in support of the National Knife Amnesty.

The Police have made effective use of dispersal powers to tackle youth crime and have used these most recently in the Gladstone Street area of the town. Police will use these powers to move people on from this area when they are behaving in an antisocial way. In all cases of youth disorder the young person will be referred to an antisocial behaviour support worker, which will ensure that young people are provided with both support and enforcement to tackle and change bad behaviour.

The Respect Action Plan is central to the Government's drive to go broader, deeper and further on antisocial behaviour by tackling its root causes; preventing it occurring in the first place for example by ensuring better parenting provision, while not letting up on stopping antisocial behaviour that blights many

communities. The Respect Task Force is currently working with all Action Areas on ensuring they understand their new enhanced responsibilities in delivering the Respect Action Plan. Key partners from Peterborough will be invited to attend the forthcoming Respect Academies to hear more about how the Action Plan can best be implemented.

Criminal Justice and Court Services Act

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department why section 53 of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 *(a)* has not been implemented and *(b)* has been superseded by schedule 8 to the Criminal Justice Act 2003. [67121]

Fiona Mactaggart: Section 53 of the Criminal Justice and Courts Services Act 2000 introduced new provisions for dealing with the breach of various community orders. It was repealed under the Criminal Justice Act 2003, which introduced a new sentencing framework including a single community order for adults, to replace all previous individual community sentences, and a new suspended sentence order. This meant that the section 53 regime was no longer appropriate. However, elements of it are incorporated in the enforcement provisions for these new sentences, including statutory warnings for failures to comply with the requirements of the sentence and the presumption of imprisonment for breach of a suspended sentence order.

Data Protection

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will publish the guidelines ensuring co-operation between the UK Information Commissioner and the European Data Protection Supervisor on information obtained from *(a)* EURODAC and *(b)* the Schengen Information System. [63823]

Ms Harman: I have been asked to reply.

At present, guidelines ensuring co-operation do not exist. The UK Information Commissioner, together with his counterparts in other EU member states, is currently working with the European Data Protection Supervisor to make checks on the processing of personal data in the Eurodac system.

The European Data Protection Supervisor does not have a formal role in data protection supervision in the Schengen Information System. The relevant supervisory arrangements for the central system are set out in the Schengen convention and are carried out by a Joint Supervisory Authority.

Disabled People

Tom Levitt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress his Department has made in promoting the rights of disabled people under its statutory duty to do so as a public body. [65818]

Paul Goggins: The Home Office is currently developing its Disability Equality Scheme in accordance with responsibilities conferred by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. The scheme is being developed by a team consisting of diversity policy leads across the core Home Office group as well as members of the Disability Rights Commission and the Home Office Disability Support Network. Collectively they will see how work on Disability Equality Schemes can be embedded into Home Office business priorities. The Home Office has published a series of Disability Awareness Guides to promote the use of reasonable adjustments and the needs of disabled people in the workplace.

Domestic Violence

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the range of activities covered by the Best Value Performance Indicator that local authorities need to undertake successfully to address domestic violence. [51349]

Hazel Blears: To highlight the need for sustained local authority action, and demonstrating that domestic violence is not an issue for the criminal justice system alone, in 2005 a revised Best Value Performance Indicator for domestic violence was published. This indicator is owned by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

BV 225 aims to assess the overall provision and effectiveness of local authority services designed to help victims of domestic violence and prevent further domestic violence.

The indicator covers metropolitan authorities, London boroughs, unitary authorities, district councils, council of the Isles of Scilly and the common council of the City of London. The indicator is measured as a percentage score of the number of questions to which a local authority can answer 'yes':

1. Has the local authority produced a directory of local services that can help victims of domestic violence?

2. Is there within the local authority area a minimum of one refuge place per 10,000 population?

3. Does the local authority employ directly or fund a voluntary sector-based domestic violence co-ordinator? (For district councils of fewer than 35,000 households, the responsibility for co-ordinating domestic violence can be designated within the job description of an existing senior officer. For district councils that contribute to a county-wide co-ordinator, see the BVPI definition).

4. Has the local authority produced and adopted a multi-agency strategy to tackle domestic violence developed in partnership with other agencies?

5. Does the local authority support and facilitate a local multi-agency domestic violence forum that meets at least four times a year?

6. Has the local authority developed an information-sharing protocol and had it agreed between key statutory partners?

7. Has the local authority developed, launched and promoted a 'sanctuary' type scheme to enable victims and their children to remain in their own home, where they choose to do so and where safety can be guaranteed? (For smaller district authorities, of fewer than 35,000 households this can be arranged in partnership with neighbouring authorities).

8. Has there been a reduction in the percentage of cases accepted as homeless due to domestic violence that had previously been re-housed in the last two years by that local authority as a result of domestic violence?

9. Does the council's tenancy agreement have a specific clause stating that perpetration of domestic violence by a tenant can be considered grounds for eviction? (For local authorities that have transferred their housing stock, the clause should be contained in the LSVT organisations' tenancy agreement).

10. Has the local authority funded and developed a domestic violence education pack in consultation with the wider domestic violence forum?

11. Has the local authority carried out a programme of multi-agency training in the last 12 months covering front-line and managerial staff in at least two of the following groups: housing staff, social services staff providing services in the local authority area; education staff; health staff; and front-line police officers.

Drugs Liaison Officers

Mr. Blizzard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many overseas drugs liaison officers are employed in each country in Latin America; and what the cost was in 2004–05; [58893]

(2) what quantity of cocaine seizures were attributable to the work of overseas drugs liaison officers in Latin America in each of the last three years for which figures are available; and what the street value was in each year. [58897]

Dawn Primarolo: I have been asked to reply.

I cannot give details of the numbers and cost of drugs liaison officers deployed overseas as to do so would prejudice international relations, jeopardise current operations and put the officers and their families at risk.

Cocaine seizures attributable to the work of drugs liaison officers based in South and Central America and the Caribbean are estimated to be 95 tonnes in 2003–04 and 46 tonnes in 2004–05, with a potential street value in the United Kingdom of £5.2 billion and £2.3 billion respectively. Figures for seizures in other years and confined to posts in states included in the definition of Latin America would be available only at disproportionate cost.

Female Murders

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many women were killed by a current or former male partner in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available. [64989]

Hazel Blears: The latest available information on homicide is published in Home Office Statistical Bulletin number 02–06, 'Violent Crime Overview, Homicide and Gun Crime 2004/2005'. Table 2.05 provides data on victims killed by their partner/ex-partner by victim gender.

The specific information data can be extracted from the Homicide Index and are given in the following table.

Homicides currently recorded In England and Wales where principal suspect is male partner or ex-partner of female victim, 1995 to 2004–05

	Number of victims
1995	93
1996	94
1997	98
1997–98	99
1998–99	76
1999–2000	88
2000–01	99
2001–02	115
2002–03	105
2003–04	93
2004–05	101

Note:
As at 28 November 2005; figures are revised as cases are dealt with by the police and by the courts, or as further information becomes available.

Firearms

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many converted firearms have been used in criminal acts where a shot has been fired in the last five years. [65424]

Hazel Blears: Statistics for crimes involving certain converted weapons have only been collected separately since April 2004. There were six offences where 'converted air pistols' or 'converted imitation handguns' were fired.

In these offences a converted weapon was specified as a weapon type. It is likely that some other offences involved converted weapons being fired, but the weapon type would have been specified differently, handgun for example.

Gun Crime

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many gun crimes have been committed in the past 5 years using .22 calibre sports pistols. [67143]

Hazel Blears: Crimes involving this type of handgun cannot be identified from data collected centrally.

Handgun Legislation (Olympics)

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what advice has been given by the police to his Department in relation to a possible relaxation to the handgun legislation for Olympic target shooters. [67140]

Hazel Blears: We liaise closely with the police in relation to the arrangements needed to allow pistol shooting disciplines to take place at major international events held or to be held in this country including the Olympic games. No specific advice has been given by the police as regards a possible relaxation to the handgun legislation for Olympic target shooters.

Home Detention Curfews

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department within what time period the Parole Board is required to reconsider its decision to refuse a Home Detention Curfew *(a)* when the Prison Ombudsman has asked a prison for an urgent review of the decision; and *(b)* what action can be taken when the Board does not meet the deadline. [65708]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Parole Board has no involvement in Home Detention Curfew (HDC) decisions. The decision rests in the vast majority of cases

with the relevant prison taking into account the views of other relevant agencies. If the Ombudsman makes a recommendation to review an HDC decision I would expect the review to take place as quickly as possible; taking into account the need to re-assess the risk posed by the individual prisoner, and the need to protect the public.

Homeless People (Arrests)

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many homeless people have been arrested in each of the last eight years. [67107]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information requested is not available centrally.

Immigration Detention (Children)

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will introduce a statutory time limit for the detention of children. [66787]

Fiona Mactaggart: Regulations made by the Home Secretary under section 22 of the Prosecution of Offences Act 1985 set custody time limits that restrict the period during which a defendant (including a defendant under 18) who is remanded in custody awaiting trial may be held in custody.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) if he will ensure that welfare assessments for children who are detained are carried out after *(a)* seven and *(b)* 21 days; [66788]

(2) if he will ensure that welfare assessments of detained children are undertaken by independent welfare panels. [66789]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Youth Justice Board's National Standards for Youth Justice Services, issued in 2004, specify how welfare assessments are to be carried out., An initial medical assessment of the young person is undertaken on arrival. This is conducted by a qualified nurse or doctor and looks at vulnerability (i.e. risk of self-harm or suicide), as well as any mental health needs and any substance abuse issues.

The National Standards stipulate that a full assessment of the detained young person will be carried out within 10 working days. The full assessment covers the health, social, educational, vocational and any other needs of the young person. After assessment, each young person is to be given a comprehensive induction to the establishment and be allocated a key worker, case worker or case manager.

The National Standards are currently being updated by the Youth Justice Board.

International Arrest Warrants

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has received documentary evidence from the Israeli Government on potential changes to UK law on international arrest warrants. [66292]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office has received written representations from the Israeli Government on the issue of arrest warrants in international cases.

Mobile Telephones

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what assessment his Department has made of the level of mobile telephone theft in each year since 2001; [66297]

(2) how many people have been successfully prosecuted for the false reporting of mobile telephone theft in the last 12 months for which figures are available; [66298]

(3) how many successful prosecutions there have been in relation to the re-programming of mobile telephones in the last 12 months for which figures are available. [66296]

Hazel Blears: Assessing the true level of mobile phone theft and the false reporting of such theft is not straightforward. This is because these are not distinct offence categories. Rather they are subsumed under broader headings such as 'theft' or 'wasting police time'. As a consequence, specific figures for mobile phone theft and successful prosecutions for false reporting are not held centrally.

In 2001 the Government invested in, and published, a major study of mobile phone theft (Harrington and Mayhew, 2001). Drawing on the British crime survey and youth surveys, the study estimated 710,000 mobile phones were stolen in 2000–01.

The British crime survey (BCS) routinely collects information which assesses the rate of theft among adult mobile phone users. According to the latest published figures, based on the 2002–03 BCS 6.9 per cent. of adult mobile phone users had experienced a theft in the previous 12 months. Younger people, those from a black and minority ethnic background, and those living in areas of high deprivation were significantly more likely to have their mobile phones stolen.

Parole Boards

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what complaints his Department has received from *(a)* individuals and *(b)* groups regarding the decisions of parole boards in each of the last five years. [45864]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information requested is not held centrally and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Party Wall Act

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been prosecuted under the Party Wall Act 1996 in each year since 1997. [66834]

Fiona Mactaggart: Data from the Court Proceedings Database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform shows that since 1997, one person was prosecuted in 1999, and one person was prosecuted in 2004 under the Party Wall Act 1996. Statistics for 2005 will be available in the autumn of 2006.

Police

Mr. Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received on police community support officers. [66850]

Hazel Blears: We do not track and compile all correspondence on this subject. A number of bodies replied last summer to our public consultation on proposals to establish a standard set of powers. Our response was published on the Home Office website on 18 January at:

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/cons-cso-powers-310805

Correspondence both then and over the autumn with the Association of Chief Police Officers and the Association of Police Authorities concerned funding for community support officers. More recently, this has been raised again in the light of the Budget Statement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many full-time police officers there were as at 1 April 2006 in the *(a)* Northern, *(b)* Central and *(c)* Southern Division Basic Command Units of the Cambridgeshire Constabulary; and if he will make a statement. [67442]

Hazel Blears: The latest available information is as at 31 March 2005. Part-time figures for BCUs are not collected centrally. As at 31 March 2005, there were 1,392 full-time police officers and 40 part-time police officers in Cambridgeshire Constabulary.

Pornography

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent discussions he has had with the National Federation of Retail Newsagents on the selling of pornographic magazines and newspapers and ways of avoiding the *(a)* sale and *(b)* availability of such material to children. [56005]

Paul Goggins: My officials, together with officials from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Department of Trade and Industry met representatives of the National Federation of Retail Newsagents and representatives of magazine and newspaper trade organisations on 8 March to discuss the sale, display and placement of publications featuring sexual material and to emphasise the need to safeguard the interests of children.

As a result of these discussions, the NFRN have agreed to highlight the importance of this issue by putting out further advice to newsagents which includes guidance about the sale and display of 'top shelf' adult material as well as advice about the appropriate placement and display of other publications containing some sexual material.

Prison Education

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent estimate he has made of the number of hours of education undertaken by each prisoner in Young Offender Institutions per week. [65615]

Fiona Mactaggart: Provisional data for 2005–06 show the average number of hours of education (not including Physical Education) undertaken by prisoners held in young offender institutions to be 7.6 hours per prisoner per week. The equivalent data for the small number of female young offenders are not available.

Prisons

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much funding was made available for staff education and development in prisons in *(a)* 2003–04, *(b)* 2004–05 and *(c)* 2005–06; how much is planned for 2006–07; and if he will make a statement. [65581]

Fiona Mactaggart: In 2003–04 the identifiable staff training and development costs were £24.3 million, in 2004–05, £23.5 million and in 2005–06 £37.4 million. The latter figure includes £11.2 million for training in the new Phoenix accounting scheme. A significant amount of local training is carried out at individual prison establishments and could be identified only at disproportionate cost.

The total forecast training activity costs for 2006–07 are not yet available, as the detailed budget figures have not yet been finalised.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will initiate comprehensive ethnic and religious monitoring across the prison estate. [65589]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Public Sector Prison Service routinely collects data on the ethnicity and religion of prisoners. It also collects data on the ethnicity, but not the religion, of staff.

In accordance with the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, ethnic monitoring data is used to monitor the impact of a range of policies and practices on prisoners, and of a range of employment functions on staff.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many women are in prison for non-violent offences; and how many were sentenced for each type of such offence. [65598]

Fiona Mactaggart: Information on the current female population serving sentences in prisons in England and Wales by offence type is contained in Table 2 of the February 2006 population in custody monthly tables available on the Home Office website. Out of 3,460 serving a custodial sentence, 2,494 were for non-violent offence types. These comprise all offence types except those categorised as violence against the person and robbery.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of prisoners in England and Wales are serving sentences of fewer than 12 months. [65796]

Fiona Mactaggart: Information on the population serving sentences of less than 12 months in prisons in England and Wales is contained in Table 1 of the February 2006 population in custody monthly tables. The proportion of prisoners among the sentenced population serving sentences of less than 12 months was 13 per cent. A copy of this publication is available at the following web-site: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/omcs.html.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* complaints, *(b)* investigations and *(c)* disciplinary actions were dealt with by governors at each London prison relating to (i) prison support staff, (ii) prison officers and (iii) prison governors in each of the last five years for which figures are available; what the average length of

investigation was, broken down by grade; what proportion resulted in disciplinary action being taken, broken down by grade; and what disciplinary actions were taken, broken down by grade. [66547]

Fiona Mactaggart: The level of detail required by the hon. Member could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the statistical correlation between participation in education in custody and rates of reoffending upon release. [66548]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Research, Development and Statistics unit in the National Offender Management Service is conducting a reconviction analysis based on information collected in three resettlement surveys undertaken in 2001, 2003 and 2004. In these surveys prisoners nearing discharge were asked about their basic skills, education, training, employment, accommodation and drug use before prison, as well as on interventions they had received in prison and their family ties. The surveys were representative of prisoners nearing release in England and Wales. Reconviction details for the offenders in the surveys have been obtained from Police National Computer data. There are nearly 5,000 cases in the final dataset.

The main objective of the analysis is to increase understanding of links between resettlement factors (including education in custody) and reconviction, and to support future work on the effectiveness of measures to reduce re-offending.

A report on the reconviction analysis will be published.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many investigations have been conducted into governors at each London prison in each of the last five years; what allegations have caused the investigations to be launched; what proportion of investigations concluded have recommended disciplinary action; what disciplinary action was taken in each case; and if he will make a statement. [66552]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information is as follows

Disciplinary investigations in London prisons between 2002 and 2006 to date

Belmarsh

2002: One investigation into alleged assault.

2004: Two investigations into allegations of racism, and racism and bullying. None of the investigations recommended disciplinary action.

Brixton

2004: One investigation into illegal planting of listening device. Disciplinary action recommended but charge dismissed at hearing.

Feltham

2005: One investigation into ABH. The case was referred to the police and the governor grade resigned following criminal conviction.

Holloway

2006: Ongoing investigation into racial harassment. It would not be appropriate to comment further.

Latchmere House

Nil.

Pentonville

2002: One investigation into discrimination. The complaint was withdrawn and no action taken.

2003: One investigation into harassment, advice and guidance was recommended and given.

2005: One investigation into poor performance of duties, advice and guidance was recommended and given.

2006: One investigation ongoing into being unfit for duty.

Wandsworth

2004: One investigation into poor performance of duties, advice and guidance recommended and given. One investigation into inappropriate behaviour, no action recommended.

2005: One investigation into inappropriate behaviour, no action was recommended. One investigation into poor performance of duties, advice and guidance was recommended and given. One investigation into harassment, advice and guidance was recommended and given.

Wormwood Scrubs

Nil.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will publish the report of the Schito inquiry into the allocation of places at HM Prison Wandsworth. [66553]

Fiona Mactaggart: This was a disciplinary investigation and the information obtained was for the specific purpose of informing internal disciplinary processes. It will not be published.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will publish the report of the recent performance testing exercise at HM Prison Wandsworth. [66554]

Fiona Mactaggart: The service level review carried out for the performance test of Wandsworth prison is an internal management tool produced for the London Area Manager. The Regional Offender Manager for London now independently monitors the service level agreement. There are no plans to publish the report.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* director of personnel, *(b)* director of finance, *(c)* doctor, *(d)* pharmacist, *(e)* pharmacy technician, *(f)* training manager and *(g)* chaplain posts in the Prison Service have been advertised in each of the last 12 months; in which (i) publications and (ii) professional journals the posts were advertised; how many applications were received for each post; and what proportion of (A) applicants, (B) those interviewed and (C) those appointed were from each ethnic group. [66555]

Fiona Mactaggart: Responsibility for recruitment into the public sector Prison Service is devolved to local areas and detailed records are not maintained centrally. Ethnicity information is collated for diversity monitoring and is included in the table. Information on total posts advertised or where they were advertised is not available but total numbers recruited have been provided. The outstanding information is not collated centrally could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

HM Prison Service in England and Wales—recruitment in the last 12 months

Post	Staff recruited	Average number of applicants per post	Proportion of applicants recorded as black and minority ethnic (BME) (percentage)	Proportion of applicants offered an interview recorded as BME (percentage)	Proportion of successful applicants recorded as BME (percentage)
Director of Personnel	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
Director of Finance	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
Doctor	0	—	—	—	—
Pharmacist	7	4.0	29	22	17
Pharmacy Technician	14	3.3	38	33	31
Training Manager	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
Chaplain	31	4.7	54	46	39

[1] Not a recognised grade and therefore not recorded in this way.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what action he is taking to avoid duplication of management roles by way of the operation of prison clusters; [66557]

(2) what proportion of staff were appointed to their preferred role as part of the Prison Service's Sheppey Improvement Team project; [66558]

(3) what the cost of the work of the Prison Service's Sheppey Improvement Team was; and what defined output improvements were delivered. [66559]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Prison Service will consider clustering prison establishments, where doing so will achieve more effective and efficient performance within that group of establishments. A review of management roles and responsibilities is key to avoiding duplication, and is a significant aspect of the clustering process and essential to realising benefits.

Of the 796 staff who were asked to express a preference:

75 per cent. got their preference;

12 per cent. did not respond;

13 per cent. were placed into posts.

The cost of the Sheppey Improvement Team was £296,741. This is the cost of the central team and does not include the cost of the contributions from other groups in the Prison Service.

The proposals approved by the evaluation team demonstrate value for money, more constructive activities and improved resettlement opportunities for prisoners. The process will deliver improvements in several measurable indicators including key performance targets and compliance with standards.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what the operational reasons were in each case for governors at HM Prison Wandsworth to travel to *(a)* Japan, *(b)* Australia and *(c)* Antigua to escort repatriated prisoners back to the United Kingdom in the last 12 months; [66563]

(2) what estimate he has made of the cost of *(a)* prison officers and *(b)* governor grades travelling to (i) Japan, (ii) Australia and (iii) Antigua to escort repatriated prisoners back to the United Kingdom in the last 12 months. [66564]

Fiona Mactaggart: No operational managers (governor grades) have escorted repatriated prisoners to any country in the last 12 months. The costs, excluding air fares, of the prison officers undertaking escorts of repatriated prisoners to the countries in question is as follows: Japan—0, Antigua—£20,202, Australia—£8,466.63. These figures include salary costs.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the implementation of the Prison Service Violence Reduction Strategy. [66568]

Fiona Mactaggart: The national Violence Reduction Strategy was launched in May 2004. The national strategy requires each establishment to have in place a local Violence Reduction Strategy appropriate to needs. A whole prison approach is encouraged, with the aim of reducing violence and fear of violence. A focus on personal safety, supporting victims, and repairing the physical and emotional harm caused by violence or abuse, links closely with the suicide prevention strategy.

Prisons are audited against Prison Service Standard 53, Violence Reduction, which identifies strengths and areas for improvement at each establishment. This evidence suggests that many establishments have implemented thorough local strategies, which were formulated with the close involvement of focus groups of staff and prisoners. A revised violence reduction strategy is planned for 2007 to reflect expected learning from the forthcoming report of the inquiry into the death of Zahid Mubarek and from a recent research study, which was undertaken to identify good practice in implementing the violence reduction strategy in the first year. There has also been an operational review of violence reduction, many of the recommendations from which have already been adopted in prisons.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will extend the Goods Again project at HM Prison Onley to other establishments. [66569]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Goods Again project, which involves a partnership between the community sector, Onley prison and the local authority to provide an electrical goods re-use service, is still in its infancy. As the scheme progresses and develops, consideration will be given to whether it is possible and appropriate to expand its use to other prisons and areas.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what reason juveniles are being detained at HM Prison Woodhill; what facilities are designated for juveniles being detained there; what plans he has to move juvenile detainees from HM Prison Woodhill; and when he plans to complete those moves. [66571]

Fiona Mactaggart: Three juveniles are detained at Woodhill because of the security risk they present. The Youth Justice Board, is currently satisfied with the arrangements in place.

The juveniles are in a self-contained wing in single rooms. They are permitted their own clothing, association, they attend education and gymnasium and have access to work, a radio, CDs and a games console. Subject to behaviour, a television is provided. They are able to have regular social visits, and access to the telephone.

An alternative suitable location which offers an appropriate level of security is being sought.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on implementation of anti-bullying procedures at HM Prison Woodhill. [66572]

Fiona Mactaggart: A Violence Reduction Strategy is in place at Woodhill which incorporates an anti-bullying management process. A Safer Custody Coordinator has been appointed. Staff are encouraged to complete Security Information Reports to enable analysis of bullying at Woodhill and thereby help to direct resources and interventions to address bullying.

Bullying is known to be more prevalent among young offenders at Woodhill. Action taken to reduce bullying among this group includes:

An anti-bullying course has been developed specifically for young offenders at the prison to raise awareness of bullying issues, and to encourage young offenders to address their behaviour. To date, 106 young offenders have attended the course;

Development of an anti-bullying video with Stantonbury Campus aimed at highlighting bullying in prisons to encourage prisoners to change their behaviour;

Staff training to raise awareness of bullying issues and to enable staff to deliver the anti-bullying course to prisoners;

Team building morning held to develop relationships between prisoners on the young offender unit;

Young offenders have their own dedicated gym session to address the problem of bullying in the showers.

The work with young offenders will be extended to the adult population.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action he is taking to improve the relationship between staff and inmates at HM Prison Leeds. [66575]

Fiona Mactaggart: Measures to improve staff prisoner relationships have been agreed as part of an establishment performance improvement plan and work is being undertaken by the head of prisoner services and the decency team to ensure that staff engage appropriately with prisoners. Work is also ongoing to develop request and complaints processes to ensure that both staff and prisoners have confidence in the system.

The prison service director of operations and area manager have agreed to a reduction of 104 in the operational capacity (from 1,254 down to 1,150). Despite this significant reduction the same resources have been maintained to facilitate staff in improving staff prisoner relationships at Leeds.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent assessment he has made of the use of the special cell at HM Prison Leeds. [66592]

Fiona Mactaggart: Following HM Chief Inspector of Prison's inspection, the special cell is only used where full relocation is necessary for violent and/or refractory prisoners. Each usage is authorised by a governor and a quality assurance checklist has been implemented. Guidance ensures that all paperwork explains why the special accommodation has been used and that this is never to be used solely for preventing self- harm. Regular contact with the prisoner takes place, at no more than 15-minute intervals, with staff/prisoner interactions recorded in the unit log sheet.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action he is taking to improve the physical working conditions for staff at prisons. [66593]

Fiona Mactaggart: Prison management have an obligation to ensure that all staff work in a safe and clean environment. As part of the strategic development of the prison estate, the National Offender Management Service will improve, where possible, those facilities used by staff as well as by prisoners.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what the cost will be of the Prison Service's listen to improve scheme; [66594]

(2) what budget is available for the development of local people plans at *(a)* each prison and *(b)* Prison Service headquarters; and what mechanisms are in place to ensure (i) efficiency, (ii) effectiveness and (iii) value for money; [66595]

(3) how participants in the Prison Service's People Strategy will be selected; [66596]

(4) if he will make a statement on the launch of the Prison Service's People Strategy. [66597]

Fiona Mactaggart: The public sector Prison Service launched its People Strategy in January 2006. The People Strategy will be delivered locally through Local People Plans developed from Listen to Improve groups. These are staff consultation and involvement groups to gather staff views on what should be addressed in the Local People Plan, with staff volunteering to take part. The direct costs of facilitating the Listen to Improve groups were £140,500 in 2005–06 and are forecast to be £222,000 in 2006–07. A breakdown of full costs, by prison establishment, could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. Implementation of the People Strategy is overseen by a programme board and subject to regular review by the Prison Service's Change Management Board.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the job evaluation scheme for the Prison Service in the eastern region. [66598]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Prison Service is currently developing a new job evaluation system (JES) to cover the majority of its directly employed staff. As part of this process, a pilot exercise has been run in the service's eastern region, which involved interviewing a representative sample of about 100 postholders. The results of these interviews are currently being analysed and will inform the future development of the JES. The work on JES is an essential building block in the service's strategy for pay and workforce reform.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the Prison Service's deaths in custody initiative. [66600]

Fiona Mactaggart: I refer the hon. Member to the answers I gave on 15 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 2313–14W and on 29 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1038–39W.

Mr. Burrowes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 20 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 256, on access to drugs in prison, what steps are being taken to combat access to illegal drugs in prisons. [66687]

Fiona Mactaggart: A comprehensive range of measures is in place to reduce the supply of drugs into prisons. It includes:

passive and active drug dogs;

closed circuit television systems and fixed and low-level furniture in social visits area;

closed visits and visit bans on visitors suspected of smuggling drugs;

sharing of intelligence with police about drug routes into prisons;

the use of the Supply Reduction Good Practice Guide;

mandatory drug testing;

local searching strategies; and

deployment of mobile phone detectors and analysis of recovered phones for intelligence purposes.

Since 1996–97 the level of prison drug misuse as measured by the random mandatory drug testing programme has fallen by more than 50 per cent.

Racially Motivated Crime (Statistics)

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the scale was of the inaccuracies in the racially motivated crime statistics that caused them to be withdrawn; what the cause of the error was; and when corrected statistics will be published. [66725]

Hazel Blears: The publication of 'Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System' published on Thursday 30 March 2006 was withdrawn following the identification of apparent errors for four police forces areas (Hertfordshire, North Yorkshire, Dorset and Nottinghamshire) in Table 3.1 covering racially-motivated offences reported to the police.

These errors were caused by amendments from Hertfordshire, North Yorkshire and Dorset which had been notified to the Home Office having not being included in the final published document. No error had been notified for Nottinghamshire.

Officials are now checking all the figures included in this publication with the police and other agencies before the publication will be reissued.

Respect Task Force

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time employees work in his Department's Respect Task Force. [66309]

Hazel Blears: There are 28 full-time employees and three part-time employees currently working in the Respect Task Force.

Segregation Units (Prisons)

James Duddridge: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the progress of the review of segregation units in prisons. [66994]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Prison Service is currently undertaking a review of the segregation performance standard and the segregation policies set out in Prison Service Order 1700. It is anticipated that the review will be completed in March 2007.

Sex Offender Vetting

Joan Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the proposals to develop a new vetting and barring scheme will include provisions to bar those on the sex offenders register from holding office *(a)* as a local councillor and *(b)* on a police authority; and if he will make a statement. [44251]

Ruth Kelly: I have been asked to reply as my Department has responsibility for the new vetting and barring scheme, under which people will be barred where they present a risk of harm either to children and/or vulnerable adults, including due to inclusion on the sex offenders register. Depending on the risk they present, people will be barred from working closely with either children and/or vulnerable adults which would include caring for, training or supervising children or vulnerable adults, working in establishments that children or vulnerable adults use (such as schools and care homes) or holding positions of authority in relation to children or vulnerable adults (such as local councillors with responsibilities in relation to children's or adults' services).

My Department does not have responsibility for the vetting procedures for local councillors or for employment with the police authorities, this lies with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Home Office respectively.

Sheppey Offender Management Pilot

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the Sheppey Offender Management Pilot. [66556]

Fiona Mactaggart: The three prisons on the Isle of Sheppey have been conducting a small scale pilot of the National Offender Management Model since 7 November 2005. 183 prisoners were involved in the pilot between seven November 2005 and 31 March 2006. The aim of the pilot is to put into practice the national offender management model, part of which deals specifically with the identified necessary interventions required for the individual offenders. The results of the pilot are currently being evaluated. The sentence plan which outlines the interventions is owned by the community based offender manager and delivered by the custody based offender supervisor.

Swinfen Hall

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of inmates at HM YOI Swinfen Hall had access to first night procedures in each year since 1997. [66574]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information is not available in the form requested. In general, all prisoners received into Swinfen Hall are provided with access to first night procedures, and have been since 1997, though the nature of these arrangements has changed and been developed over this period.

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will withdraw the UK's Reservation to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. [66666]

Fiona Mactaggart: The UK retains two reservations from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The first of these relates to mixing of children and adults and states:

> "Where at any time there is a lack of suitable accommodation or adequate facilities for a particular individual in any institution in which young offenders are detained, or where the mixing of adults and children is deemed to be mutually beneficial, the United Kingdom reserves the right not to apply article 37*(c)* in so far as those provisions require children who are detained to be accommodated separately from adults."

The second reservation refers to Immigration and Nationality and states:

> "UK reserves the right to apply such legislation, in so far as it relates to the entry into, stay in and departure from the UK of those who do not have the right under the law of the UK to enter and remain in the UK, and to the acquisition and possession of citizenship."

UK law honours the spirit of the Convention in relation to the standards of care and treatment available to children in the UK, including asylum-seeking children. We believe it is necessary to retain this reservation because it preserves the integrity of our immigration laws. The UK has entered other, similar reservations in respect of other human rights instruments. We are satisfied that asylum-seeking children in the UK receive adequate care, protection and support.

Regarding children mixing with adults: we have made great progress in achieving separation of under and over-18s in custody, for example by placing girls under 17 in non-prison service accommodation and by providing new, special units for 17 year old girls. We will therefore be considering whether there is a continuing need for the Reservation against Article 37*(c)* of the Convention; and this review is due to begin shortly.

CABINET OFFICE

Departmental Websites

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will list *(a)* the websites operated by his Department, including the Cabinet Office and *(b)* the reports placed on the internet in March 2006, indicating in each case whether paper copies were also made available. [65216]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The websites operated by the Department are shown in the table.

Website	*URL*
Cabinet Office	www.cabinet-office.gov.uk
Chartermark	www.chartermark.gov.uk
Infosec	www.seriousaboutinfosec.gov.uk
Better Regulation Submissions	www.betterregulation.gov.uk
Prime Minister's Strategy Unit	www.strategy.gov.uk
Government Communication Network	www.comms.gov.uk
Chief Information Officers Council	www.cio.gov.uk
UK Resilience	www.ukresilience.info
Preparing for Emergencies	www.preparingforemergencies.gov.uk
Emergency Planning College	www.epcollege.gov.uk
National Steering Committee on Warning and Informing the Public	www.nscwip.info
Civil Service	www.civilservice.gov.uk
Civil Service Pensions	www.civilservice-pensions.gov.uk
Civil Service Diversity	www.diversity-whatworks.gov.uk
Civil Service Recruitment Gateway	www.careers.civil-service.gov.uk
Faststream	www.faststream.gov.uk
Diversity Faststream	www.diversity.faststream.gov.uk
European Faststream	www.european.faststream.gov.uk
Interchange	www.interchange.gov.uk
EU Careers	www.eu-careers-gateway.gov.uk
Civil Service Jobs	www.servicewide.civil-service.gov.uk
Public Appointments Unit	www.publicappointments.gov.uk
Public Service Leaders Scheme	www.publicserviceleadersscheme.gov.uk
Civil Service Payclub	www.civil-service.net
UK Honours	www.honours.gov.uk
GovTalk	www.govtalk.gov.uk
Civil Service Appeal Board	www.civilserviceappealboard.gov.uk
Civil Service Commissioners	www.civilservicecommissioners.gov.uk
House of Lords Appointments Commission	www.lords-appointments.gov.uk

Website	URL
Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments	www.ocpa.gov.uk
Committee on Standards in Public Life	www.public-standards.gov.uk
Better Regulation Commission	www.brc.gov.uk
The Equalities Review	www.theequalitiesreview.org.uk

The following reports were published by the Cabinet Office in March 2006.

Cabinet Office—"Race Equality Scheme"

Cabinet Office—"Customer-focused Leadership Learning Resources"

Cabinet Office—"Local Elections in England in 2006: Guidance for Civil Servants on Conduct"

UK Resilience—"Protecting Against Terrorism: Guidance for Businesses from the Security Service"—This is not a Cabinet Office document, but we advised on some of the content.

UK Resilience—"Hurricanes Katrina and Rita: a Perspective"

Better Regulation Executive—"Making a Difference: Safe and Secure Data Sharing Between Health and Adult Social Care Staff"

Better Regulation Executive—"Consent Regimes: Reducing Unnecessary Bureaucracy"

Chief Information Officers Council—"Transformational Government Implementation plan"—A two page summary was made available in paper version.

Committee on Standards in Public Life—"Annual Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life 2005"—A paper version was made available.

"Equalities Review—Interim Report"—A paper version was made available, including a large print version.

Except where indicated, paper copies were not made available. But the reports were published on the internet in print-friendly PDF format and, in most cases, the relevant section of the Cabinet Office will provide paper copies on request.

Equal Pay

John Bercow: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what steps are being taken by the Government to close the gender pay gap in the Civil Service. [65627]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The Government recognise that it is good employer practice to ensure that pay and conditions of service are fair and free from any form of gender bias. It demonstrated its commitment to addressing the gender pay gap by requiring every department and agency to undertake an equal pay review and prepare an action plan in 2003.

Cabinet Office encourages departments to monitor progress against their action plans and review their pay systems following implementation of annual pay awards. Departments should also carry out full equality proofing of their reward policies every three years. Where there is evidence of pay inequalities, departments are expected to address the inequalities in an appropriate manner.

The Cabinet Office also undertook an equal pay review for the Senior Civil Service (SCS) in 2002 which has been re-examined each year since then as part of the Government's evidence to the Senior Salaries Review Body.

The Government are committed to ensuring that pay systems in the public sector are fair and non discriminatory, reflecting the contribution of the individual.

Ministerial Travel

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister without Portfolio what mileage was undertaken in February by the car allocated to the Minister Without Portfolio. [65221]

Mr. McCartney: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 29 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1032W.

Office of Public Service Reform

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will list the changes in Government policy that resulted from recommendations of the Office of Public Service Reform. [65225]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The Office of Public Service Reform (OPSR) initiated a wide range of public service improvement work, relating in particular to customer focus, much of which is now being used in Departments. More specifically OPSR was responsible for:

Developing public service reform strategy (the Prime Minister's "Four Principles of Reform" and "People at the Heart of Public Services")

Identifying the main generic factors that determine peoples' satisfaction with public services (eg, delivery, timeliness, information, professionalism, and staff attitude)

Developing a range of service delivery performance improvement methodologies for departments (eg, delivery landscape reviews, end-to-end delivery chain reviews, agency review)

Developing Charter Mark as a cutting edge of customer service practice

Developing Government policy on inspection of public services.

Promoting the development of more systematic pay and work force strategies and stronger leadership to reinforce user focus.

Parliamentary Accountability

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister without Portfolio if he will set out the steps he takes to ensure parliamentary accountability for his actions. [65269]

Mr. McCartney: In accordance with the requirements of the Ministerial Code, it is for Ministers in charge of Departments to answer questions on the work of their Departments. In line with the practices of previous administrations, I do not have a slot on the rota for oral questions as I am not in charge of a Department.

Written questions which are relevant to my ministerial responsibilities are for me to answer in the normal way.

Parliamentary Questions

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister without Portfolio for what reasons written parliamentary questions tabled to him by the hon. Member for Lewes on 22 March were answered by the Parliamentary Secretary in the Cabinet Office. [65252]

Mr. McCartney: This was due to an administrative error.

I have written to the hon. Member today to apologise for the error and the Official Reporter will be asked to correct the *Official Report*.

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister without Portfolio if he will make a statement on his practices in respect of written parliamentary questions tabled to him for answer. [65253]

Mr. McCartney: I respond to written parliamentary questions in accordance with the requirements of the Ministerial Code.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Arson

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the total number of arson attacks was for the 100 *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in Northern Ireland with the (i) highest and (ii) lowest percentage of children receiving free school meals in each of the past 10 years. [66091]

Angela E. Smith: The information on the number of arson attacks in schools refer to those with the highest and lowest percentages of pupils with free school meal entitlement. This was used instead of pupils receiving free school meals, as entitlement is a better measure of need. The information on the number of arson attacks in the past 10 years is not available. The Education and Library Boards have provided the following information for maintained and controlled schools for the years 2002–03 to 2005–06.

Percentage

	2002–03		2003–04		2004–05		2005–06	
	High	*Low*	*High*	*Low*	*High*	*Low*	*High*	*Low*
Primary	3	0	1	0	1	1	3	0
Post Prim	4	2	5	5	2	0	4	1

The information for voluntary grammar and grant maintained integrated schools in the form requested is not readily available and is being requested. I will write to you with the information as soon as possible.

Average Annual Industrial Wages

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the ratio was of average annual industrial wage levels to average terrace house prices in Northern Ireland between 1995 and 2005. [65710]

Mr. Hanson: There is no official estimate available for the average sale price of terrace properties in Northern Ireland during this period. Published figures on the sale price of new terrace properties (including town houses) are provided in Table 1.

The average gross annual earnings[1] in Northern Ireland for all employees (i.e. full and part-time) working in the manufacturing sector according to the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) are provided in Table 2.

Table 1

	Average sale price of new terrace properties (£000)
1995–96	51
1996–97	53
1997–98	64
1998–99	84
1999–2000	72
2000–01	81
2001–02	92
2002–03	103
2003–04	106
2004–05	117

Table 2

	Mean gross annual earnings in the NI Manufacturing Sector (£000[1])
1995	n/a[3]
1996	n/a[3]
1997	14.7
1998	15.7
1999	15.6
2000	16.6
2001	17.5
2002	18.3
2003	18.8
2004[2]	19.7
2005[2]	19.7

[1] Please note that the above information relates to employees on adult rates who have been in the same job for more than a year.

[2] Implementation of Office for National Statistics (ONS) recommendations to improve the quality of the survey have resulted in a discontinuity with earlier data from 2004 (see the ONS Review of Distribution of Earnings Statistics report at http://www.statistics.gov.uk).

[3] ASHE statistics prior to 1997 are currently not available (n/a).

Notes:

Housing

1. Estimates of the average sale price of existing terrace properties (2002–05) are being produced, but are not currently available.

2. The figures shown on average sale price of new terrace properties are taken from NI Housing Statistics, but this taken in isolation does not represent the housing market for terrace properties. In particular, new terrace houses are more expensive than new semi-detached houses, whereas the same is not believed to be true for existing properties.

3. In the granting of mortgages, lenders take account of the entire income of the purchaser(s), including the income of partners, which may be earned in the non-industrial sector.

Earnings

1. The Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) is a UK wide survey that provides a wide range of information on hourly, weekly and annual earnings by gender, work patterns, industry and occupation inter alia. The Office for National Statistics (ONS)

carry out ASHE in Great Britain and it is carried out by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI) in Northern Ireland.

2. ASHE is a sample survey and uses the Inland Revenue's PA YE system as the main sampling frame. To improve coverage and hence make the survey more representative, supplementary information was collected since 2004 on businesses not registered for VAT and for people who changed or started new jobs between the sample selection and the survey reference period. The improvements have caused a discontinuity with earlier available data (1997–2003) when no supplementary data was collected. The data on earnings is obtained not from the employees, but from their employers under the authority of the Statistics of Trade and Employment (Northern Ireland) Order 1988. Information collected is treated as strictly confidential and is used only for statistical purposes.

3. A recent National Statistics review of earnings statistics recommended that median values (the figure below which 50 per cent. of values fall) are used in preference to mean values (the sum divided by the number of values) when reporting earnings. The mean and the median measure different things and can both be appropriate measures depending on what the user is trying to measure. The mean measures the average amount earned by individuals but in a skew distribution such as earnings this measure is susceptible to small numbers of very high earners, whereas the median measures the amount earned by the individual in the middle of a ranked distribution. However, in this instance the mean values have been used to ensure equivalence with the average used to report on house prices in the response.

Curriculum and Assessment

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 13 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 2033W, on curriculum and assessment when he expects to be in a position to write to the hon. Lady for North Down with the Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment's advice. [68091]

Angela E. Smith: Since the hon. Lady's previous question, the Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment has continued to work on a detailed response to the points raised by Dr. Morrison. This material is now available and will be sent to the hon. Lady and placed in the Library of the House.

Domestic Rates

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when he expects the Department of Finance and Personnel in Northern Ireland to complete the valuation of domestic properties in connection with the rating of those properties. [66987]

Angela E. Smith: The valuation phase of domestic revaluation will be completed by the end of May 2006 and publication of the draft schedule of values will take place on a phased basis over a seven-week period commencing the end of June 2006.

Draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the expected timescale is for a public inquiry into the draft Belfast metropolitan area plan. [67623]

Angela E. Smith: The Department of the Environment has recently written to the Planning Appeals Commission formally requesting a public inquiry into the draft Belfast metropolitan area plan (BMAP), published in November 2004, and Amendment No. 1 to the draft plan, published in February 2006. The PAC's formal acceptance of the request and their response as to when the inquiry might begin are currently awaited. The arrangements and timetable for the inquiry will thereafter become the responsibility of the PAC.

Drug Addicts

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many registered drug addicts there are in each *(a)* ward, *(b)* county and *(c)* constituency in Northern Ireland; what percentage of the total this represents in each case; and if he will make a statement. [67932]

Mr. Woodward: The Northern Ireland Addicts Index Database holds information on all those persons registered in concurrence with the Misuse of Drugs (Notification of and Supply to Addicts) (Northern Ireland) Regulations 1973. It is based on a specific list of drugs, not necessarily all those which are used by addicts, and is dependent on GPs and other doctors filling in and submitting the required form. It does not represent the full total of those currently in treatment for problem drug use in Northern Ireland. The latest figures from the Database shows that in 2004/2005 there were 239 'registered drug addicts'. Their distribution by Health and Social Services Board is provided in the following table:

Registered addicts by Health and Social Services Board 2005

	Number	*Percentage*
Northern	102	43
Eastern	97	41
Western	20	8
Southern	15	6
Total	[1]239	100

[1] This figure includes 5 individuals for whom Health and Social Services Board could not be established.

Note:

The data collected for the database does not facilitate description of those on the register by council ward or Parliamentary constituency.

The Government take the problem use of illicit drugs very seriously and will continue to ensure appropriate and accessible treatment and support is available across Northern Ireland. We will also continue to promote activities aimed at reducing illicit drug use. Further details of action planned to address this issue will be found in the New Strategic Direction for Alcohol and Drugs 2006–2011 to be launched on May 8.

Economic Growth

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the rate of economic growth has been in Northern Ireland for each of the last 10 years. [67074]

Angela E. Smith: Economic growth rates for the UK regions are derived from the regional gross value added statistics released by the Office of National Statistics. The ten most recent growth rates for Northern Ireland are illustrated in the following table. It should, however, be noted that these are on a nominal basis, as reliable regional price deflators are unavailable to convert them into real terms.

The rate of economic growth in Northern Ireland for 1994–2004

	GVA at current basic prices (£ million)	Growth rate (Percentage)
1994	13431	—
1995	14352	6.86
1996	15413	7.39
1997	16283	5.64
1998	17274	6.09
1999	18077	4.65
2000	18918	4.65
2001	19817	4.75
2002	20825	5.09
2003	21952	5.41
2004	23058	5.04

Emergency Drills

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on what dates since October 2001, local authorities and emergency services have carried out nuclear emergency drills in co-operation with UK agencies; and where these drills were carried out. [22763]

Angela E. Smith: Government Departments in Northern Ireland have not held any nuclear emergency drills involving local authorities and emergency services since October 2001.

Employment Statistics

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what change there has been in the number of people employed full-time on farms in Northern Ireland over the past 10 years. [67549]

Angela E. Smith: The number of full-time farmers in Northern Ireland has fallen from 23,400 in 1995 to 18,200 in 2005, a decline of 5,200.

The number of other full-time workers on farms in Northern Ireland has fallen from 3,600 in 1995 to 2,600 in 2005, a decline of 1,000.

Farming (Fraudulent Claims)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people have been successfully prosecuted under the *(a)* Animals (Records) Order (Northern Ireland) 1997, *(b)* Sheep Annual Premium Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1992 and *(c)* Integrated Administration and Control Systems Regulations 1993 in each of the last five years; and what the total cost was of fraudulent claims made in each case in each year. [65368]

Angela E. Smith: The information is as follows:

Animals (Records) Order and Sheep Annual Premium Convictions

Year of conviction	Scheme year	Number of convictions	Cost of fraud (£)
2001–02	2001	2	4,448.00
2002–03	2002	3	6,556.00
2003–04	2003	9	33,672.00
2004–05	2004	8	51,674.00

Animals (Records) Order and Sheep Annual Premium Convictions

Year of conviction	Scheme year	Number of convictions	Cost of fraud (£)
2005–06	2004	5	15,131.00
	2003	1	1,804.00
Total			16,935.00
Total		28	113,285.00

Note:
Nil prosecutions for Animal (Records) Order alone.

Sheep Annual Premium (SAPS) only convictions

Year of conviction	Scheme year	Number of convictions	Cost of fraud (£)
2002–03	2002	6	28,487.00
2003–04	2003	12	30,252.00
2004–05	2004	3	7,966.00
2005–06	2004	1	1,950.00
Total		22	68,655.00

Integrated Administration and Control System (IACS) convictions

Year of conviction	Scheme year	Number of convictions	Cost of fraud (£)
2004–05	2003	3	3,732.00
2005–06	2004	2	8,301.00
Total		5	12,033.00

Note:
No IACS convictions prior to 2004–05

Female Council Candidates

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many female candidates there are in the Northern Ireland council elections. [67072]

Mr. Hanson: According to the Electoral Office for Northern Ireland's records, 201 candidates at the 2005 district council elections were female. This was out of a total of 918 candidates and represents just under 22 per cent. of the total. There are no local council elections taking place in Northern Ireland this year.

Government Taskforce on Needs

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland which areas are being targeted by the Government taskforce established to assess the needs of those areas; and which civil and elected representatives have been consulted by the taskforce in each of these areas. [64357]

Mr. Hanson: The Taskforce to Address the Needs of Protestant Working Class Communities did not target any specific areas but rather Protestant communities across Northern Ireland as a whole. The Taskforce Report was published on 4 April 2006 and is available at www.dsdni.gov.uk.

The Taskforce met with representatives of:

the Church of Ireland and the Presbyterian and Methodist churches;

Evangelical Contribution on Northern Ireland;

the Orange Order;

Protestant/Unionist/Loyalist Network;

Rural Community Network;

Diversity Challenges;

Northern Ireland Housing Executive;

North Belfast Community Action Unit;

PSNI;

Community Relations Council;

Institute of Directors;

Confederation of British Industry; and

political parties.

A number of individual community activists also met the Taskforce.

As Minister with responsibility for Social Development I undertook a series of consultations on the Taskforce Report and have completed fifty meetings with civic and elected representatives of the Protestant community as part of this process.

Greyhound Racing

Dr. Alasdair McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what legislation applies to the use of greyhounds in greyhound racing in Northern Ireland. [66102]

Angela E. Smith: Under the Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 1972 all animals are protected from unnecessary cruelty or suffering, though there are no specific provisions on the welfare of racing greyhounds.

Housing

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average housing price in Northern Ireland has been in each of the last 10 years. [67061]

Angela E. Smith: The Valuation and Lands Agency maintains a database of house sales, which covers the period from mid-2002 to present. Prior to mid-2002 this data was not recorded in a way that permits statistical analysis, except at disproportionate cost.

The average house price in Northern Ireland for each year in which data is available is as follows:

	£
2002 (2nd half)	97,067
2003	105,558
2004	110,760
2005	116,914

Housing Benefits

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many households in Northern Ireland he estimates will be entitled to housing benefit in 2006–07. [68102]

Mr. Hanson: It is estimated that there will be a total of 183,500 households entitled to housing benefit in 2006–07.

Inflation

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the rate of inflation was in Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 years. [67063]

Angela E. Smith: Statistics have not yet been developed to enable the production of reliable regional inflation rates within the UK. However, research by the Office of National Statistics indicated that the cost of living in Northern Ireland, during 2004, was approximately three to five per cent. below the UK average.

InterTradeIreland

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what recent assessment he has made of the *(a)* quality and *(b)* performance of InterTradeIreland. [64617]

Angela E. Smith: InterTradeIreland's business plan is subject to scrutiny by the two Sponsor Departments (North and South) on an annual basis; and its annual accounts are examined separately and certified by the Comptroller and Auditor General for Northern Ireland and the Irish Comptroller and Auditor General.

The Body's activities are also subject to regular monitoring by the two Sponsor Departments, who are satisfied with the overall quality and performance since its inception.

Invest Northern Ireland

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much land held by Invest Northern Ireland is available for industrial use in each of Northern Ireland's constituencies. [66403]

Angela E. Smith: The amount of land held by Invest Northern Ireland which is available for industrial use in each of Northern Ireland's constituencies is as follows. These figures do not include 1,885 acres (763 ha) of land held by Invest NI that is currently in industrial use.

Parliamentary constituency	*Land available for industrial use*	
	Acres	*Hectares*
Belfast East	0.0	0.0
Belfast North	2.9	1.2
Belfast South	0.0	0.0
Belfast West	22.3	9.0
East Antrim	29.9	12.1
East Londonderry	67.3	27.2
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	97.5	39.5
Foyle	122.3	49.5
Lagan Valley	34.6	14.0
Mid Ulster	35.9	14.5
Newry and Armagh	9.9	4.0
North Antrim	43.0	17.4
North Down	20.1	8.1
South Antrim	135.3	54.8
South Down	55.9	22.6
Strangford	8.6	3.5
Upper Bann	212.6	86.0
West Tyrone	19.7	8.0
Total	917.8	371.4

Legal Advice

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps have been taken to ensure a panel of barristers is available to the Northern Ireland Administration to provide legal advice. [66508]

Angela E. Smith: Three panels of junior counsel and one of senior counsel were appointed by the Attorney General in April 2004 after consultation with the Secretary of State to support the work of Senior and Junior Crown Counsel in providing advice to and representation for both the Northern Ireland departments and the Whitehall departments operating in Northern Ireland. The appointments were made following an open competition and selection by a board comprising representatives of the devolved and Westminster administrations, with two independent members.

Measuring Public Opinion

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland which organisations or companies have been employed by his Department on measuring public opinion in each of the last three years; and how much has been spent in each case. [44742]

Mr. Hanson: The following organisations and companies have been employed on measuring public opinion during the last three years; the Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency; Queen's University Belfast; University of Central Lancashire & University of Manchester; Independent Research Solutions; Gallup Europe; Anderson Spratt Group; A V Browne; and Millward Brown.

The total amount paid in each of the last three years to these organisations and companies for projects in which public opinion was measured is provided in the following table.

It is not possible to distinguish between the amount spent on measuring public opinion and other activities within the same project.

To disclose the amount paid to individual private sector companies would be prejudicial to commercial interests.

	Total spent (£)
2002–03	145,777
2003–04	416,113
2004–05	233,063

Planning

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) how many planning refusal notices have been issued in each district council area in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years; [25778]

(2) how many planning approval decisions have been issued in each of the last five years in each district council area in Northern Ireland. [25779]

Angela E. Smith: Details of how many applications were refused or approved since 2000 are set out in the following tables.

Table 1: Decisions issued by council area between 2000 and 2005

Council area	*2000–01*		*2001–02*		*2002–03*	
	Refusal	*Approval*	*Refusal*	*Approval*	*Refusal*	*Approval*
Antrim	86	606	48	624	49	812
Ards	78	687	81	800	64	924
Armagh	26	1,101	46	1,061	44	1,093
Ballymena	18	714	16	760	18	917
Ballymoney	23	401	22	426	22	450
Banbridge	36	790	40	770	21	956
Belfast	118	1,964	95	2,262	89	2,115
Carrickfergus	24	226	15	257	9	273
Castlereagh	29	519	20	494	26	503
Coleraine	77	655	74	807	60	765
Cookstown	32	715	31	602	51	643
Craigavon	46	907	65	742	48	913
Derry	48	747	75	787	62	715
Down	87	938	93	988	91	1,044
Dungannon	60	966	48	1,059	24	1,040
Fermanagh	92	1,110	84	1,100	119	1,220
Larne	26	309	14	277	13	284
Limavady	53	382	69	379	42	354
Lisburn	106	903	125	930	150	1,147
Magherafelt	15	723	24	739	50	833
Moyle	24	315	21	341	16	309
Newry and Mourne	163	1,851	112	1,551	135	1,722
Newtownabby	25	452	28	524	25	557
North Down	54	599	83	598	37	711
Omagh	23	863	32	923	21	902
Strabane	24	552	22	582	36	517

Council area	2003–04 Refusal	2003–04 Approval	2004–05 Refusal	2004–05 Approval
Antrim	116	879	184	980
Ards	79	896	89	1,166
Armagh	11	763	73	846
Ballymena	73	983	188	1,174
Ballymoney	25	507	61	574
Banbridge	108	1,027	128	764
Belfast	97	2,200	90	2,043
Carrickfergus	15	241	19	276
Castlereagh	44	465	23	485
Coleraine	72	668	97	865
Cookstown	75	821	81	947
Craigavon	62	903	111	913
Derry	66	746	110	685
Down	98	1,140	70	1,073
Dungannon	23	1,129	74	1,447
Fermanagh	107	1,485	160	1,736
Larne	28	344	29	339
Limavady	8	438	106	610
Lisburn	195	1,074	126	1,221
Magherafelt	40	734	42	891
Moyle	14	299	26	367
Newry and Mourne	213	1,732	483	1,733
Newtownabby	40	602	16	568
North Down	36	661	39	673
Omagh	52	1,013	67	1,228
Strabane	38	673	86	656

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many valid planning applications have been received by the divisional planning office in *(a)* Downpatrick and *(b)* Craigavon in each of the last five years. [67620]

Angela E. Smith: The total number of valid planning applications received in the Craigavon and Downpatrick divisional planning offices between 2001 and 2005 are as follows:

	Craigavon	Downpatrick
2001	5,084	4,204
2002	5,578	4,721
2003	6,714	4,796
2004	7,289	5,942
2005	6,455	4,811

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many planning approvals have been received by the Divisional Planning Office in *(a)* Downpatrick and *(b)* Craigavon in each of the last five years. [67621]

Angela E. Smith: The total number of planning approvals issued by the Craigavon and Downpatrick Divisional Planning Offices between 2001 and 2005 are as follows:

Number

	Craigavon	Downpatrick
2001	4303	3223
2002	4486	3822
2003	4538	3706
2004	4100	4256
2005	4563	3696

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average length of time taken to process a planning application from application to approval is in the *(a)* Downpatrick and *(b)* Craigavon Divisional Planning Office. [67622]

Angela E. Smith: In 2005 the average time taken to process a planning application to approval was 36.39 weeks in the Downpatrick Divisional Planning Office (DPO) and 26.84 weeks in the Craigavon DPO.

Police

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 499W on police, how many people were in each category of applicants. [67133]

Mr. Woodward: I am advised that the number of people in each category of applicants for the last two PSNI trainee constable competitions were as follows:

Competition	Number of Protestant applications	Number of Catholic applications	Number non-determined
9	3876	2068	162
10	4572	2851	268

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many Police Service of Northern Ireland students have been *(a)* disciplined and *(b)* expelled while undergoing their training in each of the last 10 years; and what percentage this is of the total intake in each year. [65333]

Mr. Woodward: It is not possible to provide this information prior to November 2001, as records before this date show no distinction between officers undergoing initial training (now termed 'student'

officers) and those who have completed initial training ('probationer constables'). To this end, the figures prior to November 2001 cannot be provided.

The figures for November 2001 onwards are as follows:

	Number of students	Number of verbal warnings	Number of written warnings	Number of suspensions	Number of dismissals	Percentage of intake
2001–02	276	3	0	1	1	2
2002–03	540	19	14	0	2	6.5
2003–04	540	26	17	2	6	9
2004–05	540	23	20	3	2	9
2005–06	440	17	15	5	2	9

Road Tax

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people have been caught by road tax detection devices in each of the last five years, broken down by police region. [28845]

Angela E. Smith: On the road detection of vehicle excise duty evasion by Driver and Vehicle Licensing's (DVLNI) Automated Number Plate Readers (ANPRs) was introduced in 2001. Separate recording of ANPR detections disaggregated from those detected by Police or traffic wardens only started in 2002. The figures are:

	Number
2002–03	5,501
2003–04	6,024
2004–05	12,543

These figures are not recorded by police region.

Road Traffic Accidents

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* deaths and *(b)* serious injuries have been caused by road traffic accidents in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [67619]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested by the hon. Member is available on the Police Service of Northern Ireland website at www.psni.police.uk.

Shared Future Document

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when action plans will be produced by Departments to implement the recommendations of the Shared Future document. [66402]

Angela E. Smith: The first triennial action plan of A Shared Future was launched by my noble friend the Minister of State for Northern Ireland (Lord Rooker) on 27 April.

I have arranged for copies of the action plan to be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Sinn Fein/IRA Stormont Spy Ring

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people were assisted to move house as a result of the discovery of the Sinn Fein/IRA Stormont spy ring; and how many people had additional security measures fitted to their homes. [65323]

Mr. Woodward: The numbers of people assisted to move house and provided with home security measures as a result of the compromise of information in 2002 are as follows:

Protection scheme	Number admitted
Scheme for the special purchase of evacuated dwellings	499
Key persons protection scheme	669
Prison service assisted home removal scheme	453
Prison service protection scheme	960

Statemented Children

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what *(a)* number and *(b)* percentage of children with special educational needs have been (i) statemented and (ii) not statemented in the 100 (A) primary and (B) secondary schools in Northern Ireland with the (1) highest and (2) lowest percentage of children receiving free school meals in each of the last three years. [66085]

Angela E. Smith: The requested information is as follows:

Pupils with special educational needs who have been (a) statemented and (b) not statemented, in the 100 primary and post primary schools with the highest percentage of free school meals entitlement.

	Primary schools				Post primary schools			
	SEN children with a statement		SEN children at Stages 1–4 (non statemented)		SEN children with a statement		SEN children at Stages 1–4 (non statemented)	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
2003–04	548	9	5,294	91	1,683	19	7,031	81
2004–05	591	10	5,334	90	1,809	19	7,481	81
2005–06	605	10	5,170	90	2,005	19	8,308	81

Pupils with special educational needs who have been (a) statemented and (b) not statemented, in the 100 primary and post primary schools with the lowest percentage of free school meals entitlement.

	Primary schools				Post primary schools			
	SEN children with a statement		SEN children at Stages 1–4 (non statemented)		SEN children with a statement		SEN children at Stages 1–4 (non statemented)	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
2003–04	195	10	1,696	90	823	25	2,420	75
2004–05	228	11	1,787	89	923	26	2,660	74

Note:
Figures relate to post primary pupils and pupils in year 1 to year 7 classes in primary schools.

Taxis

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the reasons are for the time taken to introduce legislation on taxi regulation in Northern Ireland; and when he expects this legislation to be introduced. [66963]

Angela E. Smith: The necessary legislation to enable the Department of Environment to implement changes on taxi regulation is substantially drafted. We plan to start consulting on the draft legislation later this month.

Television Licences

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women were successfully prosecuted during 2005 for not having a television licence in Northern Ireland. [65876]

Mr. Hanson: A total of 6,711 television licence cases were laid for Northern Ireland in 2005. A gender breakdown is not available.

Tourism

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what promotional activities are planned by the Northern Ireland Tourist Board to market Northern Ireland in Scotland during 2006. [65878]

Angela E. Smith: Tourism Ireland is responsible for marketing Northern Ireland as a preferred holiday destination in Great Britain and overseas. Tourism Ireland works closely with the Northern Ireland Tourist Board to fulfil this remit.

During 2006, Tourism Ireland's Glasgow office is undertaking the following marketing activities:

Five e-marketing communications to a total of 53,000 consumers:

TV advertising in January, March, May, June, July and August:

57 Scottish cinemas showing Northern Ireland advertisements during the run of "Narnia, the Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe":

Four direct mail campaigns directed at 66,000 residents:

National (Great Britain) print advertisements in Scottish editions of newspapers— reaching the target audience of two million of sightseers and culture seekers plus additional five insertions in 'Scotland on Sunday':

Four consumer exhibitions in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Coatbridge from January to June:

Five Scottish tour operators attending the Northern Ireland Tourist Board Workshop in May:

Four Scottish coach operators and group organisers attending the Northern Ireland educational visit in September:

Five presentations to Scottish Travel Trade, media and business tourism agencies.

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much the Northern Ireland Tourist Board spent on promoting Northern Ireland as a tourist destination in the Republic of Ireland in each of the last five years. [66941]

Angela E. Smith: The Northern Ireland Tourist Board has an office in Dublin which includes a tourist information centre (TIC) and also a marketing team.

The annual spend in the RoI office during the period 2001–02 to 2005–06 varied by year and is detailed in the following table. The total spend figures include the running costs of the premises in Dublin.

Some of the promotion and advertising figures which may be of specific interest are itemised as follows.

£

	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06
Total RoI spend per year	559,919	465,052	1,052,009	1,050,994	720,597
Specific promotional spend					
Public relations	31,000	27,417	35,472	37,167	37,183
Advertising	122,131	139,592	704,499	799,535	465,750
Consumer promotions	104,478	72,491	75,511	48,568	38,065
Trade and media familiarisation trips	31,439	49,209	53,258	23,441	21,557

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

China/Vietnam

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the Government supports the procedures used by the European Commission to determine whether to impose anti-dumping duties on shoes from China and Vietnam. [66130]

Ian Pearson: The Government are content that the European Commission is carrying out its investigation into dumping of shoes with leather uppers from China and Vietnam, including its decision to impose provisional anti-dumping measures, in accordance with the procedures set down in Council Regulation (EC) 384/96 of 22 December 1995 (as amended) on protection against dumped imports from countries not members of the European Community. Nonetheless, the UK has

questioned and continues to monitor a number of aspects of the investigation including, in particular, product coverage, the choice of analogue country for two non-market economies, decisions on market economy treatment of Chinese companies and the Community Interest assessment.

Gibraltar

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much was given to the Government of Gibraltar for national security in each of the last five years. [67065]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The United Kingdom retains overall responsibility for the national security of Gibraltar. Overall Government expenditure on the two main forces responsible for this role in Gibraltar, namely, the Gibraltar Squadron and the Royal Gibraltar Regiment, over the past five years has been as follows:

£

	Gibraltar Squadron	*Royal Gibraltar Regiment*
2001–02	910,000	4,384,000
2002–03	1,101,000	4,733,000
2003–04	1,117,000	4,798,000
2004–05	1,245,000	5,116,000
2005–06	1,328,000	5,638,000

The totals are £5,701,000 and £24,669,000 respectively over the five year period.

Home Working

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many people in his Department have been enabled to work from home in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [67976]

Mr. Straw: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does not keep central records of the number of home workers. However, approximately 170 people are currently equipped with full remote laptop access to the FCO computer system.

India (Defence Exports)

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what changes have been made to the rules governing the export of *(a)* defence equipment and *(b)* certain dual-use-goods by the UK to India in the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [66239]

Mr. Straw: As for all destinations, export licence applications covering defence equipment to India are rigorously assessed on a case-by-case basis against the consolidated EU and national export licensing criteria, as announced by the then Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister of State (right hon. Peter Hain) in a written reply to my hon. Friend the Member for Crawley (Laura Moffatt), on 26 October 2000, *Official Report*, columns 199–203W, taking account of the circumstances prevailing at the time and other relevant announced Government policies.

In August 2005, the Government revised the position adopted in 2002 on our policy regarding the export of nuclear related items to India. The restrictions now in force are less stringent than those in force in 2002 and conform to the UK's current international obligations and non-proliferation commitments.

In line with our Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) commitments, we will continue to refuse applications in respect of all NSG Trigger List items, and applications in respect of all items on the NSG Dual-Use List, when they are destined for unsafeguarded nuclear fuel cycle or nuclear explosive activities, or when there is an unacceptable risk of diversion to such activities.

We will now, however, consider on a case-by-case basis licence applications for items on the NSG Dual-Use List destined for other activities. (Our March 2002 policy was to refuse all such exports to nuclear or nuclear-related end-users in India, regardless of the stated end-use of the item).

We will also consider all applications to export other items assessed as licensable, including those assessed as licensable under the weapons of mass destruction end-use control, on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the risk of use in, or diversion to, unsafeguarded nuclear fuel cycle or nuclear explosive activities, or acts of nuclear terrorism; the risk of possible onward transfer of these items to other states for proliferation purposes, including the recipient state's export control performance; and the potential utility of the items concerned for, and contribution that they would make to, such activities.

We will continue to consider applications for exports which will contribute to the physical protection or security of civil or military nuclear facilities or assets in India. Licences may be issued in exceptional cases, consistent with our obligations and commitments.

We will encourage contacts between UK nuclear scientists, academics and those working in or with the UK nuclear industry with their Indian counterparts, except where we consider that such contacts might be of assistance to the weapons-related aspects of its nuclear programme. Where such contacts involve the transfer of technology, which require export licences, we will continue to consider applications for such licences in accordance with the provisions of UK export control legislation, on a case-by-case basis.

International Arms Trade Treaty

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Prime Minister regarding the International Arms Trade treaty; and if he will make a statement. [67837]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister have regular discussions on a wide range of foreign policy issues including the International Arms Trade treaty. The commitment to work to secure such a treaty was a pledge in the Labour party's 2005 general election manifesto.

Mr. Cranby: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps he has taken to promote the Arms Trade Treaty *(a)* among other Governments and *(b)* at the United Nations. [68074]

Dr. Howells: The Government are committed to pursuing a treaty on the international trade in all conventional arms. We believe that such a treaty needs to include a wide range of signatories, including the world's major arms exporters. We are engaging with other countries at various levels, including through ministerial contacts, specific events, direct expert-level talks and using our network of overseas posts. Most recently a dedicated cross-Whitehall team visited Beijing (14 March) and Moscow (20 February) to discuss the initiative with their Chinese and Russian counterparts. I also made a speech on 23 March making the case for a treaty while on a visit to the United Nations in Geneva. Speaking to the assembled diplomatic community, my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary also spoke about the UK's commitment to the arms trade treaty in a speech at Mansion House on 26 April. A further global lobbying exercise is also currently under way involving all of our overseas posts. This work will continue with the aim of building the consensus needed for the start of a formal process at the UN later this year.

International Tax and Investment Centre

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when his Department's officials have met International Tax and Investment Centre representatives since March 2003; and what subjects were discussed. [66765]

Ian Pearson: As far as I am aware, in the period in question, officials have discussed with International Tax and Investment Centre representatives the business environment in Azerbaijan and prospects for the future of the Iraqi oil sector.

Iraq

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will place a copy of the *(a)* fiscal and regulatory frameworks for the oil industry in Iraq and *(b)* UK paper prepared for the Iraqi Ministry of Oil on this subject in the Library; what policy the Government have on funding the Iraqi oil industry; and if he will make a statement. [66766]

Dr. Howells: The Iraqi constitution, approved in a referendum on 15 October 2005, provides the basis of Iraqi law on the regulation of the oil industry in Iraq. Detailed fiscal and regulatory frameworks do not exist at present. An English translation of the constitution will be placed in the Library of the House. The practical implementation of the provisions of the constitution will be effected through further legislation, which we expect the incoming Government to take forward.

The UK has not prepared papers for the Iraqi Ministry of Oil on fiscal and regulatory frameworks for the Iraqi oil industry.

Providing a framework for securing the substantial investment needed in the Iraqi oil industry will be a key challenge for the incoming Government. There are several options open to the Iraqis and we encourage them to work with experienced development partners to assess the benefits of each option, and to ensure that Iraq's resources benefit its citizens.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reports relating to Iraq the Government has received from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in its capacity as custodian of the Geneva Convention; whether the reports indicate breaches of the Convention by forces in Iraq; what *(a)* the UK's and *(b)* the Allied Command in Iraq's response has been; if he will place relevant correspondence between the ICRC and the Government in the Library; why the Government decided not to disclose such reports as a matter of course; if he will ensure in future that the Government exercises the option available to it to disclose such reports in full; and if he will make a statement. [67541]

Dr. Howells: The International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) has unfettered access to British security detention facilities in southern Iraq and reports its findings to us, and we respond, on a confidential basis.

It is customary international practice for reports from the ICRC on security detention to remain confidential between the ICRC and the detaining power. We believe it is important to maintain that policy of confidentially so as to, inter alia, encourage the free and frank exchange of views about detention in all locations where ICRC carry out their valuable work.

Israel

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the occasions when *(a)* he and *(b)* Ministers in his Department have condemned (i) suicide and (ii) other terrorist attacks in Israel; and if he will make a statement. [67934]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and I have publicly condemned terrorist attacks in Israel. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary recently did so following the bombing in Tel Aviv on 17 April.

Israel has suffered greatly in the face of terrorism. The tragic impact of suicide bombings is all too clear. Israel is entitled to take steps to ensure its security and safeguard itself against terrorism. But it must act in accordance with international law. We continue to urge the Palestinian Authority to take steps to control Palestinian terrorist groups and to improve security for both Israelis and Palestinians.

Recent statements on the Middle East Peace Process can be found on the Middle East Peace Process pages of the FCO website at: http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1007029394617.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions *(a)* he and *(b)* Ministers in his Department have had with Arab states about suicide bombings in Israel; what response he has received; and if he will make a statement. [67935]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and I have raised this issue in our discussions with Arab states. Most recently my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary discussed the suicide bombing in Tel Aviv on 17 April in a meeting with the Saudi Foreign Minister, Prince Saud al Faisal, during his visit to Saudi Arabia on 18 April.

My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and I will continue to work with Arab states and the parties towards a comprehensive, just and lasting peace based on a two state solution with Israeli and Palestinian states living side by side in peace and security.

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what information he has received regarding the acquisition of land by Israel for further illegal settlement building close to Rachel's Tomb in Bethlehem; and what representations he is making on the subject. [68056]

Dr. Howells: In February 2006, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reported that the Israel Defence Force (IDF) requisitioned 702.6 dunums (70.3 hectares) of Palestinian land throughout the west bank in February 2006. We understand land was requisitioned by the IDF in Bethlehem for "military requirements", including new observation towers and the expansion of military bases and road construction. "Land levelling also occurred for the expansion of existing and the establishment of new IDF infrastructure as well as around Israeli settlements".

We remain concerned about the current route of the barrier around Bethlehem. Israel has a right to protect its citizens from terrorist attack, but the routing of the barrier on occupied territory is contrary to international law. We have made clear our concerns on the routing of the barrier beyond the Green Line to the Israeli Government at all levels and will continue to do so. On 23 March, our defence attaché in Tel Aviv raised the crossing points at Bethlehem with the Israeli authorities.

Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what phase of the performance-based Roadmap to a permanent two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict had been attained before the January 2006 Palestinian legislative elections; and if he will make a statement. [65724]

Mr. Straw: Progress has been made on some aspects of the Roadmap by both parties, but neither the Israelis or the Palestinians have implemented their Roadmap commitments in full. In January 2006, full implementation of Phase I had yet to be achieved.

Both sides need to take steps to implement their Roadmap commitments. We will continue to work with both Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and the Israeli Government to achieve this.

Kurds

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent steps he has taken to facilitate a peaceful solution to the Kurdish question; and if he will make a statement. [67175]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Government welcomed the statement by the Turkish Prime Minister in August 2005 that Turkey needed "to address the Kurdish issue under a banner of increasing democratisation". Our ambassador in Ankara has continued to convey to senior Turkish Ministers and officials, including in recent weeks, the need to follow up the statement with social and economic reforms in South-east Turkey. We also continue to press the Turkish authorities to ensure the full enjoyment of the cultural rights of all Turkish citizens.

Mauritania

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on what elements the €81,000 contribution to a UN High Commissioner for Refugees project in Mauritania to improve Mauritanian capacity to manage migration will be spent; and how much will be spent on each element. [67845]

Dr. Howells: The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' project aims to improve Mauritania's capacity to manage migration by strengthening the implementation of Mauritanian law on the residence of foreigners on Mauritanian territory, enhancing refugees' protection under law and promoting enjoyment of their rights.

The UK has offered to co-fund the project with the European Commission and would provide €81,000 towards the total. We would not seek to earmark our contribution. The Commission is still considering whether to approve funding for the project.

Ministerial Cars (Fuel Costs)

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the fuel costs were for ministerial cars used by his Department in each of the last five years. [67122]

Mr. Straw: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Minister of State for Transport (Dr. Ladyman) on 27 April 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1226–27W.

Nepal

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the security situation in Nepal. [64633]

Dr. Howells: The security situation in Nepal has improved since the King announced, on 24 April 2006, that he was handing power back to the political parties and that he would reinstate Parliament. The parties responded by calling off their strikes and the Maoists have lifted their blockades and called a three month unilateral ceasefire.

The reinstated Parliament convened on 28 April 2006. The new Prime Minister, G P Koirala, was sworn in to office on 30 April and the Parliament agreed on a proposal to hold a constituent assembly and to reciprocate the Maoist ceasefire. There were no reports of violence or unrest surrounding these events. Since

then, supplies of food and fuel are returning to near normal levels, shops and roads have opened and transport is moving.

Currently there is no reason to suppose that the security situation will deteriorate significantly or that the public mood will lead to further unrest. However, the political situation continues to move quickly and remains uncertain, and the security situation in Nepal could still change rapidly.

We assess that there is no direct threat to British interests. We have been monitoring the situation closely, with oversight from the Cabinet Office. We will continue to do so, including with our international partners.

Palestine

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the proposed arms sales by the Russian military to Hamas; and if he will make a statement. [56110]

Mr. Straw: We understand that Russia has frozen the proposed arms sales.

Dr. Blackman-Woods: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the Government's policy on relations with the newly elected Palestinian Authority. [67160]

Dr. Howells: We recognise Hamas's democratic mandate as a result of free and fair elections. But democracy means more than winning elections. With this mandate comes responsibilities. We want to take the peace process forward with the Palestinian Authority and Israel but we can only do so if everyone is committed to democracy and a two-state solution, not violence. As I told the House, on 25 April 2006, *Official Report*, columns 491–94:

> 'We will continue to do all that we can to impress on Hamas—the newly elected Government of the Palestinian people—that it should recognise the right of the state of Israel to exist, that it should renounce violence, and that it should stick to previous agreements that form the basis of the road map which we consider to be the best and indeed, at the moment, the only way forward'.

We will continue to work with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to take the peace process forward.

Small Arms/Light Weapons

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on his position at the UN Review Conference on Small Arms and Light Weapons in New York in June; whether he has discussed this matter with his US counterpart; what his understanding is of the position the US may take at the conference; whether he has proposals to put to his US counterpart to try to influence that country's position; and if he will make a statement. [66764]

Dr. Howells: The UK is working with many other countries, including the US, to ensure that the Review Conference helps to strengthen the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and to facilitate its implementation. In particular the UK is working with others to promote global guidelines for national controls on SALW transfers to be agreed at the Review Conference. The UK has had productive dialogue with the US on SALW issues ahead of the Review Conference, including between my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and his US counterpart as well as at official level.

Syria

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he next plans to hold meetings with the Syrian authorities. [68092]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has no plans to hold meetings with the Syrian authorities.

Terrorism (Definition)

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the Government's definition of terrorism is; what assessment he has made of the merits of agreeing a globally-accepted definition of terrorism; and if he will make a statement. [67162]

Dr. Howells: The definition of terrorism in UK law is contained in section 1 of the Terrorism Act 2000, as amended by section 33 of the Terrorism Act 2006. In November 2005, my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary asked the noble and learned Lord, Lord Carlile of Berriew, to undertake a review of the definition. Lord Carlile is intending to report later this year.

The Government see great advantage in an internationally agreed definition of terrorism and have been working to achieve one through the conclusion of a UN Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism. Regrettably, the UN membership has yet to reach final agreement on the convention, but the UK will continue to press for progress.

Terrorist Organisations

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations his Department has made to the EU on the continuing proscription of the People's Mojahedin Organisation of Iran in the last 12 months. [68058]

Dr. Howells: The Mojahedin-e Khalq (MEK, or People's Mojahedin Organisation of Iran) appears on the EU's list of persons, groups and entities which are subject to restrictive measures with a view to combating terrorism under Council Regulation 2580/2001-EC. The Court of First Instance of the European Communities is currently considering a challenge by the MEK to their inclusion on that list. The UK has contributed to those proceedings, but since judgment in the case is awaited it would be inappropriate to comment further at this stage.

The MEK is proscribed in the UK under the Terrorism Act 2000.

UK/India Prisoner Transfer

Mr. Crausby: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many transfer application requests have been submitted relating to the UK/India Prisoner Transfer Agreement; and how many such requests have been approved. [66964]

Dr. Howells: To date, three British nationals in prison in India have submitted requests to transfer to the UK under the UK/India Agreement on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons. One Indian national in prison in the UK has submitted a request to transfer to India. No requests have yet been approved. The authorities in the UK and India are still considering all four requests.

Mr. Crausby: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress is being made with the UK/India Prisoner Transfer Agreement. [66965]

Dr. Howells: The UK/India Agreement on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons was signed by my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and Indian Home Minister Shivraj Patil on 18 February 2005 and came into force on 21 November 2005. We are working closely with the Indian Ministry of Home Affairs to process the first requests for transfer.

UN Population Fund

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on which occasions *(a)* the UK has voted against and the US has voted for and *(b)* the UK has voted for and the US has voted against the adoption of measures by the United Nations Population Fund since 1997. [66877]

Mr. Thomas: I have been asked to reply.

There has not been any voting in the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Executive Boards since 1997.

US-India Nuclear Deal

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has received from his Pakistani counterparts regarding the US-India nuclear deal; and if he will make a statement. [66237]

Mr. Straw: I have not received any representations from my Pakistani counterparts regarding the US-India Civil Nuclear Co-operation Initiative. My officials discussed the Initiative, among other issues, with their Pakistani counterparts during the inaugural UK-Pakistan Strategic Dialogue in October 2005.

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the Government are reviewing their policy towards India's possession of nuclear weapons following the recently concluded US-India nuclear deal; and if he will make a statement. [66537]

Mr. Straw: The Government's policy on India's possession of nuclear weapons has not changed. We do not and will not support India's nuclear weapons programme. We remain committed to the objective of universalisation of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, which India can join only as a non-nuclear weapons state. But we recognise that this is a long-term objective. We warmly welcomed the announcement of the US-India Civil Nuclear Co-operation Initiative in July 2005 as we believe that the deal can make a significant contribution to energy security, development, economic and environmental objectives for India and the international community, as well as bringing advantages for non-proliferation.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Assault (Civil Action)

Vera Baird: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what steps she plans to take to permit civil action in cases of assault to be commenced beyond the limitation period in circumstances where the assaulter has been enriched after that date. [64891]

Ms Harman: The Law Commission recommended changes to the law relating to limitation periods, in its 2001 report on Limitation of Actions (Law Com. 270).

Under the Law Commission's proposed regime, there would be a primary limitation period of three years from the date that the claimant knows the relevant facts. These are *(a)* the facts which give rise to the cause of action; *(b)* the identity of the defendant; and *(c)* that the injury was significant. An injury would be considered significant if a reasonable person would think that it was worth making a claim, assuming the defendant does not dispute liability and is able to satisfy a judgment. The impecuniosity of the defendant may therefore prevent time running. In addition, in personal injury cases, the court would have a discretion to disapply the limitation period if it would be equitable to do so. There would be no time limit on the exercise of this discretion.

The Government have announced their acceptance in principle of the Law Commission's recommendations, subject to further consideration of certain aspects of the report, 16 Jul 2002, *Official Report*, column 272W. This work is now well advanced and we hope to be able to conclude it shortly. We will then seek a legislative opportunity to reform the law.

Census Information

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs pursuant to the evidence of her Department's permanent secretary on 28 February 2006 to the Constitutional Affairs Committee, what assessment she has made of the potential administrative impact on her Department of releasing information collected in the 1911 census. [64789]

Ms Harman: In order to make the 1911 census returns accessible to as many people as possible and to prevent its reading rooms being overwhelmed by demand, The National Archives intends to make them available on the internet for the first working day of 2012. Digitisation of the records will take approximately five years. In this context TNA has considered the administrative impact of making returns available in response to specific requests before the online service is launched.

In line with Treasury policy, TNA intends to use a commercial supplier to digitise the records. Allowing the public to access records during this process would cause

repeated disruptions to the scanning process, and make it highly unlikely that any reputable commercial organisation would wish to embark on this large scale programme.

As is the case for any paper records nearly 100 years old, the 1911 returns are in fragile condition. Repeated handling by staff and members of the public would cause rapid deterioration in their condition. In some cases the original record could become unreadable and the unique information in the lost forever.

TNA estimates that a significant number of staff might have to be diverted from other work to deal with requests for census records. This would severely impact on its ability to provide a service to its many other customers.

Coroner Service

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will list the occasions since 1976 when a sudden or violent death involving a single victim has not had a coroner's inquest return a verdict. [65239]

Ms Harman: This information is not held centrally and to obtain would incur disproportionate costs.

Council Tax Valuations

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs pursuant to the answer of 16 February 2006, *Official Report*, columns 2192–93W, on council tax valuations, what plans there are to give the Valuation Office Agency continuing access to property data. [66662]

Bridget Prentice: Currently, Land Registry has no plans to give Valuation Office Agency access to property data.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs pursuant to her answer of 16 February 2006, *Official Report*, columns 2192–93W, on council tax valuations, what Government *(a)* agencies and *(b)* Departments will have access to data held in the Land Registry's property database on the commencement of e-conveyancing. [66663]

Bridget Prentice: Land Registry currently provides property price information to public and private sector customers on a commercial basis and this service will continue when electronic conveyancing is introduced in England and Wales. I cannot specify which Government agencies and Departments will request this type of data after the introduction of electronic conveyancing as this will depend on their individual requirements.

Court Services (South-west)

Mr. Harper: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs (1) if she will make a statement on the financial position of court services in the south-west; [64736]

(2) what savings are being sought from court services in the south-west region; and if she will make a statement. [64738]

Ms Harman: Currently only indicative budgets have been given to the Regions showing a required saving of 5.1 per cent.

Crown Counsel (Northern Ireland)

Mark Durkan: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many senior Crown counsel were subsequently appointed judges in Northern Ireland in the last 30 years. [66507]

Bridget Prentice: In the last 30 years seven senior Crown counsel were subsequently appointed as judges in Northern Ireland.

Death Certificates

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what rules apply to the timescale for issuing death certificates in relation to *(a)* the date of death, *(b)* the holding of a coroner's inquest and *(c)* the release and disposal of the body. [65192]

Ms Harman: Death certification and inquest proceedings are governed by the relevant primary and secondary legislation, including the Birth and Deaths Registration Act 1953 and the Coroners Act 1988. No mention is made within the legislation of specific timescales in respect of the date of death, the holding of a coroner's inquest or the release and disposal of the body.

Departmental Websites

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will list *(a)* the websites operated by her Department and *(b)* the reports placed on the internet in March 2006, indicating in each case whether paper copies were also made available. [65214]

Ms Harman: *(a)* The websites that come under my Department's responsibility are detailed in the following table.

(b) In March 2006 the following reports were published on my Department's main website http://www.dca.gov.uk/majrepfr.htm:

Effects of advertising in respect of compensation claims for personal injuries (http://www.dca.gov.uk/majrepfr.htm);

Research into the operation of Rule 9.5 of Family Proceedings Rules 1991 (http://www.dca.gov.uk/majrepfr.htm);

Making contact happen or making contact work? The process and outcomes of in-court conciliation (http://www.dca.gov.uk/research/2006/03_2006.htm);

Claims Standards Council Report by Boleat Consulting and response to the Boleat report (http://www.dca.gov.uk/legist/compensation.htm);

Getting better, earlier advice to vulnerable people (http://www.dca.gov.uk/laid/civilaid.htm);

Estimating the size and nature of the civil legal advice sector in England and Wales (http://www.dca.gov.uk/research/2006/04_2006.htm).

The following consultations were published on my Department's website http://www.dca.gov.uk/consult/confr.htm:

Draft inquiry procedure (UK inquiries) rules;

Mental Capacity Act Code of Practice.

The following responses to consultations were published on my Department's website http://www.dca.gov.uk/consult/2005.htm:

Barnet County Court and specialist family centre pilot;
Imprints on election material.

All the documents are available in hard copy.

Name	*Web address*
The Adjudicator to HM Land Registry	www.ahmlr.gov.uk
Asylum and Immigration Tribunal	www.ait.gov.uk
Civil Justice Council	www.civiljusticecouncil.gov.uk
Commission for Judicial Appointments	www.cja.gov.uk
Community Justice	www.communityjustice.gov.uk
Community Legal Service	www.cladirect.org.uk
Council on Tribunals	www.council-on-tribunals.gov.uk
Criminal Courts Review	www.criminal-courts-review.org.uk
Criminal Injuries Compensation Appeals Panel	www.cicap.gov.uk
Department for Constitutional Affairs	www.dca.gov.uk
Employment Tribunals	www.employmenttribunals.gov.uk
Employment Appeal Tribunal	www.employmentappeals.gov.uk
Family Justice Council	www.familyjusticecouncil.org.uk
Finance and Tax Tribunals	www.financeandtaxtribunals.gov.uk
Gender Recognition Panel	www.grp.gov.uk
General Commissioners of Income Tax	www.tribunalsservice.gov.uk/gcit
Her Majesty's Courts Service	www.hmcourts-service.gov.uk
Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Court Administration	www.hmica.gov.uk
Hutton Inquiry	www.the-hutton-inquiry.org.uk
Immigration Services Tribunal	www.immigrationservicestribunal.gov.uk
Information Tribunal	www.informationtribunal.gov.uk
Judicial Appointments Commission	wwwjudicialappointments.gov.uk
Judicial Appointments and Conduct Ombudsman	www.judicialombudsman.gov.uk
Judicial Studies Board	www.jsboard.co.uk
Land Registry	www.landreg.gov.uk
Lands Tribunal	www.landstribunal.gov.uk
Law Commission	www.lawcom.gov.uk
Legal Services Commission	www.legalservices.gov.uk
Legal Services Research Centre	www.lsrc.org.uk
Legal Services Review	www.legal-services-review.org.uk
Review of Legal Aid Procurement	www.legalaidprocurementreview.gov.uk
Mental Health Review Tribunal	www.mhrt.org.uk
National Archives	www.nationalarchives.gov.uk
Northern Ireland Court Service	www.courtsni.gov.uk
Office of Judicial Complaints	www.judicialcomplaints.gov.uk
Office of Legal Services Ombudsman	www.olso.org
Office of the Legal Services Complaints Commissioner	www.olsc.gov.uk
Official Solicitor and Public Trustee	www.officialsolicitor.gov.uk
Pensions Appeal Tribunal	www.pensionsappealtribunals.gov.uk
Public Guardianship Office	www.guardianship.gov.uk
Social Security and Child Support Appeals Tribunal	www.appeals-service.gov.uk
Social Security and Child Support Commissioners	www.osscsc.gov.uk
Transport Tribunal	www.transporttribunal.gov.uk
Tribunals Review	www.tribunals-review.org.uk
Tribunals Service	www.tribunals.gov.uk

Dr. David Kelly

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment she has made of the compliance by the Oxfordshire Coroner with section 17A(6) of the Coroners Act 1988, in the case of the death of Dr. David Kelly; and if she will make a statement. [65235]

Ms Harman: Any review of a decision made by the coroner is a matter for the courts alone.

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs pursuant to the answer of 21 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 1935W. to the hon. Member for Beaconsfield (Mr. Grieve) on Dr. David Kelly, whether the decision not to reopen the inquest means that it is now officially closed. [65458]

Ms Harman: Yes, the inquest into the death of Dr. David Kelly is now closed.

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs for what reasons the death certificate issued on 18th August 2003 in respect of Dr. David Kelly included the reasons for death before the Hutton Inquiry had reported. [65546]

Ms Harman: Section 17A(2) of the Coroners Act 1988 requires that where a coroner has adjourned an inquest in the event of a public inquiry, he shall send to the registrar of deaths a certificate stating, so far as they are ascertained at that date, the particulars required to be registered under the Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953.

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs who took the decision to issue the death certificate for Dr. David Kelly; and on what date that decision was taken. [65547]

Ms Harman: The Oxfordshire coroner sent the necessary particulars to the registrar of deaths required by section 17A(2) of the Coroners Act 1988 on 18 August 2003.

Electoral System

Chris Ruane: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many local authorities have a *(a)* plain English campaign and *(b)* Charter Mark Certificate for their electoral registration forms. [65904]

Bridget Prentice: We are aware that a number of electoral registration officers make alterations to the prescribed annual canvass form so that it meets with plain English principles, although information on how many authorities have done so is not held centrally.

My Department is currently reviewing the prescribed form with the intention of providing in regulations a new form, based on local authority best practice, which will be both clearer and simpler to read and complete.

Although a local authority could not gain Charter Mark accreditation for its registration form alone, a good registration form might be indicative of good customer service throughout the authority, which as a whole could lead to a Charter Mark being awarded.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what steps the Government is taking to increase voter turnout in elections among young people. [67104]

Bridget Prentice: The Government have embarked on a number of initiatives to promote participation in democracy. They do not directly promote voter turnout in elections; that is the role of political parties, the candidates and the Electoral Commission. Examples of what the Government are doing to promote participation include:

- The 1824 Collective campaign, which promoted awareness of voter registration among London's urban youth.
- Funding seven local authorities to explore new methods of voting, working with youth organisations, further and higher education institutions to encourage young people to register to vote and participate in elections.
- Piloting early and mobile voting in the local Government elections in May 2006.

The Government have made available £2.5 million to support the new power to encourage participation included in the Electoral Administration Bill. It is intended that this money will enable Returning Officers and Electoral Registration Officers in England and Wales to undertake promotional activity, such as posters, leaflet and outreach work in order to encourage registration and/or participation in elections.

House of Lords Reform

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what recent discussions the Government have had regarding House of Lords reform. [67094]

Bridget Prentice: The Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs, Lord Falconer, has held preliminary discussions with the other parties about a process to see whether a consensus can be found on the way forward on Lords reform.

Hutton Inquiry

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will list individuals who refused permission for statements they had given to Thames Valley Police to be passed to Lord Hutton for his investigations into the circumstances surrounding the death of Dr. David Kelly. [65191]

Ms Harman: Such information is not held as part of the inquiry's records.

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs at what time and on what day the nature of the inquiry into the death of Dr. David Kelly was changed from a judicial inquiry to an inquiry by a judge; and for what reasons. [65194]

Ms Harman: There was at no time any change of status of Lord Hutton's inquiry between its establishment and the publication of the report.

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will list the individuals who were asked to appear before the Hutton Inquiry into the death of Dr. David Kelly, but who did not do so. [65195]

Ms Harman: None.

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will list the *(a)* title and *(b)* date of each inquiry concluded by Lord Hutton prior to his appointment to lead an inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the death of Dr. David Kelly. [65232]

Ms Harman: The Public Administration Select Committee included a comprehensive list of major inquiries in its first report of the 2004/05 Session (HC 51 I and II), "Government by Inquiry" (Annex A "Inquiries into Matters of Public Concern: 1900–2004"). The table indicates that Lord Hutton has chaired one public inquiry, the investigation into the circumstances surrounding the death of Dr. David Kelly.

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs for what reasons the Hutton Inquiry was not established under the Tribunals of Inquiry (Evidence) Act 1921. [65238]

Ms Harman: Lord Hutton did not need the formal powers of the 1921 Act in order to carry out a full and comprehensive inquiry.

Inquests

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether it is a requirement for an inquest to be held in the event of the death of a serving member of *(a)* MI5 and *(b)* MI6. [65538]

Ms Harman: The relevant criteria for holding an inquest are set out in section 8 of the Coroners Act 1988 and apply equally whatever the deceased person's employment may have been.

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many inquests in Oxfordshire have yet to be opened; how many relate to soldiers who have served in Iraq; and what the date is of the earliest death for which an inquest has not yet been held. [65171]

Ms Harman: I understand from the Oxfordshire coroner that as of 20 April 2006 no inquests remain unopened in relation to soldiers who died in Iraq. Otherwise the number of unopened inquests relating to all other kinds of deaths will be rarely in excess of 3 cases at one time. The earliest deaths in Iraq for which inquests have been opened but not concluded took place on 29 March 2003 when a helicopter crashed killing eight servicemen. Otherwise the coroner believes the earliest death to be that of a prisoner at HMP Bullingdon in 2000.

Judicial Inquiries

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether the responsibility for selecting a judge to lead a judicial inquiry has passed from the Lord Chancellor to the Lord Chief Justice. [65220]

Ms Harman: Under the Inquiries Act neither the Lord Chancellor nor the Lord Chief Justice have responsibility for appointing a chairman to an inquiry, even where that chairman is to be a judge. That is the responsibility of the Minister (or Ministers) who are setting up the inquiry.

The Inquiries Act reflects past practice in that it contains an obligation for the Minister to consult the Lord Chief Justice (or appropriate judicial colleague) before the appointment of any serving judge. This carries with it a requirement to take account of any issues that are raised during consultation. The detail of this process is contained in Section 10 of the Inquiries Act; which is set out as follows:

Section 10 of the Inquiries Act 2005: Appointment of judge as panel member

Description of judge	*Person to be consulted*
Lord of Appeal in Ordinary	The senior Lord of Appeal in Ordinary
Judge of the Supreme Court of England and Wales, or Circuit judge	The Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales
Judge of the Court of Session, sheriff principal or sheriff	The Lord President of the Court of Session
Judge of the Supreme Court of Northern Ireland, or county court judge in Northern Ireland	The Lord Chief Justice of Northern Ireland

Notes:
1. If the Minister proposes to appoint as a member of an inquiry panel a particular person who is a judge of a description specified in the first column of the table, he must first consult the person specified in the second column.
2. In this section "sheriff principal" and "sheriff" have the same meaning as in the Sheriff Courts (Scotland) Act 1971 (c. 58).

Judicial Reform

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what funding will be provided for the five-year plan for judicial reform. [67084]

Ms Harman: The Department's strategy 2004–09, as amplified by "Doing Law Differently", sets out the Department's commitment to constitutional and judicial reform. The funding allocated to Judicial Group within DCA, which includes the running costs for the new bodies set up under the Constitutional Reform Act 2005 for 2006–07, is around £25 million. The allocation of funding for 2007–08 has not been finalised and funding for subsequent years is subject to the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007.

Justices of the Peace Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on the operation of Section 60 of the Justices of the Peace Act 1997. [65028]

Ms Harman: The payment of fines and fees, under section 60 of the Justice of the Peace Act (JPA)1997, was a matter for the Justice's Chief Executive of the magistrates courts committee up until March 2005. The Justice's Chief Executive role ceased on 1 April 2005 when magistrates courts committees were abolished and responsibility for magistrates courts along with the payment of fines and fees passed to Her Majesty's Courts Service.

Land Disputes

Mark Williams: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many title deed cases have been referred to the adjudicator at HM Land Registry under section 73 of the Land Registration Act 2002 in each year since 2002. [63959]

Ms Harman: The referral of cases to the Adjudicator to HM Land Registry began after the Land Registry Act 2002 and associated rules came into force 13 October 2003. Cases referred because of a dispute relating to title deeds may include disputes claims based in adverse possession of land against the holder of the documentary title; or disputed claims to ownership of land where the title deeds have been lost or destroyed.

Number of cases referred to the Adjudicator since October 2003

	Total
October 2003–March 2004	137
2004–05	1,523
2005–06	1,649

The figures include disputes that do not necessarily relate to title deeds, such as disputed restriction and notice applications. Land Registry does not currently categorise the disputes that are referred to the Adjudicator as 'title deed' and 'non title deed' cases.

Mark Williams: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many complaints concerning title deeds have been

investigated by HM Land Registry in each of the last 10 years; and how many of these complaints have been upheld. [63961]

Bridget Prentice: Land Registry records the total number of complaints received annually and these are normally categorised according to the nature of the complaint. Complaints that concern title deeds might include, for example, complaints that title deeds have been lost while in the custody of Land Registry, or that the provisions of a particular title deed have been reflected incorrectly in the register of title. However, complaints concerning title deeds are not recorded as a distinct category. The following figures reflect the total number of complaints received and—so far as they have been recorded as such—the number of complaints considered to be unjustified or misdirected. These figures therefore reflect complaints of all categories, including those that do not concern title deeds such as, for example, complaints about the way in which a particular application has been handled, aspects of the legislation governing land registration or specific Land Registry policies and procedures.

Total number of complaints (all categories)

	Number of complaints recorded as unjustified / misdirected
1996–97	578
	No record
1997–98	701
	No record
1998–99	2,059
	245
1999–2000	2,398
	699
2000–01	2,710
	810
2001–02	3,594
	891
2002–03	3,015
	1,425
2003–04	2,849
	1,228
2004–05	2,579
	1,181
2005–06	2,483
	1,159

Land Registry Fees

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what fee structure the Land Registry uses for those looking to buy or sell a residential property. [66250]

Bridget Prentice: Land Registry's fee structure is set out in statutory Fee Orders, the current orders being the Land Registration Fee Order 2004 (SI 2004 No. 595) and the Land Registration Fee (Amendment) Order 2004 (SI 2004 No. 1833).

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what charges the Land Registry will levy for the provision of information for home information packs. [66654]

Bridget Prentice: No special charging arrangements will be made by Land Registry for the provision of information for home information packs. As with other statutory services provided by Land Registry, the fees for official copies of the register and other relevant documents will be those contained in the Land Registration Fee Order which is current at the time.

Legal Aid

Mrs. James: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on access to legal aid for people who claim state benefits. [65078]

Ms Harman: Those in receipt of income support, income based jobseeker's allowance, or guarantee state pension credit, automatically qualify financially for legal aid. Income received from other state benefits is assessed as part of the financial means test for civil legal aid.

Lords of Appeal

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs which Lords of Appeal in Ordinary who were serving on 18 July 2003 had expertise in media law. [65231]

Ms Harman: The term "media law" is not precise and media law includes a number of areas of law, for example, contract law, tort, insurance law, human rights and freedom of expression (article 10 of the ECHR), and other areas. The Government believes that all Lords of Appeal in Ordinary serving on 18 July 2003 had, whether as counsel or judges or both, exposure to these areas of law.

Magistrates Courts

Vera Baird: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on the sum spent in 2005 on trials and hearings in magistrates courts that did not go ahead. [64847]

Ms Harman: The National Audit Office (NAO) report estimated that ineffective trials and hearings cost the criminal justice system £173 million and, of this figure, the courts was responsible for £21 million. The defence was responsible for £96 million, the police for £24 million, the Crown Prosecution Service for £24 million and the police and the CPS together for a further £8 million. The NAO found examples of good practice and the recommendations will help improve performance. We are working with the police and the CPS to improve performance in the magistrates courts. The proportion of ineffective trials has declined from 31 per cent. in 2002 to 21 per cent. in September 2005.

Vera Baird: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what steps she plans to take to ensure the implementation of the recommendations made by the National Audit Office on reducing waste and delay caused by ineffective hearings and trials in magistrates courts. [64849]

Ms Harman: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Huntingdon (Mr. Djanogly) on 27 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 112W.

Ministerial Cars (Fuel Cars)

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the fuel costs were for ministerial cars used by her Department in each of the last five years. [67018]

Bridget Prentice: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Minister of State for Transport (Dr. Ladyman) on 27 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 1227W.

National Archives Website

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will take steps to ensure that the National Archives History National Curriculum website makes it clear for teachers and pupils that Schedule 5 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 abolished the Lord Chancellor's Instrument No. 12 of 1966 and the 100-year Census closure rule as of 1 January 2005. [65186]

Ms Harman: The relevant section of the Learning Curve website run by The National Archives has now been amended to make it clear that Government policy is the basis for the 100-year closure period that applies to decennial census returns.

Sentencing

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what training judges receive on consistency in sentencing; what steps she *(a)* has taken and *(b)* plans to take to encourage consistency in sentencing; and if she will make a statement. [64397]

Ms Harman: Following the recent constitutional reforms, the responsibility for judicial training lies with the Lord Chief Justice as head of the judiciary, rather than with Ministers. This responsibility is exercised through the Judicial Studies Board (JSB), an independent body chaired by Lord Justice Keene.

The JSB provides sentencing exercises for the Crown court judiciary at a variety of training events, including continuation seminars that are attended every three years and annual circuit events. All magistrates have been issued with an Adult Court Bench Book, published by the Judicial Studies Board. This bench book includes a structured decision-making guide for use when making sentencing decisions and also includes a copy of the Magistrates' Court Sentencing Guidelines.

Judges are responsible for sentencing in individual cases and are governed by the statutory framework laid down by Parliament. Judges will also consider any relevant case law, Court of Appeal decisions and guidelines issued by the Sentencing Guidelines Council, which was introduced by the Criminal Justice Act 2003 partly with the aim of increasing consistency in sentencing.

Tribunals Service

Dr. Cable: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what steps are being taken to raise public awareness of the Tribunals Service. [65713]

Bridget Prentice: In addition to the public launch events attended by stakeholders held on 3 April at five major cities across Great Britain, the following steps are being taken to raise awareness of the new Tribunals Service:

individual tribunals are continuing to work with their existing stakeholders and user groups to promote awareness of the new Service;

prominently displayed links to the Tribunals Service website www.tribunals.gov.uk have been and are being established for example from the 'Direct Gov', Department for Constitutional Affairs and HMCS websites www.direct.gov.uk, www.dca.gov.uk and www.hmcourts-service.gov.uk) respectively; and

public Tribunals Service signage has been displayed on some buildings and will continue to be as local hearing centres become increasingly shared by the tribunals.

PRIME MINISTER

Children's Services

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Prime Minister how many nursery and crèche places are provided for people working in his Office and employees of other Departments working in Downing street; what charges are made for the provision of such services; and what other facilities are provided for children of such employees. [67373]

The Prime Minister: For these purposes my office forms part of the Cabinet Office. I have therefore asked my hon. Friend, the Parliamentary Secretary for the Cabinet Office (Mr. Murphy) to reply. A copy of the reply will be placed in the Library of the House.

Civil Servants

Derek Conway: To ask the Prime Minister what advice has been issued to Ministers on the presence of civil servants at Labour party events during elections. [67798]

The Prime Minister: Guidance to civil servants on their conduct during both the general election and local elections is available in the Libraries of the House.

Corporate Hospitality

David Simpson: To ask the Prime Minister on how many occasions he has accepted corporate hospitality in the last 12 months. [67532]

The Prime Minister: Paragraph 5.28 of the Ministerial Code sets out the rules on the registration of hospitality.

Departmental Estate

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Bridgwater (Mr. Liddell-Grainger), of 16 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 2393W, on the departmental estate, how much of the sum was spent on *(a)* the 10 Downing street flat, *(b)* 10 Downing street other than the flat, *(c)* the 11 Downing street flat, *(d)* 11 Downing street other than the flat and *(e)* 12 Downing street, apportioning common works proportionately where applicable. [65365]

The Prime Minister: The figures are not held in the format requested. I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 10 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1836–37W, and to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Bridgwater (Mr. Liddell-Grainger) on 16 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 2393W.

Departmental Websites

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list *(a)* the websites operated by 10 Downing street and *(b)* the reports placed on the internet in March 2006, indicating in each case whether paper copies were also made available. [65217]

The Prime Minister: My Office operates the 10 Downing street website "www.pm.gov.uk". Reports and other publications are regularly placed on the site. Paper copies are made available as and when necessary.

E-communication

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Prime Minister what guidance he has issued to Ministers who may wish *(a)* to podcast and *(b)* to blog. [67559]

The Prime Minister: Ministers who may wish to podcast or blog should take account of the requirements of the Ministerial Code.

Home Secretary

Nick Herbert: To ask the Prime Minister if he will place in the Library *(a)* a copy of the letter from the Home Secretary offering his resignation and *(b)* his response. [67855]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the press briefing given by my Official Spokesman on 2 May, a copy of which is available on the No. 10 website.

Honours (Prevention of Abuses) Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Prime Minister (1) when he last met *(a)* the Lord Chancellor, *(b)* the Secretary of State for the Home Department and *(c)* the Attorney-General to discuss the operation of the Honours (Prevention of Abuses) Act 1925; and if he will make a statement; [66177]

(2) what discussions he has had with *(a)* the First Minister of Scotland and *(b)* the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland about the operation of the Honours (Prevention of Abuses) Act 1925 in those countries; and if he will make a statement; [66179]

(3) whether he has discussed the Honours (Prevention of Abuses) Act 1925 with *(a)* junior and *(b)* Cabinet Ministers; and if he will make a statement. [67938]

The Prime Minister: I have regular meetings and discussions with ministerial colleagues and others on a wide range of subjects. Information relating to internal meetings, discussion and advice is not disclosed as to do so could harm the frankness and candour of internal discussion.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Prime Minister how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females have been (i) prosecuted and (ii) convicted of an offence under the Honours (Prevention of Abuses) Act 1925 in each year since 1976. [66178]

The Prime Minister: The information requested is not held centrally.

Hutton Report

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list the four countries referred to in paragraph 165 of the Hutton Report of 28 January 2004. [65535]

The Prime Minister: No. The Government co-operated fully with the Hutton Inquiry.

Ministerial Code

Mr. Evans: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list the information he has declared to the Cabinet Secretary under the ministerial code. [66981]

The Prime Minister: My interests are set out in the Register of Members' Interests.

Official Residences

Justine Greening: To ask the Prime Minister when *(a)* 10 and *(b)* 11 Downing street were last decorated externally; what plans he has to re-decorate externally (i) 10 and (ii) 11 Downing street in the next 12 months; and if he will make a statement. [68109]

The Prime Minister: The last major external redecoration works took place as part of the large scale rebuilding works that took place between 1960 and 1963. Minor external redecoration last took place in the mid 1990s. There are no plans to carry out any external redecoration in the coming 12 months.

David Simpson: To ask the Prime Minister how much has been spent on *(a)* furnishings, *(b)* repairs and *(c)* decorating for (i) 10 Downing street and (ii) Chequers in each of the last five years. [67531]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 27 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 702W, by my hon. Friend, the Parliamentary Secretary for the Cabinet Office (Mr. Murphy) to the hon. Member for Lewes (Norman Baker).

Chequers was established under the Chequers Estate Acts 1917 and 1958 and is administered by independent trustees who receive an annual grant from public funds towards its maintenance and to cover staff employed at Chequers in accordance with the Acts.

Organogram

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister when he plans to issue an updated version of the 28 April 2004 organogram of the No. 10 organisation. [65268]

The Prime Minister: I have nothing further to add to the answer I gave the hon. Member on 18 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 400W.

Overseas Trips (Journalists)

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Prime Minister (1) whether journalists accompanying him on overseas trips are required to pay for their own air tickets; [67852]

(2) which journalists have accompanied him on each official overseas visit since 2001. [67853]

The Prime Minister: All the main news organisations are invited to accompany me on official overseas visits as and when appropriate. Journalists meet the costs of their airfare.

Parliamentary Questions

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister what training in *(a)* freedom of information requirements, *(b)* the ministerial code and *(c)* the February 2005 Cabinet Office guidance to departments is required to be undertaken by (i) officials and (ii) special advisers involved in drafting answers for him to written parliamentary questions; and what review process is in place to establish whether they are adhering to (A) legislative requirements and (B) internal guidance. [65374]

The Prime Minister: In accordance with the ministerial code, Ministers are accountable for the decisions and actions of their Departments, including answers to parliamentary questions.

A range of training and guidance is available to those involved in drafting answers to parliamentary questions.

Raymond McCord Junior

Dr. Alasdair McDonnell: To ask the Prime Minister if he will meet Raymond McCord Senior to discuss allegations of collusion in the murder of his son Raymond McCord Junior and related cases. [66114]

The Prime Minister: I understand that this case is currently being investigated by the Historical Enquiry Team (HET), set up to review unresolved deaths in Northern Ireland resulting from the security situation between 1968 and April 1998. I also understand that the Police Ombudsman's office is carrying out an investigation into this case. I am sure the hon. Member will appreciate that it would therefore be inappropriate for Ministers to meet with Mr. McCord in advance of the Ombudsman's report.

Strategic Health Authorities

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Prime Minister what meetings he has held with the chief executives of strategic health authorities since 1 January 2006; for what reasons these meetings were held; and what the content of the discussions was. [66005]

The Prime Minister: My officials and I have meetings with a wide range of organisations and individuals on a wide range of subjects. Information relating to internal meetings, discussion and advice is not disclosed as to do so could harm the frankness and candour of internal discussion.

I also refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Northavon (Steve Webb) on 27 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 37W, and to the Health summit I held at Downing street on 12 April. Details of this can be found on the No. 10 website.

Suicide Bombings (Israel)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list the occasions when he has condemned *(a)* suicide and *(b)* other terrorist attacks in Israel; and if he will make a statement. [67936]

The Prime Minister: This is a matter of public record and can be found in speeches and statements I have made, copies of which are available on the No. 10 website.

Trade Deals

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Prime Minister how many trade deals he signed in each of the last eight years; and with which countries. [66718]

The Prime Minister: The European Commission has competence for EU trade policy, and conducts all trade negotiations on behalf of EU member states.

Information on trade agreements can also be found on the Europa website:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/trade/issues/bilateral/index_en.htm

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Best Value Performance Indicators

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the best value performance indicators that have been collected from local authorities in relation to libraries in each year since 1997–98. [66305]

Mr. Woolas: Best value performance indicators (BVPIs) have been collected from local authorities since 2000–01. Details of BVPIs relating to libraries which have been collected since then are set out as follows:

	BVPI
2000–01	[1]115
	[2]117
	[3]118
2001–02	115
	117
2002–03	115
	117
2003–04	117
	118
2004–05	117
2005–06	[4]220

[1] The cost per visit to public libraries
[2] The number of visits per head of population to public libraries
[3] The percentage of library users who found the book/information they wanted, or reserved it, and were satisfied with the outcome
[4] Compliance with the Public Library Service Standards

Building Regulations

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when the consultation for the changes to Part P Building Regulations due to come into effect in April 2006 *(a)* commenced and *(b)* finished. [66257]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Building Regulations Advisory Committee (BRAC) and the Local Authority Building Control (LABC) were consulted before the new edition of AD P was published, and BRAC approved the changes at the December 2005 meeting. The changes were not substantial but were minor ones covering procedure and clarification.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what changes will be made to Part P building regulations in April. [66267]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Approved Document P has not been altered significantly. There have been some minor amendments designed to clarify the definitions of notifiable and non-notifiable Part P work and to set out more clearly procedures to be followed by local authorities.

Capita

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the number of contracts Capita has with local government organisations. [66307]

Mr. Woolas: The information requested is not held centrally.

Departmental Staff Survey

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 10 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1834W, on the departmental staff survey, when he will place in the Library a copy of the narrative report. [66313]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Eight paper copies of the report were sent to the deposited papers clerk, at the House of Commons Library on the 28 March 2006.

Domestic House Sales

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate the Government has made of the number of domestic properties placed on the market for sale in England in each year since 1997. [66387]

Yvette Cooper: Information on the number of domestic properties placed on the market for sale is not collected centrally. However information on the number of properties sold since 1996 is available from the Land Registry and published on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister website at:

http://www.odpm.gov.uk/pub/162/Table588Excel87Kb_id1156162.xls

Equal Pay

Dr. Cable: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps are undertaken within his Department to ensure that women are obtaining equal pay to men doing work of equal value. [65838]

Jim Fitzpatrick: It is our practice to equality proof annual pay awards and key inputs to pay awards.

Free Bus Travel

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will take steps to ensure that the money allocated to local authorities to cover the cost of the free bus travel policy announced in the Budget is spent solely for that purpose. [66846]

Mr. Woolas: Government funding for the cost of free bus travel, as for many other services provided by local authorities, is distributed through the unhypothecated formula grant. This enables councils to take their own decisions on local funding priorities, accountable to local people. The Government are considering the implementation of the national scheme for free bus travel, as announced by my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the whole issue of the efficiency and effectiveness of current arrangements for bus travel, in the context of the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007.

Home Inspection Packs

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the timetable is for the introduction of home inspection packs. [63180]

Yvette Cooper: Home information packs will be introduced on 1 June 2007.

Housing (Lettings and Allocations)

Andrew Stunell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of choice-based housing lettings policy by local authorities; if he will provide additional guidance on how councils should determine between housing choice and need in their allocation schemes; and if he will make a statement. [64060]

Yvette Cooper: An independent evaluation of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister-funded choice-based lettings (CBL) pilot scheme was carried out and a report published in May 2004. The evaluation report showed that the pilots were successful in offering increased choice to social housing applicants and that applicants largely welcomed the move to CBL, feeling that it gave them greater choice and control and increased the transparency of the lettings process. Local authorities were also very positive about their experience of CBL. In order to build on the evaluation and assess the longer term impacts of CBL, ODPM has commissioned Heriot Watt University to undertake further research which is currently underway and scheduled to complete by summer 2006.

ODPM is committed to producing statutory guidance to local authorities on choice based lettings. This will include advice on how to frame a CBL scheme which offers applicants a choice of accommodation while continuing to meet the statutory obligation to ensure that priority for social housing goes to those in greater housing need. The guidance will also be issued for consultation later this year.

Local Government Finance

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will enable local authorities to retain the additional income raised from abolishing the council tax discount on empty homes. [66273]

Mr. Woolas: When the Government introduced new powers for local authorities to reduce the council tax discount on long term empty homes in 2003 we concluded that, to ensure that any decision to reduce the discount was made on housing grounds not for financial reasons, the additional resources raised should be distributed nationally. We have no plans to change the current arrangements.

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many local authorities have used the discretionary powers contained in the Local Government Act 2003 to abolish the council tax discount on *(a)* second homes and *(b)* empty homes. [66284]

Mr. Woolas: As at 10 October 2005:

(a) 244 authorities (69 per cent. of billing authorities) were using their discretionary powers to reduce the council tax discount offered to second homes; and,

(b) 186 authorities (53 per cent. of billing authorities) were using their discretionary powers to reduce the council tax discount offered to long term empty homes.

These figures are generated using the CTB1(S) form, which was completed by 353 billing authorities (that is, all authorities with the single exception of Wandsworth, which has therefore been excluded from the figures).

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what funds have been allocated by the Government to each Greater London Borough Council in each of the last eight years. [67030]

Mr. Woolas: The information available is shown in the following table.

Government grant allocated to each greater London borough council from 1998–99 to 2005–06

£000

	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06
City of London	85,052	86,929	88,806	92,503	101,051	116,301	121,278	125,061
Camden	200,121	208,994	218,845	237,742	248,752	266,756	286,979	330,004
Greenwich	207,230	225,508	246,101	264,300	276,789	317,948	338,057	351,270
Hackney	246,385	258,648	272,945	288,231	338,591	371,425	391,775	408,216
Hammersmith and Fulham	148,850	159,107	168,927	180,845	190,898	213,397	223,648	230,169
Islington	201,697	224,987	243,470	257,123	272,635	310,144	313,671	339,010
Kensington and Chelsea	120,870	127,582	136,376	142,022	152,609	175,652	176,988	184,014
Lambeth	266,091	284,441	297,079	315,585	339,190	370,394	387,923	400,164
Lewisham	234,615	249,200	271,900	283,458	293,515	353,362	392,906	375,722
Southwark	252,635	279,265	313,860	326,016	351,218	427,964	457,163	435,418
Tower Hamlets	269,788	289,204	310,219	335,064	359,807	409,164	438,278	470,231
Wandsworth	208,076	218,592	229,475	240,694	248,308	279,577	285,924	294,774
Westminster	205,743	214,927	223,983	234,166	248,985	283,096	288,940	301,905
Barking and Dagenham	136,439	153,355	168,827	181,277	193,347	223,681	223,364	237,538
Barnet	197,653	206,389	222,831	240,316	241,925	268,501	282,047	291,894
Bexley	138,397	150,293	161,768	174,242	183,207	200,136	207,772	217,696
Brent	228,112	237,213	250,397	269,426	276,662	324,396	346,623	351,665
Bromley	158,935	170,679	184,021	198,772	199,956	222,117	231,040	240,993
Croydon	213,961	223,053	243,635	266,718	288,307	321,602	340,776	348,684
Ealing	219,684	231,883	248,310	268,568	277,684	302,347	311,933	330,313
Enfield	202,007	219,856	240,111	264,089	275,061	307,878	323,901	334,760
Haringey	217,479	236,886	270,816	296,350	301,816	336,846	344,869	330,309
Harrow	124,974	131,021	140,587	151,243	160,383	182,826	193,032	197,054
Havering	129,039	137,320	148,095	160,585	166,805	182,496	192,558	200,620
Hillingdon	156,474	173,676	171,976	209,693	214,850	235,171	250,302	275,883
Hounslow	164,042	175,518	185,410	198,506	205,749	224,736	236,326	247,493
Kingston upon Thames	75,483	80,037	86,752	94,245	96,829	109,459	115,155	124,820
Merton	107,148	116,318	123,479	128,796	132,213	147,252	162,299	172,209
Newham	286,302	308,655	335,547	362,671	391,428	447,333	458,173	484,876
Redbridge	167,213	183,073	202,581	219,850	212,881	235,121	250,203	259,094
Richmond upon Thames	75,758	81,937	94,629	100,260	106,081	116,903	118,025	122,849
Sutton	106,006	114,785	124,048	132,822	135,718	154,422	170,483	177,818
Waltham Forest	192,707	210,339	229,063	248,061	263,757	278,861	294,979	295,469

Notes:

1. Government grant is defined here as the sum of specific grants inside Aggregate External Finance, formula grant (revenue support grant, redistributed business rates and police grant) and Greater London Authority (GLA) grant.
2. Changes in grants between years may be affected by changing local authority responsibilities.
3. The information excludes those grant programmes, such as European funding, where authorities are simply one of the recipients of funding paid towards an area.

Local Government White Paper

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when the Local Government White Paper will be published. [66434]

Mr. Woolas: It is the Government's intention to publish a White Paper on the future of local government in England this summer.

Neighbourhood Renewal Projects

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans the Government have for neighbourhood renewal projects in *(a)* Romford and *(b)* Havering. [67012]

Mr. Woolas: Support under the Government's neighbourhood renewal initiative is targeted at the most deprived parts of England, as determined by indices of deprivation which were last updated in 2004. Havering

does not rank sufficiently high on the indices to qualify. Nevertheless, Havering is now beginning to prepare its Local Area Agreement (LAA), to be implemented from April 2007. While this does not involve additional funding, it is a powerful tool for driving forward regeneration and renewal, and provides an opportunity to focus on the needs of priority areas within Havering.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much has been allocated to neighbourhood renewal schemes in *(a)* Romford, *(b)* Havering and *(c)* each London borough in each of the last eight years. [67013]

Yvette Cooper: Havering, incorporating Romford, does not qualify for support under the Government's neighbourhood renewal initiative.

Neighbourhood renewal funding received over the last eight years by the eligible London boroughs is contained in the following table. This shows aggregated figures for the following neighbourhood renewal elements: neighbourhood renewal fund, new deal for communities, neighbourhood management pathfinders, and the single community programme.

Neighbourhood renewal funding by borough

£

	1998–99	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
Barking and Dagenham	—	—	—	1,001,992	1,476,606
Brent	—	10,000	245,300	1,868,212	4,108,686
Camden	—	—	—	2,542,997	3,910,759
Croydon	—	—	—	452,813	651,152
Ealing	—	—	—	628,216	914,794
Enfield	—	—	—	1,120,993	1,654,472
Greenwich	—	—	—	2,375,563	3,741,249
Hackney	1,026,300	2,924,000	—	14,473,832	16,273,373
Hammersmith and Fulham	—	—	309,500	998,278	4,198,525
Haringey	—	—	10,000	5,502,601	9,351,955
Islington	—	10,000	400,000	4,334,217	7,024,237
Kensington and Chelsea	—	—	—	713,823	1,043,467
Lambeth	—	10,000	400,000	2,340,384	4,514,748
Lewisham	—	10,000	417,057	2,557,150	8,660,129
Newham	—	332,786	1,724,626	13,275,140	18,211,210
Southwark	13,050	653,455	1,153,700	5,790,044	10,513,274
Tower Hamlets	—	450,000	35,500	11,292,148	14,919,815
Waltham Forest	—	—	—	1,482,290	2,198,528
Wandsworth	—	—	—	350,000	495,000
Westminster	—	—	—	931,006	1,369,910
	1,039,350	4,400,241	4,695,683	74,031,699	115,231,889

£

	2003–04	*2004–05*	*2005–06*	*Total*
Barking and Dagenham	1,956,088	2,050,699	1,918,546	8,403,931
Brent	7,683,942	9,662,942	12,732,117	36,311,199
Camden	5,339,524	6,928,523	8,232,849	26,954,652
Croydon	844,139	824,139	813,563	3,585,806
Ealing	1,199,286	1,199,286	1,166,485	5,108,067
Enfield	2,196,024	2,179,492	2,156,977	9,307,958
Greenwich	5,057,875	6,024,855	7,658,857	24,858,399
Hackney	18,040,555	23,066,793	27,670,121	103,474,974
Hammersmith and Fulham	6,259,942	7,865,857	9,467,340	29,099,442
Haringey	12,127,622	14,617,288	18,250,090	59,859,556
Islington	13,301,280	14,435,988	18,734,214	58,239,936
Kensington and Chelsea	1,372,614	1,372,613	1,338,728	5,841,245
Lambeth	9,900,930	11,425,562	11,826,300	40,417,924
Lewisham	6,924,803	7,674,066	8,524,853	34,768,058
Newham	20,070,476	29,884,627	32,888,158	116,387,023
Southwark	12,703,996	15,178,778	17,425,970	63,432,267
Tower Hamlets	17,848,196	20,138,714	24,389,589	89,073,962
Waltham Forest	2,928,585	3,180,165	3,184,942	12,974,510
Wandsworth	630,000	632,663	603,274	2,710,937
Westminster	1,812,366	2,080,367	2,075,721	8,269,370
	148,198,243	180,423,417	211,058,694	739,079,216

Ordnance Survey

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many requests Ordnance Survey has received for information under the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2005; and how many requests were refused *(a)* in whole and *(b)* in part. [66231]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Since the implementation of the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2005 on 1 July last year, Ordnance Survey has received four requests under the legislation. One request was granted in full. In line with published guidance, the other three were treated as requests for information under the

Freedom of Information Act 2000 and were therefore not applicable under this legislation.

There have been no refusals in whole or part by Ordnance Survey under the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2005.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 22 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 401W, on Ordnance Survey, what the nature is of the contractual relationship with Getmapping. [66326]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Getmapping is a supplier of imagery to Ordnance Survey, and is also one of many licensed partners of Ordnance Survey who develop and market services that add further value to Ordnance Survey data and meet the diverse needs of users of geographic information.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans Ordnance Survey has to make public data freely available to the public. [66389]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Ordnance Survey has been making mapping and geographic information available to the public for over 200 years.

As a government trading fund focused on the collection, maintenance and dissemination of geographic information, it is a core component of Ordnance Survey policy to ensure that its data is readily available to all who wish to use it. In recent years, there has been a steady growth in the use of such data in commerce, government and leisure activities.

Ordnance Survey, like all trading funds, is charged with delivering a financial return to government. Consequently it charges for the provision and maintenance of its data. It is also expected to invest for the future to meet the increasingly sophisticated requirements of its customers and partners. Ordnance Survey does not receive any funds voted directly by Parliament. Instead it generates its revenue from the licensing of its data into the market place. This business model has helped underpin the efficiency, quality and service improvements that ensure the sustainability of the organisation.

Planning

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what planning guidance his Department has issued to local authorities on applications for change of use from reservoirs. [66976]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of Deputy Prime Minister has not issued any planning guidance for change of use from reservoirs specifically. Circular 03/2005, Changes of Use of Buildings and Land offers general guidance to local authorities on general applications for change of use.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he will publish the new Planning Policy Statement 3. [66439]

Yvette Cooper: Consultation closed on 27 February 2006. We will publish a revised statement later in the year.

Residental and Nursing Homes

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the weekly amount paid in each local authority towards adults in *(a)* residential homes and *(b)* nursing homes was in each of the last six years. [64767]

Mr. Byrne: I have been asked to reply.

Information is not held centrally in the form requested. The average gross weekly expenditure on residential and nursing care for older people for each local authority in England for the financial years 1999–2000 to 2004–05, the latest for which data is available, has been placed in the Library. These figures are provided by local authorities. The figures for 1999–2000 are not directly comparable to those for subsequent years because they are based on gross expenditure whereas later years are based on gross total cost. The difference is that gross total cost includes capital charges and certain types of income received such as income from joint arrangements with other local authorities.

Similar information for adults aged 18 to 64 with physical disabilities or sensory impairments, learning disabilities and mental health needs is available on the NHS and Social Care Information Centre's website at www.ic.nhs.uk/pubs/persocservexp2005.

Residential Development

Greg Clark: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment his Department has made of trends in the loss of privately-owned green space as a result of residential development. [67959]

Yvette Cooper: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 11 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 691W.

Valuation Office Agency

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 20 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 73–4W, on the Valuation Office Agency (VOA), if the data supplied to the VOA from the National Register of Social Housing included information on the property attributes of individual homes. [66311]

Dawn Primarolo: I have been asked to reply.

The data supplied to the Valuation Office Agency from the National Register of Social Housing did not include any information on the property attributes of individuals' homes.

Valuebill local-egovt CD

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) if he will place in the Library a copy of the latest version of the Valuebill local-egovt national project CD; [66353]

(2) when he will introduce the Valuebill project. [66440]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The development phase of the Valuebill project formally closed at the end of March 2005. Ownership and responsibility for sustainability has migrated to London Connects, the pan-London e-Government partnership. London Connects is currently involved in a number of initiatives to ensure roll out of

the product set including distributing them on CD to all appropriate English local authorities. Copies of this CD have been placed in the Libraries of the House.

Warrington (Housing)

Helen Jones: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what assessment he has made of the effect of house prices in Warrington on the ability of first time buyers to purchase property in the area; [64742]

(2) what steps he is taking to encourage the provision of more affordable housing in Warrington. [64743]

Yvette Cooper *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* The North West Regional Housing Strategy recognised the impact of rising house prices in the region and made the provision of affordable houses its second priority after urban regeneration. The Government have allocated around 45 per cent. of the region's housing resources to providing affordable housing, which includes first time buyers. Within Warrington, the Housing Corporation has allocated £1.7 million to help provide affordable housing in the Robson street scheme. Warrington council has also made use of the Private Finance Initiative to provide affordable housing for rent.

HEALTH

"Every Child Matters"

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance she has given to primary care trusts on the priority which they should give in allocating their budgets to fulfilling their responsibilities under the "Every Child Matters" initiative; and if she will make a statement. [67676]

Mr. Byrne: The "Every Child Matters: Change for Children" programme is a joint programme between the Department and the Department for Education and Skills, which sets out the national framework for local change programmes to build services around the needs of children and young people.

Since the launch of the programme in 2004, a range of documents and guidance has been published to support local delivery. These set out primary care trusts' (PCTs) responsibilities under the Children Act 2004, the legislation underpinning the "Every Child Matters" programme. Chief executives in PCTs are alerted to relevant guidance published under the "Every Child Matters" programme through the Department's bulletin to chief executives. PCTs are responsible for deciding how to prioritise and allocate their budgets, taking into account the full needs of their local population.

All guidance issued under the "Every Child Matters" programme is available on its website at: www.everychildmatters.gov.uk

A&E Departments

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many hospitals in England have category *(a)* 1, *(b)* 2 and *(c)* 3 accident and emergency departments. [67560]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 2 May 2006]:* National health service trusts self-report the number of accident and emergency (A&E) services they provide against definitions set by the Department for the three types of A&E. The information available is shown in the table and this was the position at the end of December 2005.

	Number of departments (England)
Type 1 (major) A&E departments	204
Type 2 (single specialty) A&E departments	85
Type 3 A&E departments (minor injury and illness services including minor injury units, including walk-in centres)	321

Source:
QMAE

Alcohol

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average alcohol consumption per person, per visit to a pub or bar, was in *(a)* Southend-on-Sea, *(b)* Essex, *(c)* the Metropolitan police area of London and *(d)* England in each of the last five years for which information is available. [65184]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is not held centrally. However, data are available on the mean alcohol consumption (in units) among adults (aged 16 and over) from 1996 to 2002 for England, for each Government office region (GOR) and strategic health authority (SHA). Information on outlets where alcohol is purchased is also available.

Table 1 provides the mean alcohol consumption per week, in units for adults (aged 16 and over) for each Government office region, including London GOR, and SHAs (including Essex) from 1996 to 2002 using three-year moving averages. The results are taken from "Health Survey for England: Health & lifestyles indicators for Strategic Health Authorities 1994–2002".

Table 2 shows the percentage of adults (aged 16 and above) who had bought alcohol at the four main types of outlet in the last week: by sex and average weekly alcohol consumption in 2004, Great Britain.

Table 1: Age standardised[1] mean alcohol consumption (units) per week among adults[2], from 1996–2002 by three-year moving average[3] for each Government office region and strategic health authority—England

Units

	1996–98	*1997–99*	*1998–2000*	*1999–2001*	*2000–02*
England	12.0	12.1	12.4	12.4	12.6
North East	14.0	13.6	13.7	13.6	13.8
County Durham and Tees Valley	14.8	14.4	13.9	13.9	13.8
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	13.5	13.0	13.9	13.4	13.8

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Table 1: Age standardised[1] mean alcohol consumption (units) per week among adults[2], from 1996–2002 by three-year moving average[3] for each Government office region and strategic health authority—England

Units

	1996–98	*1997–99*	*1998–2000*	*1999–2001*	*2000–02*
North West	13.3	13.4	14.1	14.4	14.6
Cheshire and Merseyside	12.4	12.5	13.0	13.7	14.8
Cumbria and Lancashire	13.4	13.7	13.9	13.7	13.4
Greater Manchester	14.1	14.1	15.4	15.8	15.5
Yorkshire and the Humber	13.4	14.3	14.8	14.4	14.1
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	12.5	14.0	15.3	14.7	14.5
South Yorkshire	13.7	13.9	13.7	13.1	13.3
West Yorkshire	14.2	14.9	14.9	14.7	14.1
East Midlands	11.3	11.9	12.1	12.3	12.0
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	10.7	11.5	11.7	12.1	12.1
Trent	11.6	12.1	12.4	12.5	12.0
West Midlands	11.8	11.2	11.2	11.5	12.1
Birmingham and the Black Country	12.2	11.7	11.3	11.6	11.5
West Midlands South	11.5	10.6	11.0	11.7	13.7
Shropshire and Staffordshire	11.6	11.1	11.1	11.4	11.3
East of England	10.8	10.8	11.2	11.4	11.9
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	11.5	11.9	12.2	12.5	12.4
Essex	10.2	9.7	10.9	11.4	12.4
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	10.7	10.8	10.6	10.5	11.0
London	10.4	10.1	10.4	10.4	10.8
North Central London	10.0	9.7	9.9	10.3	10.9
North East London	8.9	8.7	7.8	7.6	8.0
North West London	9.9	9.8	10.7	10.7	12.0
South East London	11.1	10.8	11.8	12.2	12.0
South West London	12.3	12.0	12.0	12.3	11.6
South East	12.1	12.1	12.0	12.1	12.4
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	12.0	12.2	11.5	10.9	10.9
Kent and Medway	11.9	11.8	11.2	11.4	11.1
Surrey and Sussex	12.4	12.3	12.3	13.0	13.0
Thames Valley	12.0	11.8	12.3	12.4	13.3
South West	11.7	12.0	12.4	11.8	11.6
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	11.7	12.6	13.2	12.2	11.8
Dorset and Somerset	12.3	12.1	11.4	10.7	11.4
South West Peninsula	11.1	11.5	12.1	11.9	11.5

[1] Data have been age- standardised to take into account differences in age distributions between the SHAs, using the direct standardisation method.
[2] Adults aged 16 and over.
[3] To reduce random variation resulting from small sample sizes in each individual year from 1996 to 2002, the method of moving averages was used, where three years of data are combined together.
Source:
Health Survey for England: Health and lifestyle indicators for Strategic Health Authorities 1994–2002. Department of Health

Table 2: Percentage of adults[1] who had bought alcohol at the four main types of outlet in the last week: by sex and average weekly alcohol consumption, 2004, Great Britain

Percentage

Weekly alcohol consumption	*Licensed bar*	*Supermarket*	*Restaurant*	*Off-licence*	*Base (=100 per cent.)*
Men					
Non-drinker	1	3	0	1	187
Less than 1 unit	4	6	5	2	179
1–10 units	31	22	17	3	539
11–21 units	53	39	24	8	321
22 units and over	71	41	28	20	356
All men	38	26	18	8	1,582
Women					
Non-drinker	1	3	1	0	295
Less than 1 unit	5	6	6	1	403
1–10 units	23	28	18	2	718
11–21 units	39	40	28	6	278
22 units and over	50	48	29	12	256
All women	22	24	16	4	1,950

[1] Adults aged 16 and over.
Source:
Drinking: Adults' Behaviour and Knowledge in 2004. Office for National Statistics

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the average alcohol consumption per person, per visit to a pub or bar, in each country in the European Union in each of the last five years for which information is available. [65185]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is not held centrally. However, data is available on adult per capita alcohol consumption. The table provides the average adult (aged 15 and over) per capita pure alcohol consumption (in litres) for the last five years available for each of the European Union countries.

Recorded per capita alcohol consumption in European Union countries, 1997 to 2001

Litres

Country	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*
Austria	13.03	12.76	12.79	12.92	12.58
Belgium	11.19	10.07	10.24	10.21	10.06
Cyprus	6.4	6.58	6.57	6.61	6.67
Czech Republic	16.47	16.37	16.48	16.33	16.21
Denmark	12.51	11.98	11.92	11.98	11.93
Estonia	8.14	8.6	8.02	8.98	9.85
Finland	9.66	9.76	9.98	10.03	10.43
France	14.18	13.97	13.77	13.41	13.54
Germany	13.5	13.23	13.23	12.99	12.89
Greece	9.96	9.45	9.92	9.43	9.3
Hungary	12.45	12.63	11.96	11.94	11.92
Ireland	12.83	13.15	13.79	14.21	14.45
Italy	9.82	9.55	9.36	9.32	9.14
Latvia	8.88	8.91	9.57	9.43	9.31
Lithuania	11.65	10.83	11.26	12.21	12.32
Luxembourg	16.79	18.92	18.36	18.56	17.54
Malta	6.37	6.6	6.72	6.95	6.74
Netherlands	9.96	9.88	9.91	9.84	9.74
Poland	8.5	8.48	8.61	8.54	8.68
Portugal	13.5	13.29	12.96	12.8	12.49
Slovakia	13.07	12.33	12.62	12.44	12.41
Slovenia	11.14	8.26	7.87	11.6	6.55
Spain	12	11.88	11.82	11.92	12.25
Sweden	7.28	6.98	7.07	6.97	6.86
United Kingdom	10.23	9.92	10.25	10.23	10.39

n/a = Data not available.
Source:
World Health Organization statistical information system

David Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when her Department will publish the final report on models of care for alcohol misusers; and what assessment she has made of the merits of providing ring-fenced funding for tackling alcohol misuse. [66912]

Caroline Flint: The Department intends to publish models of care for alcohol misusers within the next few months. We are not considering ring-fenced funding for alcohol treatment services, funding of these services is part of the normal responsibilities of primary care trusts.

Alzheimer's Disease

Dr. Alasdair McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in the mild stages of Alzheimer's disease will be affected by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence draft recommendation on the three anticholinisterase drugs. [66141]

Jane Kennedy: The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence's (NICE) appraisal consultation document on donepezil, galantamine, rivastigmine (review) and memantine for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease, does not constitute its formal guidance on this technology.

The recommendations in the draft guidance are preliminary and may change before final publication, and it would be therefore inappropriate to comment further at this stage. NICE is currently considering responses to its consultation and will issue final guidance later in the year. Until that time, NICE'S original guidance on drugs for Alzheimer's disease, published in 2001, continues to apply.

Ambulance Response Times

Mr. Jeremy Browne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average response time for ambulances to get to an emergency call-out in *(a)* England and *(b)* Taunton constituency was in the last year for which figures are available. [64258]

Jane Kennedy: The Department collects ambulance response time data by Ambulance Trust rather than by geographical area, and in relation to response time requirements rather than by average response time. Therefore, the information requested is not centrally collected in the required format.

The data that the Department does collect on ambulance response times is published in tables 5a, 5b, 6 and 7 of the statistical bulletin, Ambulance services, England: 2004–05, which is available in the Library and on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/11/36/79/04113679.pdf

This publication includes ambulance response time data for the Westcountry Ambulance Trust, which covers Taunton, and for the whole of England for 2004–05.

BCG Vaccination

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what advice she *(a)* has issued and *(b)* plans to issue to primary care trusts on the BCG vaccination screening programme in schools; and if she will make a statement. [66649]

Caroline Flint: The Chief Medical Officer's letter dated 6 July 2005 outlining changes to the Bacillus Calmette-Guerin (BCG) programme was sent to all primary care trusts (PCT) directors of public health. Further information was sent to PCT immunisation co-ordinators on 18 August 2005. This information is available on the Department's website at:

www.dh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance/HealthAndSocialCare Topics/Tuberculosis/fs/en

Breast Cancer

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients could be treated with Herceptin for early stage breast cancer within existing capacity in English hospitals; and by how much she expects that capacity to be expanded within *(a)* six months and *(b)* 12 months. [67966]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department does not keep central figures on local national health service capacity to deliver particular treatments. The NHS is expected to

consider local needs and priorities as part of its planning process, taking account national strategies/guidance such as that from the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence.

In the case of Herceptin, a HER2 test is needed to identify if a woman is HER2 positive and, as such, might benefit from treatment with Herceptin. Professor Mike Richards, the national cancer director, is working with cancer networks to ensure that testing arrangements are put in place to enable women who require it to be tested for HER2 status. This work is ongoing.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) which primary care trusts in England have refused to prescribe Herceptin to patients with early stage breast cancer except in exceptional circumstances; [67968]

(2) which primary care trusts in England have agreed to prescribe Herceptin to patients with early stage breast cancer. [67967]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department does not collect information on local primary care trust (PCT) prescribing policies for different drugs.

It is for individual clinicians, in discussion with a patient, to decide whether or not it is suitable to prescribe a specific drug. PCTs may also need to be involved to decide whether to support the clinician's decision and supply the drug at the National Health Service's expense. PCTs need to take a range of factors into account, including local factors, when considering the funding of drugs and other treatments.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients *(a)* funded by the NHS and *(b)* funded privately are being treated with Herceptin for early stage breast cancer in NHS hospitals in England. [67969]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department does not collect information on the numbers of patients treated with specific drugs, whether in the national health service or privately.

Care Homes

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what percentage of elderly and mentally infirm people cared for in care homes in *(a)* Bristol North primary care trust and *(b)* Bristol South and West primary care trust have their fees paid for by (i) the NHS or (ii) local authority; and what percentage have their personal care costs paid for by themselves, a relative or another third party; [65304]

(2) what percentage of the fees charged by care homes in *(a)* Bristol North primary care trust and *(b)* Bristol South and West primary care trust is paid for by the NHS or local authority. [65305]

Caroline Flint: The information is not held centrally in the form requested. However, table 1 shows expenditure on residential and nursing care placements made by Bristol City unitary authority in 2004–05 for the various adult client groups, including older people. This shows gross expenditure, income received from sales, fees and charges and the resulting net expenditure.

Table 2 shows the number of residents supported by the council as at 31 March 2005, some of whom will have been placed in care homes outside Bristol.

Information on the percentages of the various ways costs are paid is not collected. According to the 2005 market survey by the independent analysts, Laing and Buisson, approximately 67 per cent. of the cost of residential care in the United Kingdom is funded by social services, or by the national health service to cover nursing care. It is estimated that approximately 100,000, or around 25 per cent., of residents nationally are privately or self funded.

1. Bristol city council—expenditure: 2004–05

£000

	Gross expenditure	Sales, fees and charges	Net expenditure
Older people			
Nursing care placements	13,948	3,831	10,117
Residential care placements	26,970	6,746	20,224
Adults aged 18–64 with physical disabilities			
Nursing care placements	913	352	561
Residential care placements	692	223	469
Adults aged 18–64 with learning disabilities			
Nursing care placements	1,074	210	864
Residential care placements	13,105	1,940	11,165
Adults aged 18–64 with mental health needs			
Nursing care placements	1,367	456	911
Residential care placements	2,289	900	1,389

Source:
Form PSS EX1

2. Bristol city council—numbers of supported residents at 31 March 2005

	Number of residents
Older people	
Nursing care placements	710
Residential care placements	1,075
Adults aged 18–64 with physical disabilities	
Nursing care placements	45
Residential care placements	35
Adults aged 18–64 with learning disabilities	
Nursing care placements	15
Residential care placements	285
Adults aged 18–64 with mental health needs	
Nursing care placements	50
Residential care placements	85

Note:
Data rounded to the nearest 5.
Source:
SR1 return.

Colorectal Cancer

Derek Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence has approved cetuximab as a prescribed drug for colorectal cancer. [67683]

Jane Kennedy: The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) plans to publish its technology appraisal on bevacizumab and cetuximab

for the treatment of metastatic colorectal cancer in November 2006. Further information on this appraisal can be found on NICE's website at www.nice.org.uk.

Derek Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many primary care trusts have prescribed cetuximab for colorectal cancer. [67684]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Data are not collected on the number of primary care trusts prescribing particular drugs.

Correspondence

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for West Worcestershire of 10 March. [67129]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 2 May 2006]:* A reply to this letter was sent on 2 May 2006.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects to reply to letters from the hon. Member for North Shropshire of *(a)* 25 March, *(b)* 5 April and *(c)* 19 April. [67970]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Responses to these letters were sent on 2 May 2006.

Delayed Discharges

Ms Diana R. Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many delayed discharges there were in acute hospitals serving the Kingston-upon-Hull area in the last 12 months; and how many acute hospital bed nights these represented. [65436]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is shown in the table.

Acute delayed transfers of care, acute hospitals serving the Kingston-upon-Hull area

	Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust	
	Delayed transfers of care	*Number of days delayed*
April 2005	12	666
May 2005	10	684
June 2005	20	999
July 2005	27	832
August 2005	18	668
September 2005	25	1,104
October 2005	21	661
November 2005	18	921
December 2005	13	906
January 2006	17	972
February 2006	21	804
March 2006	14	938

Notes:
1. Data in the table is taken from local monitoring of delayed discharges included in the situation reports (SITREPs) collection. The delayed transfers of care figures are based on a snapshot taken on the last typical Thursday in the month. This differs to the day used in the separate, quarterly, LDPR commissioner collections on which the figures published in the Statistical Supplement to the Chief Executive's Report to the NHS, December 2005 are based. The number of days delayed sums all delays in the month.
2. Due to the way the data is collected, the number of days delayed data for June 2005, September 2005, December 2005 and March 2006 are based on five weeks' data—all other months are based on four weeks' data.

Source:
Department of Health, SITREPS

Dentistry

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists have signed the new contract in dispute in *(a)* Greater London and *(b)* England. [66893]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the number of dentists who have signed the new contract and the number who have signed in dispute is not available centrally.

We do however have some provisional information that covers contracts. A contract may well be for more than one dentist so cannot be broken down further to individual dentist level. These management estimates show that 488 contracts were signed in dispute in the five London strategic health authorities and 2884 in England.

Primary care trusts are working with dentists to resolve as many disputes as possible locally.

Peter Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the availability of NHS dental services in Gosport constituency; how many dentists are giving appointments for NHS treatment; what the average time patients waited for treatment was in the latest period for which figures are available; and if she will make a statement. [67151]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has made no assessment of the availability of national health service dental services in Gosport constituency.

There were 35 NHS dentists with a general dental services or personal dental services contract within Gosport parliamentary constituency area as at 31 December 2005.

Information on average waiting times for treatment is not held centrally.

Departmental Advertising Costs

Mr. Donohoe: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much *(a)* her Department and *(b)* its agencies spent on advertising for job vacancies in each of the last five years. [65966]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 25 April 2006]:* This information can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Diabetes

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to ensure that diabetes patients are provided with a fully informed choice of all available insulins and informed of their risks and benefits. [67671]

Jane Kennedy: The choice of insulin prescribed to a patient is a clinical decision made as a result of a joint decision-making process between the patient and their clinician taking into account all available evidence and the individual's specific clinical needs. From January 2006, the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) has required all primary care trusts to implement NICE guidance on patient education by

providing all people with diabetes with high quality, structured education which should include information on insulin use.

Drinking Water

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) when the consultation by the Food Standards Agency on natural mineral water, spring water and bottled drinking water will be completed; [64771]

(2) what specification applies to UK natural mineral waters that wish to carry the claim that they are suitable for infant feeding. [64772]

Caroline Flint: There is not yet a specification for United Kingdom natural mineral waters that would allow the claim that they are suitable for infant feeding. The Food Standards Agency has completed a consultation on draft criteria that would enable natural mineral water to carry such a claim. These criteria were based on advice from the committee on medical aspects of food and nutrition. The comments received during the consultation are being taken into account in the preparation of the final version of regulations.

Fluoridation

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research she has *(a)* assessed and *(b)* commissioned on the possible relationship between children drinking tap water with added fluoride and the risk of developing bone cancer as teenagers. [65196]

Caroline Flint: A number of studies regarding water fluoridation and bone cancer have been published. The weight of the scientific evidence, as assessed by independent committees of experts, comprehensive systematic reviews, and review of the findings of individual studies, does not currently support any association between water fluoridated at levels optimal for oral health and the risk for cancer, including bone cancer, in children.

We are aware that an observed association between exposure to fluoride in drinking water and the incidence (new cases) of osteosarcoma in young males has recently been reported in a paper in the United States (Age-specific fluoride exposure in drinking water and Osteosarcom (United States) Bassin et al., Cancer causes control (2006) 17: 421–428). No apparent association was observed in females. The author has described this research as an exploratory analysis and has acknowledged that further research is required to confirm or refute the observed association.

In 2000, the Government commissioned a systematic review of public water fluoridation from the University of York. In this study, no clear association between osteosarcoma and fluoridation was found. In 2002, the Medical Research Council (MRC), commissioned by the Government to consider further research requirements on water fluoridation, agreed with the York findings that overall, the evidence does not suggest that artificially fluoridated water increases the risk of cancer. The Department will keep any further publications from the recent United States study under review and is committed to a continuing programme of research in line with the MRCs recommendations.

Folic Acid

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment her Department has made of the possibility that ingestion of folic acid masks vitamin B12 deficiency; and if she will make a statement; [66098]

(2) what assessment her Department has made of the effects on the elderly of ingesting folic acid. [66099]

Caroline Flint: The scientific advisory committee on nutrition (SACN) was asked by the Government to consider the evidence that has arisen since the committee on medical aspects of food policy report "Folic Acid and the Prevention of Disease" was published in 2000, and to advise on any gaps in the evidence base, with particular reference to the issue of folic acid masking vitamin B12 deficiency.

SACN published their draft report on "Folate and Disease Prevention" in November 2005 for stakeholder comment. The committee are now in the final stages of preparing the report, which is expected to be published this summer. The report will include an assessment of the effects of increasing folic acid intake on the elderly. The Department will consider SACN's recommendations carefully after the report is published.

General Practitioners

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the estimated annual cost per general practitioner is of the *(a)* employer's and *(b)* employees' contribution to the NHS superannuation scheme. [63936]

Mr. Byrne: The average estimated employer and employee pension scheme contributions in respect of general medical practitioners for the financial year ending 31 March 2004 were:

Employer's contribution per practitioner: £10,284;

Employee's contribution per practitioner: £4,407.

Under the new general medical services contract, general practitioners pay both the employer's and employee's contributions from a global sum that makes provision for these pension contributions.

Susan Kramer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many of Greater London's primary care trusts met the 48-hour target for access to GPs in the latest period for which figures are available. [65067]

Jane Kennedy: In March 2006, all primary care trusts covered by North West London, North Central London, North East London, South East London and South West London Strategic Health Authorities reported that they met this target.

Genito-urinary Medicine

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the future demand for genito-urinary medicine in the Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley Primary Care Trust area following the introduction of the chlamydia screening programme. [66414]

Caroline Flint: Chlamydia is the most common bacterial sexually transmitted infection in the United Kingdom. Reducing the prevalence of this infection is an important goal in the drive to improve sexual

health, outlined in the White Paper, "Choosing Health: making healthier choices easier". The Health Protection Agency manages the national chlamydia screening programme. The programme aims to control chlamydia through early detection and treatment of asymptomatic infection; reduce onward transmission to sexual partners; and prevent the consequences of untreated infection.

It is the responsibility of primary care trusts (PCTs), working in conjunction with strategic health authorities (SHAs), to decide on local delivery and planning of services. Kent and Medway SHA has informed officials that the Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley PCT is currently meeting locally agreed performance targets, and the SHA is working to ensure that all PCTs and trusts have plans in place to ensure the 2008 target of maximum 48-hour waiting is achieved.

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the funding available to the Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley NHS Trust *(a)* from other primary care trusts for the provision of a genito-unitary facility and *(b)* to fund the introduction of chlamydia screening. [66415]

Caroline Flint: It is the responsibility of primary care trusts (PCT), working in conjunction with strategic health authorities (SHA), to decide on local delivery and planning of services. In 2006–07, £91.5 million was allocated to PCTs for sexual health modernisation which includes funding for chlamydia screening and contraception and abortion services. In addition, a further £25 million for capital was allocated this financial year to PCTs for sexual health services.

In December 2005, the Department allocated £165,000 to the Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley PCT for start up costs for the national chlamydia screening programme. This funding is aimed at setting up a chlamydia screening office, funding information technology and laboratory developments and identifying premises for the chlamydia screening office before screening begins.

Health Reforms (Patient Care)

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the Answer of 2 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 915W, on health reform in England: update and next steps, whether the Tariff will apply to a patient requiring acute services for a potentially terminal illness, as opposed to palliative care for a patient in whom the same illness has progressed beyond a point where acute services can reasonably be expected to contribute to the patient's recovery; and whether it will be *(a)* the patient's GP, *(b)* the hospital consultant and *(c)* the primary care trust which makes the judgement that acute, rather than palliative care is required for a patient at any stage of the patient's care. [62229]

Mr. Byrne: The national tariff is structured around healthcare resources groups (HRGs), which represent clinically relevant groups of diagnoses and treatments that consume similar average levels of healthcare resource. In this way, the tariff applies on the basis of a patient's diagnosis and treatment combination rather than the severity of a patient's condition, for example terminal illness, albeit that these issues are related.

A list of treatments currently excluded from the tariff are set out in Payment by Results: Implementation support guide 2006–07 (Technical Guidance), which is available on the Department's website. Funding for treatments outside the scope of payment by results continues to be negotiated locally.

Whether, or when, a patient should be given acute care or palliative care is a matter for the clinical judgement of the doctor responsible for the patient's care.

Health Trainer Programme

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the primary care trusts which are in the early adopter phase of the health trainer programme. [65897]

Caroline Flint: A list of the primary care trusts (PCTs) which are in the early adopter phase of the health trainer programme is shown in the following list.

PCTs

Adur, Arun and Worthing
Airedale
Amber Valley
Ashton, Leigh and Wigan
Barking and Dagenham
Barnsley
Bebington and West Wirral
Bedford
Birkenhead and Wallasey
Blackburn with Darwe..
Blackpool
Blackwater Valley and Hart
Bolton
Bradford City
Bradford South and West
Bristol North
Bristol South and West
Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale
Burntwood, Lichfield and Tamworth
Bury
Carlisle and District
Central Cheshire
Central Cornwall
Central Huddersfield
Central Liverpool
Central Manchester
Charnwood and North West Leicestershire
Chelmsford
Chesterfield
City and Hackney Teaching
Coventry
Darlington
Derbyshire Dales
Derwentside
Doncaster Central
Doncaster East
Doncaster West
Dudley Castle and Beacon

Dudley South
Durham and Chester le Street
Durham Dales
Easington
East Devon
East Staffordshire
Eastern Birmingham
Blackpool
Blackwater Valley and Hart
Bolton
Bradford City
Bradford South and West
Bristol North
Bristol South and West
Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale
Burntwood, Lichfield and Tamworth
Bury
Carlisle and District
Central Cheshire
Central Cornwall
Central Huddersfield
Central Liverpool
Central Manchester
Charnwood and North West Leicestershire
Chelmsford
Chesterfield
City and Hackney Teaching
Coventry
Darlington
Derbyshire Dales
Derwentside
Doncaster Central
Doncaster East
Doncaster West
Dudley Castle and Beacon
Dudley South
Durham and Chester le Street
Durham Dales
Easington
East Devon
East Staffordshire
Eastern Birmingham
Eastern Hull
Eastern Leicester
Eastern Wakefield
Eastleigh and Test Valley South
Eden Valley
Epping Forest
Erewash
Exeter
Fareham and Gosport
Gateshead
Greenwich Teaching
Halton
Hammersmith and Fulham
Haringey Teaching
Harlow
Hartlepool
Hartlepool
Havering
Heart of Birmingham
Heywood and Middleton
High Peak and Dales
Hounslow
Hull Teaching
Hyndburn and Ribble Valley
Isle of Wight
Islington
Kensington and Chelsea
Knowsley
Lambeth
Langbaurgh
Leicester City West
Lewisham
Maidstone Weald
Medway Teaching
Mid Devon
Mid Hampshire
Mid Sussex
Middlesbrough
Morecambe Bay
New Forest
Newark and Sherwood
Newcastle
Newham
North and East Cornwall
North Devon
North Birmingham
North Bradford
North Dorset
North East Lincolnshire
North Eastern Derbyshire
North Hampshire
North Kirklees
North Liverpool
North Manchester
North Peterborough
North Stoke
North Tees
North Tyneside
North Warwickshire
Northamptonshire Heartlands
Northumberland
Nottingham City
Oldbury and Smethwick
Oldham
Oxford City
Plymouth
Portsmouth City
Preston
Rochdale
Rotherham
Rowley Regis and Tipton
Salford
South East Sheffield, North and South West Sheffield
Sedgefield

Slough
Solihull
South and East Dorset
South Birmingham
South Derbyshire
South Hams with West Devon
South Huddersfield
South Liverpool
South Manchester
South Peterborough
South Sefton
South Stoke
South Tyneside
South West Dorset
South West Kent
Southampton City
Southern Norfolk
Southport and Formby
Southwark
St. Helens
Sunderland Teaching
Sutton and Merton
Tameside and Glossop
Torbay
Tower Hamlets
Wakefield West
Walsall
Warrington
Wednesbury and West Bromwich
West Cornwall
West Hull
West Lincolnshire
Western Sussex
Windsor, Ascot and Maidenhead
Wolverhampton City

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what mandatory core competences health trainers must satisfy before being employed by the NHS. [65948]

Caroline Flint: The mandatory core competences required to become a national health service health trainer has been placed in the Library.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the cost of training each health trainer; and if she will make a statement. [65950]

Caroline Flint: The Department has mandated a set of core competences to which all health trainers partnerships must adhere. Health trainer training is under the control of individual primary care trusts and costs will vary according to the locally designed training programmes.

Holly's Law

Mr. Ames: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if she will bring forward legislation similar to H.R. 1079, (Holly's Law), introduced into the United States House of Representatives in March 2006; and if she will make a statement; [65261]

(2) if she will set up an enquiry into the safety of RU-486; and if she will make a statement; [65482]

(3) what information she has evaluated on *(a)* complications and *(b)* deaths caused by RU-486; and if she will make a statement. [65483]

Jane Kennedy: I refer the hon. Member to my replies given on 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2688W and 2726W.

Current evidence supports the safety of medical abortion in the United Kingdom, and this is a method of abortion recommended by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists.

The safety of all medicines in the United Kingdom is continuously monitored by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency. Since initial licensing in 1991, the safety of mifepristone (Mifegyne, RU-486)—a medicine used for abortion has been carefully monitored through review of reports of suspected adverse drug reactions and through periodic safety reports submitted by the manufacturer. Such reviews have evaluated both suspected complications and deaths relating to this medicine.

In 2005, following new advice from the United States Food and Drug Administration, where this product is used in combination with another medicine that is not licensed for this purpose in the UK, reports of suspected serious adverse reactions associated with mifepristone, including cases of serious bacterial infection, were thoroughly reviewed. The regulatory authorities within Europe, including the UK, did not identify any new safety issues in this review. No additional enquiry is necessary. Regulatory action to withdraw this medicine in the UK, equivalent to that proposed in H.R. 1079 (Holly's Law) in the United States, is not appropriate since European Union advice, including UK expert advice, is that the balance of risks and benefits of mifepristone remains positive.

Insulin Analogues

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action her Department is taking in response to the European Agency for the Evaluation of Medicinal Products' recommendations (document CPMP/SWP/372/01) on the investigation of the carcinogenic potential of insulin analogues. [67697]

Jane Kennedy: The safety of human insulin analogues in clinical practice is continually monitored by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and the European Medicines Agency. Human insulin analogues are licensed through the European centralised licensing procedure. No pre-clinical studies have been specifically requested in relation to this issue by the MHRA.

Meat Hygiene Service

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what criteria were used to assess the need for each of the options for proposed changes to veterinary supervision arrangements within the Meat Hygiene Service. [66084]

Caroline Flint: Criteria used to assess the need for each of the options for proposed changes to veterinary supervision arrangements within the meat hygiene

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service (MHS) are as detailed in the MHS paper, Veterinary supervision arrangements within the MHS, and the July 2005 report by DNV Consulting, Review of options for provision of Veterinary Surgeons within the Meat Hygiene Service. Both of these papers were included as part of the 12-week public consultation on proposed changes to veterinary supervision arrangements, launched by the MHS on 11 April 2006.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she last met representatives of the Meat Hygiene Service to discuss alteration of the arrangements for veterinary supervision. [67924]

Mr. Byrne: My hon. Friend, the Under-Secretary of State for Health (Caroline Flint) has not met with representatives of the Meat Hygiene Service (MHS) to discuss alteration of the arrangements for veterinary supervision.

Proposals for changes to veterinary supervision arrangements within the MHS, which are currently out to public consultation, fall within these delegated authorities.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the options which were considered for the provision of veterinary inspections at meat plants; and why each option which was rejected was rejected. [67925]

Mr. Byrne: The options for proposed changes to veterinary supervision arrangements within the Meat Hygiene Service (MHS) are set out in the 12-week public consultation launched on 11 April 2006. These papers set out and discuss the various options. Copies are available in the Library.

The only option that has so far been rejected is the option to maintain current arrangements. This has been rejected since the existing veterinary structure will not deliver the changes required as a result of Professor Wall's independent inquiry into the MHS in 2004, nor will it meet the other drivers for change, as detailed in the consultation.

Comments on all the various options, but particularly the MHS's preferred option for change, are sought as part of the consultation process.

Medical Staff Redundancies

Mr. Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the impact on patients of medical staff redundancies in hospitals in South East London; and if she will make a statement. [65689]

Jane Kennedy: The responsibility for commissioning, delivering and performance managing health services rests with the local national health service and so it is for the local strategic health authorities, primary care trusts and trusts to assess the local impact of changes in staffing levels.

Mental Health Services

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of assertive outreach teams in reducing the need for admissions to mental hospitals. [67440]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 2 May 2006]:* The primary outcome measure for assertive outreach teams is not a reduction in hospital admissions. The principal purpose of assertive outreach teams is to provide intensive support for people with severe mental illness, and who might not otherwise engage with mainstream mental health services, in their own homes or in other community settings. In December 2005, 17,000 people were receiving care from 262 assertive outreach teams, representing a 14 per cent. increase in caseload compared to 2004.

In addition to assertive outreach teams, crisis resolution services are designed to respond promptly to people in crisis, providing assessment and effective home treatment, including medication in their own home or in other community settings. At the end of March 2005, there were 343 crisis resolution teams. In the first three quarters of the financial year 2005-06, crisis resolution teams provided 61,000 home treatment episodes for patients who would otherwise have been admitted.

MMR Vaccination

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether her Department has made estimates for the uptake of the MMR vaccination over the next five years. [67185]

Caroline Flint: The Department does not make projected estimates for the uptake of measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccination. In line with World Health Organisation (WHO) recommendations, there is a national target of 95 per cent., uptake of two doses of MMR. This target, as well as effectively protecting individual children, their families and communities, is also part of an integrated immunisation approach to achieving measles and rubella control targets while maximizing programme efficiencies as detailed in the "Strategic plan for measles and congenital rubella infection in the European region of WHO, 2003."

Links to this information are available at:

www.euro.who.int/document/E82183.pdf?bcsi_scan_22F071C7F07ABBC7=0&bcsi_scan_filename=E82183.pdf.

Multiple Myeloma

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if she will make a statement on the availability of bortezomib for the treatment of multiple myeloma; [67497]

(2) when she expects guidance to be issued by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence on bortezomib treatment; [67498]

(3) whether her Department has issued guidance to primary care trusts on the availability of bortezomib treatment for multiple myeloma. [67499]

Jane Kennedy: Bortezomib (velcade) is licensed for the treatment of adults with cancer of the bone marrow (multiple myeloma) who have received at least one prior treatment and whose disease is worsening on their last treatment.

Bortezomib has been referred to the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) for appraisal. NICE plans to publish its single technology appraisal on bortezomib for multiple myeloma in September 2006. Further information on this appraisal can be found on NICE's website at www.nice.org.uk.

In the interim, there are no national restrictions on or guidelines for prescribing bortezomib on the national health service for patients who fit the licensed indication. Funding for licensed treatments should not be withheld because guidance from NICE is unavailable. In these circumstances, we expect primary care trusts to take full account of available evidence when reaching funding decisions. This is confirmed in "Health Service Circular 1999/176", which asks NHS bodies to continue with local arrangements for the managed introduction of new technologies where guidance from NICE is not available at the time the treatment or technology first became available.

National Blood Service

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 4 April 2006 to question 59146 on the National Blood Service, what estimate the National Blood Service has made of the number of calls made from call centres in her Department in 2004–05 using predictive dialling; and how many such calls resulted in silent calls. [64848]

Caroline Flint: Data for the year 2004–05 can be obtained only at disproportionate cost. However, the National Blood Service (NBS) has provided data for the past year.

The NBS made 1,467,382 calls between 1 March 2005 and 21 April 2006. Over this time period, 3.7 per cent. of these calls were abandoned, representing those occasions when the called person answers and it appears no-one is there, due to the slight delay before an operator comes on the line. The NBS continues to improve its abandonment rates, which have dropped to three per cent, in January 2006. These levels are within Ofcom's guidelines of no more than 5 per cent. silent calls.

NHS Accredited Health Trainers

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the availability of NHS accredited health trainers. [67418]

Caroline Flint: Following the successful completion of the early adopter phase, 88 spearhead primary care trust (PCTs) are now in a position to start recruiting, training and deploying health trainers.

Choosing Health money has been allocated to provide 1,200 national health service health trainers by the end of financial year 2006–07.

However, it is up to individual PCTs to make decisions about where they allocate resources and how many health trainers they will need to meet the needs of their local population.

Nuffield Speech and Language Unit

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions she has had with *(a)* the Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust and *(b)* the Royal National Throat, Nose and Ear hospital about the form of the public consultation process on the future of the Nuffield Speech and Language Unit. [66669]

Jane Kennedy: No discussions have been held between Ministers and the Royal Free Hampstead National Health Service Trust or the Royal National Throat, Nose and Ear hospital about the form of the public consultation process on the future of the Nuffield speech and language unit.

However, my hon. Friend, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Community Care (Liam Byrne) held a discussion with the hon. Member during a debate on this matter held on 25 April.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will place copies of letters she has received about the Nuffield Speech and Language Unit in the Library. [66670]

Jane Kennedy: Under the Data Protection Act, permission to make letters public would need to be sought from each correspondent. This can be carried out only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to her statement of 25 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 549, on the Nuffield Speech and Language Unit, how many patients waited more than six months for hospital in-patient treatment according to the February figures. [67279]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 2 May 2006]:* The Nuffield speech and language unit is part of the Royal Free Hampstead National Health Services Trust. The trust did not report any patients waiting over six months for inpatient admission at the end of February 2006.

Nurses

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people training to become Registered General Nurses are enrolled on pre-registration nursing courses and will complete their courses in *(a)* the 2006–07 academic year, *(b)* the 2007–08 academic year and *(c)* the 2008–09 academic year, broken down by strategic health authority area; and if she will make a statement. [66398]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 27 April 2006]:* It is not possible to say how many people will complete their training in a given year. Most students complete training in three years but each year a proportion either delay completion or leave the course.

Obesity (Taxation)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations she has received on *(a)* a tax on foods with a very high fat content and *(b)* an obesity tax based on an individual's body mass index. [65177]

Caroline Flint: The Department has received representations on tax on foods with a very high fat content through the consultation processes on the Choosing Health White Paper and the Food and Health Action Plan.

We have not received any representations on an obesity tax based on an individual's body mass index.

Osteopaths

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to amend the arrangements for the regulation of osteopaths; and if she will make a statement. [67701]

Jane Kennedy: Changes to the structure, functions and number of regulators were considered as part of the recent review of non-medical professional regulation. An announcement about the review will be made shortly.

Prevenar

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations she has received concerning her consultation with experts on how to introduce Prevenar on the NHS. [40963]

Caroline Flint: A letter was sent to health professionals on 8 February 2006.

The Department's plans to introduce important changes to the childhood immunisation programme will start later this year. These changes will ensure that young children in this country are offered the best protection against serious vaccine-preventable diseases.

We propose to introduce these changes in the summer, and a firm date will be announced as soon as vaccine supply and other issues have been finalised. A further detailed Chief Medical Officer/Chief Nursing Officer/Chief Pharmaceutical officer letter, with supporting documentation, will follow as soon as possible.

Primary Care Trusts

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of dental practices are accepting new NHS adult registrations in each primary care trust in England. [67669]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not held centrally.

Recombinant Factor VII

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the three-year funding period for recombinant factor VII for adult haemophiliacs is due to come to an end; who is responsible for the decision on further funding; and what decisions have been made. [66731]

Caroline Flint: On 12 February 2003, the Government announced an extra £88 million over three years to extend the availability of recombinant clotting factors for adult haemophiliacs in England. We remain committed to the recombinant roll-out programme and I announced on 19 April that further funding for recombinant treatment will continue.

Smoking

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what consultations her Department has carried out with *(a)* the theatre, *(b)* film and *(c)* television industry regarding possible exemptions to the ban on smoking in public places for the purposes of artistic productions; and if she will make a statement. [65735]

Caroline Flint: During last year's consultation on proposals for the Health Bill we received representations that particular theatrical performances and television/film recordings should be exempted from the smoke-free provisions of the Bill.

We are minded to allow an exemption where smoking is an integral part of the storyline of a performance or recording.

I wrote to the Theatrical Management Association and Equity along these lines on 18 April. A copy of these letters is available in the Library.

Social Services

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the expected year-end financial position of social services departments in England is in 2005–06 *(a)* in total and *(b)* broken down by local authority area; and what the year-end outturn position has been in each year since 1997–98. [60394]

Mr. Byrne: The year-end financial position of social services departments in England in 2005–06 is not available.

The Department does hold social services expenditure data centrally and in answering this question, we have assumed that year-end outturn equates with total local authority expenditure on social services.

Forecast outturn figures for the 150 local authorities with social care responsibilities in 2005–06 will not be available until early in 2007. The most recent available expenditure information held by the Department is for 2004–05.

Full details of the outturn figures for 1997–98 to 2004–05 for social services departments are available on the NHS Health and Social Care information Centre's website at www.ic.nhs.uk/pubs/persocservexp2005. Summary tables of outturn figures are available in the Library.

Stroke

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to ensure that patients admitted to hospital following a stroke have their higher cognitive function checked. [66951]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 2 May 2006]:* The Royal College of Physicians' national clinical guidelines for stroke recommend that all stroke patients should be screened for the presence of cognitive impairments as soon as is practicable.

The Department has commenced work on an 18-month programme to develop a national stroke strategy. The work to develop the strategy will look at the measures that need to be put in place to ensure that patients receive high quality care when they are admitted to hospital.

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to ensure that all healthcare staff are aware of *(a)* the risk of vascular dementia in stroke patients and *(b)* the action which should be taken if dementia is suspected. [66952]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The complex nature of dementia once it is diagnosed requires a whole systems approach across a range of health and social care providers. The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence is currently working on dementia guidelines. The first consultation on this guideline is expected in May 2006. This is in addition to the ongoing work of the older people's mental health programme which includes guidance on the provision of services.

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking *(a)* to develop effective systems of identifying people at high risk of having a stroke and *(b)* to put in place ways to reduce that risk. [66953]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 2 May 2006]:* The quality and outcomes framework (QAF) of the general practitioner contract includes points for setting up and maintaining a register of people who have had a transient ischaemic attack (TIA) or stroke, a key indicator that there is a high risk of a full, or more serious, stroke. The QAF also includes a range of points for managing that risk including for recording and managing of hypertension and cholesterol in patients who have had a stroke or TIA. In addition, the QAF includes points for managing other key risk factors such as treatment and care for atrial fibrillation, management of diabetes, recording smoking status and giving advice on smoking cessation, and setting up and maintaining an obesity register.

The Department has commenced work on an 18-month programme to develop a national strategy for stroke. One of the six key areas will focus on the improvement of primary and secondary stroke risk prevention, and raising public awareness, particularly the symptoms of stroke and the associated risk factors.

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research she has commissioned on the best ways of improving the management of patients who have had a *(a)* transient ischemic attack and *(b)* minor stroke. [66954]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department funds research to support policy and to provide the evidence needed to underpin quality improvement and service development in the national health service. Through the service delivery and organisation and health technology assessment programmes, the Department has funded a number of projects related to improving the management of patients who have had a transient ischaemic attack or minor stroke. These include:

a randomised controlled comparison of alternative strategies in stroke care;

a multi-centre randomised trial evaluating feeding policies in patients admitted to hospital with a recent stroke;

a systematic review and economic evaluation of the clinical effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of clopidogrel and modified-release dipyridamole in the secondary prevention of occlusive vascular events;

a systematic review of the effectiveness, cost-effectiveness and barriers to implementation of thrombolytic and neuroprotective therapy for acute ischaemic stroke in the NHS;

a multi-centre randomised trial to assess whether hypertension or hypotension immediately post-stroke can be therapeutically treated, and can improve post-stroke prognosis.

a randomised trial and health economic evaluation to assess the effectiveness of communication therapy in the North West of England;

a multi-centre randomised controlled trial and resource utilisation study to evaluate the effect of botulinum toxin in the treatment of upper limb spasticity due to stroke;

partnership and complexity in continuity of care: a study of vertical and horizontal integration across organisational and professional boundaries (relationships between organisations);

a cohort study to assess the effect of continuity of care in stroke and its relation to outcomes;

a study to determine what pattern of service delivery will best meet the needs of people who have a transient ischaemic attack.

The NHS national research programme projects listed above, either completed over the last three years or are currently under way, have been funded at a cost of £5.1 million. The Department has also invested £20 million over five years to set up a new stroke research network.

Voluntary Organisations

Mr. Vara: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much money was distributed to voluntary organisations through section 64 General Scheme of Grants in each year since 1997; and if she will list the organisations which received such funding in 2005–06. [67610]

Mr. Byrne: The table sets out the amount of grants to voluntary and community organisations from the section 64 General Scheme of Grants for each year from 1997 to 2005. Organisations that received a grant in 2005–06 are listed on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/section64

Financial year	*Total value of approved grants (£ million)*
1996–97	21
1997–98	21.4
1998–99	20.6
1999–2000	22.3
2000–01	22.7
2001–02	21.5
2002–03	22.1
2003–04	21.4
2004–05	17.8
2005–06	17.9

Note:
In 2004–05, £4.2 million was transferred to the Department for Education and Skills projects relating to children's social care policy following re-organisation of departmental responsibilities for children's social services.

Waiting Lists/Times

Peter Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what information her Department holds on the waiting times for *(a)* different categories of operations and *(b)* rehabilitation for stroke patients in South Hampshire. [67152]

Mr. Byrne: The operation for stroke patients is the endarterectomy of the carotid artery and (patch repair of carotid—The median waiting time for patients with a primary diagnosis of stroke and a main operation of

endarterectomy of the carotid artery and patch repair of the carotid artery covering the following primary care trusts:

New Forest,

Fareham and Gosport,

Portsmouth City,

Southampton City,

Eastleigh and Test Valley South and, Isle Of Wight, is 28 days.

This information is based on elective finished admission episodes. Information about rehabilitation waiting times is not held centrally.

Notes:

Finished admission episodes

A finished admission episode is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one Healthcare provider. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.

Diagnosis (primary diagnosis)

The primary diagnosis is the first of up to 14 (seven prior to 2002–03) diagnosis fields in the hospital episode statistics (HES) data set and provides the main reason why the patient was in hospital.

Main operation

The main operation is the first recorded operation in the HES data set and is usually the most resource intensive procedure performed during the episode. It is appropriate to use main operation when looking at admission details, for example time waited, but the figures for all operations count of episodes give a more complete count of episodes with an operation.

Weighted Capitation Formula

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the value of the weighting for *(a)* deprivation and *(b)* age is in the weighted capitation formula; [63915]

(2) what the average annual cost to the NHS is of a person *(a)* over 65 and *(b)* under 65 years in (i) deprived and (ii) non-deprived areas; [63916]

(3) what the average age of *(a)* population and *(b)* patients is for each primary care trust (PCT) area; and what the financial position of each PCT is estimated to be at the end of 2005–06. [63921]

Mr. Byrne: The weighted capitation formula has separate components for hospital and community health services (HCHS), prescribing and primary medical services to reflect the services for which primary care trusts (PCTs) receive funding. Each component has its own age and additional need weightings which are applied simultaneously to the population to produce a weighted population for each PCT, When expressed as an index centred around one for each PCT, the weightings in the HCHS component range from 0.85 to 1.25 for age and 0.71 to 1.52 for additional need.

Estimated expenditure in 2003–04 on HCHS was 2,073 for a person over 65 years and 517 for a person under 65 years. It is not possible to estimate this expenditure in deprived and non-deprived areas.

The mean and median age of the population at the time of the 2001 census and the 2005–06 month six forecast outturn position for each PCT has been placed in the Library. It is not possible to provide the average age for patients.

TREASURY

Average Earnings

Mr. Michael Foster: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average earnings of full-time employees based on the annual survey of hours and earnings were for *(a)* Birmingham, *(b)* Sandwell, *(c)* Dudley, *(d)* Walsall, *(e)* Wolverhampton, *(f)* Solihull, *(g)* Coventry, *(h)* Worcestershire, *(i)* Herefordshire, *(j)* Shropshire, *(k)* Telford and Wrekin, *(l)* Staffordshire, *(m)* Warwickshire and *(n)* Gloucestershire in each year since 2000. [67401]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 3 May 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking what the average earnings of full-time employees in *(a)* Birmingham, *(b)* Sandwell, *(c)* Dudley, *(d)* Walsall, *(e)* Wolverhampton, *(f)* Solihull, *(g)* Coventry, *(h)* Worcestershire, *(i)* Herefordshire, *(j)* Shropshire, *(k)* Telford and Wrekin, *(l)* Staffordshire, *(m)* Warwickshire and *(n)* Gloucestershire was in each year since 2000. (67401)

Average earnings are estimated from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), and are provided for full time employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey period was not affected by absence. This is the standard definition used for ASHE. The ASHE does not collect data on the self employed and people who do unpaid work.

I attach tables showing Average Gross Weekly Earnings by place of work for the years 2000 to 2005 for Full Time Employees on Adult Rates. These statistics are already published on the National Statistics website at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=13101.

The ASHE, carried out in April of each year, is the most comprehensive source of earnings information in the United Kingdom. It is a one per cent. sample of all employees who are members of pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) schemes.

Gross weekly(£) pay for full time employee jobs[1] by place of work

	Median	*Mean*
Birmingham		
2000	357	418
2001	392	462
2002	393	469
2003	398	465
2004	413	475
2004[2]	404	466
2005	425	488
Sandwell		
2000	340	391
2001	341	382
2002	353	411
2003	362	429
2004	370	451
2004[2]	365	441
2005	403	*509
Dudley		
2000	318	370
2001	335	388
2002	345	399
2003	346	395
2004	367	411
2004[2]	358	402
2005	369	425

Gross weekly(£) pay for full time employee jobs[1] by place of work

	Median	Mean
Walsall		
2000	*311	350
2001	329	370
2002	319	371
2003	341	390
2004	361	409
2004[2]	363	407
2005	359	423
Wolverhampton		
2000	342	381
2001	359	415
2002	*387	439
2003	379	436
2004	405	462
2004[2]	389	451
2005	*400	478
Solihull		
2000	*393	443
2001	402	464
2002	*429	478
2003	445	511
2004	480	547
2004[2]	471	539
2005	468	525
Coventry		
2000	364	424
2001	389	474
2002	424	501
2003	412	509
2004	444	535
2004[2]	442	522
2005	453	545
Worcestershire		
2000	336	379
2001	346	400
2002	342	403
2003	373	456
2004	373	446
2004[2]	372	444
2005	385	464
Herefordshire		
2000	290	326
2001	*318	368
2002	*329	375
2003	*376	455
2004	*360	415
2004[2]	*346	406
2005	*351	418
Shropshire		
2000	*307	358
2001	324	375
2002	340	396
2003	375	468
2004	380	452
2004[2]	374	447
2005	375	455
Telford and Wrekin		
2000	326	375
2001	335	379
2002	*362	409
2003	392	458
2004	*381	441
2004[2]	*375	436
2005	389	443

Gross weekly(£) pay for full time employee jobs[1] by place of work

	Median	Mean
Staffordshire		
2000	335	378
2001	351	399
2002	360	418
2003	357	428
2004	392	449
2004[2]	388	445
2005	395	466
Warwickshire		
2000	349	423
2001	370	*476
2002	375	462
2003	383	440
2004	421	488
2004[2]	415	472
2005	423	497
Gloucestershire		
2000	357	409
2001	365	441
2002	378	456
2003	377	448
2004	411	484
2004[2]	411	482
2005	423	493

[1] Employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey pay-period was not affected by absence.

[2] includes Supplementary survey data

Notes:

Guide to quality:

The Coefficient of Variation (CV) indicates the quality of a figure, the smaller the CV value the higher the quality.

The true value is likely to lie within ± twice the CV e.g. for an average of 200 with a CV of 5 per cent., we would expect the population average to be within the range 180 to 220.

Key

CV ⩽ 5%

* CV > 5% and ⩽ 10%

The median replaces the mean as the headline statistic. The weighted mean is the sum of the weighted values divided by the sum of the weights. The median is the value below which 50 per cent. of employees fall. It is preferred over the mean for earnings data as it is influenced less.

Source:

Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, Office for National Statistics.

Birth Statistics

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the birth rate was to those aged *(a)* 19, *(b)* 18, *(c)* 17, *(d)* 16, *(e)* 15, *(f)* 14 and *(g)* under 14 years in (i) North East Lincolnshire and (ii) North Lincolnshire in each of the past 10 years. [67055]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell dated 3 May 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your question about what the birth rate was to females aged 19, 18, 17, 16, 15, 14 and under 14 in North East Lincolnshire and North Lincolnshire in each of the last 10 years. (67055)

The latest available figures are for 2004. Because there were very few births at younger ages some aggregation and suppression of the requested figures has been necessary in order to protect confidentiality. Rates shown in the table below are three-year rolling averages with ages under 15 being combined into a single age group. Where the rate was based on fewer than five cases it has been suppressed.

Teenage live birth rates[1] by age of mother 1994–2004, North East Lincolnshire UA[2] and N. Lincolnshire UA[2]

	Age of mother					
	Under 15[3]	15	16	17	18	19
North East Lincolnshire UA						
1995–97	—	8	33	60	79	111
1996–98	—	8	29	65	78	105
1997–99	—	9	21	55	79	96
1998–2000	—	7	19	52	76	94
1999–01	—	6	19	45	71	94
2000–02	—	4	20	41	69	101
2001–03	—	3	19	44	73	99
2002–04	—	2	17	49	78	99
North Lincolnshire UA						
1995–97	—	7	16	35	63	93
1996–98	—	7	18	34	61	89
1997–99	—	4	21	31	62	75
1998–2000	—	3	21	33	54	77
1999–01	2	3	18	34	54	79
2000–02	2	2	14	34	53	82
2001–03	—	3	13	34	52	88
2002–04	—	4	11	32	51	79

[1] Live births in the three-year period per 1,000 female population of the corresponding age for the three years. Rates for under 15 are per 1,000 females aged 14.

[2] Using boundaries as at 1/4/2005 throughout.

[3] Cells containing a dash (—) indicate rates based on fewer than five live births.

More detailed information is not available as disclosure of results at specific locations would provide information of value to those seeking to circumvent HM Revenue and Customs' controls, thereby prejudicing the prevention and detection of crime.

EU Institutions (Personnel)

Michael Gove: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will ensure the continuation of low rates of income tax for personnel working in the EU institutions. [66916]

Dawn Primarolo: The taxation of personnel employed by the EU institutions is governed by the Protocol on the Privileges and Immunities of the European Union. There are no current plans to amend this Protocol.

Council Tax

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the basis of the estimates for council tax receipts in *(a)* the 2006 Budget for 2006–07 and *(b)* the 2005 pre-Budget statement. [66660]

Dawn Primarolo: Local authorities, not the Government, determine council tax increases. The 2006–07 council tax figures in Table B14 of the 2005 pre-Budget report, column 6701W are projections based on stylised assumptions of average council tax growth since its introduction. The 2006–07 figures in Table C8 of Budget 2006 (HC 968) are based on latest available CIPFA forecasts of increases in that year.

Councillors

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what changes HM Revenue and Customs have made to the tax status and liability for councillors' incomes and pensions since 2001. [66693]

Dawn Primarolo: Guidance to local councils on the expenses and allowances payable to councillors and civic dignitaries is published by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). The ODPM guidance includes advice provided by HM Revenue and Customs on tax and National Insurance issues. There have been no changes to the tax rules that affect this guidance.

Drugs Seizures

Mr. Streeter: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what *(a)* weight and *(b)* estimated street value of illegal drugs was seized by HM Revenue and Customs in Devon and Cornwall in each of the past five years, broken down by type of drug. [65141]

Dawn Primarolo: The following table gives details of HM Revenue and Customs' national seizures of illegal drugs over the last five years for which figures are available.

	Heroin		Cocaine		Other class A	Ecstasy	Cannabis
Financial year	Kilograms	Street value (£ million)	Kilograms	Street value (£ million)	Kilograms	Kilograms	Kilograms
2004–05	1,613	89	8,606	439	33	740	57,504
2003–04	1,626	101	20,727	1,140	116	1,245	57,617
2002–03	2,070	126	8,767	491	44	668	59,034
2001–02	1,489	94	6,075	365	113	1,330	67,061
2000–01	2,043	143	7,420	482	305	1,060	41,776

HM Revenue and Customs

Philip Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment has been made of the likely effect of putting out to private tender certain functions of HM Revenue and Customs. [64819]

Dawn Primarolo: HMRC regularly reviews its use of allocated public funds, including its current tendered services but there are no current plans to extend these. Taxpayer confidentiality is of paramount concern in all considerations.

John Barrett: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what job opportunities are available with HM Revenue and Customs in Scotland for staff highly skilled in human resources. [66375]

Dawn Primarolo: HM Revenue and Customs is in the process of streamlining its HR organisation to meet its business needs. The Department is creating an HR Service Centre at Cumbernauld where there is a range of jobs available for skilled HR staff. The Department is also exploring what other job opportunities may be available in other Revenue and Customs business streams in the Edinburgh area that can utilise the skills of HR staff. A database of job opportunities in other Government Departments is also available to staff to help them secure suitable alternative employment.

John Barrett: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the cost to the public purse has been of *(a)* the integration of human resources services within the Inland Revenue and *(b)* their subsequent integration with HM Customs and Excise. [66376]

Dawn Primarolo: The restructuring of the Inland Revenue HR service was to deliver a broad ranging reform of the HR function. Phase 1 was partially complete when announcements were made regarding the merger of Inland Revenue with Customs and Excise. The project has been subsumed within phase 2. The changes started in phase 1 made use of existing resources, in terms of both people and accommodation and was broadly cost-neutral.

The integration of the HR functions in Inland Revenue and Customs and Excise is only partially complete. The first phase of change was to implement a virtual service centre in three locations. These locations were selected as existing technology platforms could be utilised. The costs to date are related to the set up of a contact centre in two of the locations (the third already operated in this way) and are in the region of £100,000. The project, when completed in 2008, will lead to savings of 702 staff and an HR to total departmental staff ratio in line with Gershon proposals.

John Barrett: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer why the decision was taken to restructure the human resources services of HM Revenue and Customs; and if he will make a statement. [66377]

Dawn Primarolo: Before HM Revenue and Customs was created, both the Inland Revenue and Customs and Excise were in the process of transforming their HR service delivery models. Both Departments were committed to changes with attendant improvements in both service delivery and efficiency. As the two legacy Departments had different supporting technology, processes and working practices a simple merger of the two HR functions would not provide the service required to support the business during a time of considerable change.

John Barrett: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer why the decision was made to close the Edinburgh office of the human resources service of HM Revenue and Customs. [66379]

Dawn Primarolo: The closure of the Edinburgh office is part of a programme of wider change in HR in Revenue and Customs. The programme brings together HR from the two former Departments into a single HR structure that supports the new Department in delivering its challenging business objectives and commitments to efficiency savings as a result of the Gershon review and integration of the two former Departments.

John Barrett: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer for what reasons a directorate of HM Revenue and Customs has not been located in Scotland. [66380]

Dawn Primarolo: In June last year HM Revenue and Customs moved to a new organisational structure based on functions rather than geography. The changes were made to improve quality and consistency and help HMRC deliver good service to customers.

Many of HMRC's 36 business unit directorates have a presence in Scotland, but where each director's office is based will depend on the needs of that part of the business. HMRC is continuing to develop its plans for restructuring and relocation to meet its efficiency targets.

John Barrett: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer why HM Revenue and Customs has no human resources and learning managers in Scotland. [66381]

Dawn Primarolo: HM Revenue and Customs will have an HR Service Centre based in Cumbernauld in Scotland. There will be a 136 HR staff based in this office and there will be 26 management posts in the organisational structure at officer, higher officer and senior officer level.

John Barrett: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps are being taken to retrain human resources staff within HM Revenue and Customs in Scotland following the recent reorganisation. [66385]

Dawn Primarolo: During the current transition period to a new structure of HR work in Revenue and Customs, both HR teams in Scotland are still actively employed on HR work. This situation is expected to continue until at least December 2006. Over the coming months, the Department will be working with staff in Edinburgh to secure new work for them that best utilises their skills. People will then receive training appropriate for their new work.

John McDonnell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total expenditure by HM Revenue and Customs has been on the use of consultants employed on introducing the lean processing model into the Department. [58391]

Dawn Primarolo: LEAN processing techniques are designed to drive out waste and increase productivity in those areas that process large volumes of routine transactions, and is a key element in HMRC's plans to provide improved service to customers, and meet its efficiency targets.

The total expenditure by HM Revenue and Customs on the use of consultants introducing Lean Processing over the last two financial years from 2004-05 is £7.4 million.

Home Computer Initiative

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what consultations took place before his decision to terminate the Home Computer Initiative; and if he will make a statement. [62393]

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Mr. Burrowes: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment the Government have made of the effect of the abolition of the home computing initiatives on its digital strategy; and what further steps the Government are taking to increase access to computers and improve IT skills. [62730]

Chris Grayling: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what discussions he had with the Department of Trade and Industry on his plans to abolish Home Computer Initiative tax relief; [62657]

(2) what assessment was made of the likely effects on *(a)* businesses and *(b)* users before the decision was made to abolish the Home Computer Initiative scheme; [62658]

(3) what criteria he used in deciding that the abolition of Home Computer Initiative tax relief should have immediate effect. [62690]

Peter Luff: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) for what reasons he abolished the Home Computing Initiative in advance of the earliest date originally indicated; [62948]

(2) which factors led him to conclude that suppliers in the Home Computing Initiative should not be given greater notice of the decision to terminate the scheme at the end of the 2005–06 financial year; [62949]

(3) if he will discuss with the chief executive of the Office of Fair Trading what arrangements can be made to ensure an orderly run-down of the Home Computing Initiative; [62950]

(4) what assessment he made of the impact on *(a)* employers and *(b)* users before deciding to abolish the Home Computing Initiative; [62951]

(5) what discussions he had with *(a)* the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, *(b)* the Office of Fair Trading and *(c)* representatives of the computer industry about his decision to abolish the Home Computing Initiative; [62952]

(6) if he will meet the Chief Executive of the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) to discuss the implications for the OFT of the termination of the Home Computing Initiative in the Budget; [62947]

(7) if he will list each of the *(a)* meeting, *(b)* correspondence including electronic mail and *(c)* other contact between (i) Ministers and (ii) officials in his Department and their counterparts in the Department of Trade and Industry on the future of the Home Computing Initiative in the 10 days before the Budget; [63803]

(8) if he will place in the Library the evidence of abuse collected by HM Inland Revenue and Customs that led to the decision to abolish the tax exemption that underpinned the home computer initiative; [66509]

(9) if he will place in the Library communications from his officials to the Department of Trade and Industry on the Home Computing Initiatives relating to the abolition of the tax exemption in the Budget; [66510]

(10) whether his Department produced a regulatory impact assessment of the abolition of the home computing initiatives tax exemption. [66511]

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what estimate he has made of the impact on *(a)* employers and *(b)* employees of the abolition of the Home Computer Initiative scheme; [63232]

(2) what discussions he has had with the Department of Trade and Industry on his plans to abolish the Home Computer Initiative scheme; [63239]

(3) what discussions he had with businesses before he made the decision to abolish the Home Computer Initiative tax relief; [63241]

(4) on what basis the notice period for abolishing the Home Computer Initiative tax relief scheme was decided. [63255]

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) if he will make it his policy to retain the tax exemption offered as part of the Home Computing Initiative; [63917]

(2) what assessment his Department has made of the impact of the withdrawal of the Home Computing Initiative on levels of home computing in the UK; [63918]

(3) if he will compensate those people who invested heavily in anticipation of the Home Computer Bill and have been disadvantaged by its abandonment; [64481]

(4) if he will compensate those who invested in the Home Computer Initiative prior to the decision to abolish it. [65188]

Jo Swinson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what period of notice his Department gave to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on the ending of the Home Computing scheme. [64167]

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what discussions he had with businesses in Southend West constituency before he made the decision to abolish the Home Computer Initiative; and if he will make a statement; [65044]

(2) how much has been saved by the abolition of the Home Computer Initiative; and if he will make a statement. [65045]

Dawn Primarolo: The Government keep all taxes under review and have been looking at how they can focus their support on groups with the poorest access to technology, following the publication of the Digital Strategy paper in April 2005 which indicated that the Home Computer Initiative was poorly targeted.

In addition, HM Revenue and Customs has evidence to suggest that in some cases employees were buying the computer not borrowing it, and that some employees were being offered equipment that is clearly not a "computer" within the spirit of the legislation.

In view of these risks to the Exchequer, the Government took action at Budget 2006 to remove the exemption from benefit-in-kind tax charges and national insurance contributions for employer-provided computer equipment from 6 April 2006, and an RIA on this and the amendment to the tax exemption for mobile phones has been published.

HM Revenue and Customs has put in place transitional arrangements to ensure that where the employer and employee had agreed in writing before

6 April 2006 the terms on which the computer was to be made available the tax exemption would apply even if the employee had not physically taken possession of the computer by 6 April 2006. The Office of Fair Trading will continue to issue directions under the Consumer Credit Act, providing it is in the hirer's interest to do so, until 5 September 2006.

Further to the Digital Strategy, the Government published its 'Inclusion through Innovation' report in November 2005, which looked at where Information and Communication Technology (ICTs) might deliver most benefit to excluded groups and considered how that might be achieved. In addition, the Government have written to representatives from industry inviting suggestions on the best way of refocusing our support on these target groups. Over the next few months the DTI will review the options put forward and consider how they would meet the Government's objectives.

On 2 May, I announced two further measures which will:

set up a dedicated Digital Inclusion Team to ensure the best use of ICT in tackling social exclusion;

change the aims and objectives of the Digital Strategy to focus on inclusion, to reflect the shift in the Government's focus to a more targeted approach.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many fraudulent claims have been submitted under the Home Computing Initiative; and how many consequent court cases *(a)* have been concluded and *(b)* are pending. [63333]

Dawn Primarolo: Employees do not claim tax relief under the Home Computer Initiative. The exemption applied to remove any benefit in kind charge arising when an employer loaned a computer to an employee for private use. Evidence collected by HMRC shows that the HCI was being used to enable employees to buy equipment out of their pre tax income, including in some cases leisure equipment such as game consoles and MP3 Players.

Illegal Meat Imports

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many passengers have been found to be in possession of illegal meat imports after being detected by meat detector dogs since 2001; and how many such passengers have been *(a)* prosecuted and *(b)* convicted of importing illegal meat. [58615]

Dawn Primarolo: Dogs trained to detect products of animal origin were introduced in September 2002. Since then they have been responsible for 597 detections in 2002–03, 1,532 detections in 2003–04 and 3,375 detections in 2004–05.

Central records do not show the number of passengers associated with each detection. There has been one prosecution as a result of a detection by the dogs. In November 2005 the importer was convicted of the illegal importation of 100 kilos of crayfish and fined £100.

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer which locations each meat detector dog has visited in each month since 2001; how many hours each UK *(a)* seaport, *(b)* airport and *(c)* border crossing point has had a meat detector dog working in each month since 2001; and how many hours each meat detector dog has worked in each month since 2001. [58616]

Dawn Primarolo: HM Revenue and Customs detector dogs are deployed on a flexible, mobile basis according to risk and where they will have the most impact. They may be deployed at any port, airport or border crossing point in Great Britain that handles traffic from outside the European Union. The meat detector dogs work full time and flexible hours according to operational requirements. Further information is not available: release of detailed information about deployment of anti-smuggling resources would put in the public domain information that would be valuable to those seeking to circumvent customs controls thereby prejudicing the prevention and detection of crime.

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many tonnes of meat have been voluntarily handed over by passengers at each UK *(a)* seaport, *(b)* airport and *(c)* border crossing point in each year since 1997; [58617]

(2) if he will estimate the total amount of illegal meat seized at *(a)* each UK seaport, *(b)* each UK airport and *(c)* each UK border crossing point in each year since 2003. [58626]

Dawn Primarolo: Revenue and Customs began to record illegal meat seizures when they took on responsibility for tackling illegal imports of products of animal origin in April 2003. In the financial year 2003–04 HM Revenue and Customs seized 70,083 tonnes of meat at all seaports, airports and postal depots in Great Britain of which 3,066 tonnes had been voluntarily surrendered by passengers. In 2004–05 they seized 77,087 tonnes of meat of which 2,523 tonnes had been voluntarily surrendered. More detailed information is not available as disclosure of results at different locations would put in the public domain information that would be valuable to those seeking to circumvent customs controls thereby prejudicing the prevention and detection of crime.

Mortgages

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will take steps to limit the fees chargeable by mortgage lenders to people wishing to change their mortgage provider. [67204]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The charges imposed by mortgage lenders are principally a matter for commercial judgment in a competitive mortgage market.

The UK adopted statutory mortgage regulation in October 2004, under the Financial Services Authority (FSA). Under that regime charges must be clearly disclosed to customers before they conclude a contract with a lender.

Where these charges can be varied over the life of the mortgage, any change must be made in a way that is fair to the customer, the FSA is currently looking into increases to exit charges by certain lenders to ensure they have been made in a fair way.

National Insurance (Music Industry)

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to introduce class 1 national insurance liability for freelance musicians; whether he is seeking to claim back payments of class 1 contributions from musicians and orchestras; and what assessment he has made of the impact of this policy on orchestras. [66514]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave the hon. member for East Antrim (Sammy Wilson) on 8 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 992.

Off-shore Trusts

Mr. Evans: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the annual tax revenue which would be payable if all off-shore trusts held by British residents were repatriated to the UK. [66982]

Dawn Primarolo: No such estimate has been made.

Online Goods Declaration

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the development cost has been of the free online service by which traders can declare goods to HM Revenue and Customs; what the set-up cost of the service was; and what the expected annual cost is of *(a)* staff and *(b)* infrastructure for the service. [65861]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the expected cost is of updating CHIEF and the free declaration service by which traders can declare goods to HM Revenue and Customs to conform with the new requirements determined by the EU. [65862]

Dawn Primarolo: HMRC is currently working to clarify and document the full requirements of the EU Change Programme, technical options for delivery and associated timescales for implementation. CHIEF is likely to be the system used to implement most (but not all) of the Change Programme but until our preparatory work is complete it is by no means certain, and therefore it is not possible to provide accurate costs for updating CHIEF at this time. Each project within the EU Change Programme will be subject to a full and robust Business Case, which will include identification of the most appropriate VFM technology for delivery, reducing the compliance burden and improving customer experience.

Parliamentary Questions

Peter Luff: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he will reply to Question *(a)* 63803, *(b)* 62950, *(c)* 62951, *(d)* 62952, *(e)* 62948 and *(f)* 62949, on the home computing initiative, tabled by the hon. Member for Mid-Worcestershire. [67812]

Dawn Primarolo: I have done so today.

Pension Funds

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer which former state-owned companies have received Crown guarantees in respect of their pension fund deficits. [66344]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: It is a matter for the Department that provided the Crown guarantee to report any obligations created by the Crown guarantee to Parliament in accordance with the Requirements of Government Accounting and in its Departmental Resource Accounts in accordance with the Government's Financial Reporting Manual, which complies with generally accepted accounting practice.

Tax Credits

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 30 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1116W, on tax credits, how many and what proportion of tax credit claimants received manual payments as a result of *(a)* delays in processing changes in circumstances, *(b)* the termination of claims because the award notice had not been signed and subsequent reinstating of the claim, *(c)* an error resulting in a child or children no longer being shown on the award notice and *(d)* other reasons in (i) 2003–04, (ii) 2004–05 and (iii) 2005–06; and what the total amount of these manual payments was broken down by reason for the manual payment in each year. [66094]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 30 March 2006; *Official Report*, column 1116W.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the performance management data on tax credits which is available on a *(a)* monthly, *(b)* quarterly and *(c)* annual basis; and if he will make a statement. [63375]

Dawn Primarolo: HMRC maintains a wide range of management information data to help them manage tax credits business, monitor performance and ultimately inform the Department's annual report.

Collection of data will vary across the year.

Teenage Pregnancy

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the levels of teenage pregnancy were in each county in each year since 1997. [67417]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 3 May 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking what the levels of teenage pregnancy were in each county in each year since 1997. (67417)

Available figures are estimates of the number of pregnancies that resulted in a live birth, stillbirth or termination.

Teenage conception numbers and rates from 1997 to 2004 (the most recent year for which figures are available) are given in the attached table, which I am also placing in the House of Commons Library. Figures for 2004 are provisional.

Valuation Office Agency

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will place in the Library a copy of the Valuation Office Agency's *(a)* best practice guide and *(b)* Certificate of Value manual on the taking and adding of photographs for valuation purposes. [62296]

Dawn Primarolo: The Valuation Office Agency's (VGA) *(a)* IT Systems Best Practice—Digital Photography Summary and IT Systems Best Practice—Digital Photography are purely technical guides for its staff on how to take and store photographs using a digital camera, *(b)* The VOA does not have a Certificate of Value manual as requested.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will place in the Library a copy of the Valuation Office Agency's Data Strategy. [66655]

Dawn Primarolo: The Valuation Office Agency's Forward Plan 2005–2008 and Annual Report and Accounts 2004–2005, both of which are available on its website www.voa.gov.uk. cover the strategy for improving its data and exploiting new technology with examples.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to his Answer of 23 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 506W, to the hon. Member for Meriden (Mrs. Spelman), on the Valuation Office Agency, whether the performance appraisal system, performance rewards and performance-related pay for any staff member conducting valuations is linked to the volume, frequency, accuracy or size of the valuations. [66673]

Dawn Primarolo: In line with guidance from the Cabinet Office, the Valuation Office Agency's performance appraisal system and performance-related rewards are linked to the delivery of its key business objectives and targets (including timeliness, quality, value for money and customer satisfaction) which are set out in detail in the Agency's Forward Plan, available on its website www.voa.gov.uk.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many cameras the Valuation Office Agency owns. [66695]

Dawn Primarolo: The Valuation Office Agency has replaced 2,126 conventional cameras in the last five years on cost saving grounds. The Valuation Office Agency has used camera since the 1980s and has a total of 2,355 cameras.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the Answer of 6 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 1038W, to the hon. Member for Meriden (Mrs. Spelman) on the Valuation Office Agency, when he will place a copy of the staff intranet announcement notice in the Library. [66761]

Dawn Primarolo: I have been assured by officials that the intranet announcement was deposited in the Library of the House on 6 February 2006, the day I answered the question from the hon. Member for Meriden (Mrs. Spelman). The Library has confirmed that it is available to Members.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 30 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1117–8W, on the Valuation Office Agency (VOA), which foreign trips staff from the VOA undertook that were funded by public funds in *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06. [66762]

Dawn Primarolo: There is nothing I can usefully add to my earlier answer. The information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

VAT

Lynne Jones: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 30 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1118W, on VAT relief, whether within an existing zero rate of VAT category it is permitted to alter the detailed arrangements with respect to an item or service to which the zero rate applies. [67585]

Dawn Primarolo: Under our agreements with our European partners we are not permitted to extend the scope of our existing zero rates to include supplies on which VAT is currently chargeable.

War Loan Repayments

Anne Moffat: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the UK Government continue to pay interest and capital reduction to the US in connection with lend lease and war loans; and if he will make a statement. [67695]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Government intends to meet its obligations under the 1945 Agreement by repaying the United States Government in full the amounts lent in 1945. Repayment of the war loans to the United States Government are expected to be completed on 31 December 2006.

Western Gray Whales

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assurances he received during discussions on the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development's funding for Shell's proposed Sakhalin II development that none of the remaining western gray whales will die as a result of the project. [67174]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, together with the other potential lenders to the Sakhalin II project, have undertaken an extensive and detailed assessment of the risks to the western gray whales. This assessment has drawn on the views of an independent panel of world-renowned whale experts, convened by the World Conservation Union (IUCN). This panel produced a series of recommendations on whale protection measures relating to noise, construction schedules, vessel movements, monitoring and other relevant issues, and it is hoped that these measures, together with Sakhalin Energy's own whale protection plans, will minimise the level of disruption to the whale's habitat. To date there is no evidence of Sakhalin Energy's activities resulting in any whale deaths, and recent research has indicated that the whale population is showing signs of recovery.

Further comfort is drawn from the establishment of an independent western gray whale Advisory Panel that will oversee and advise on ongoing whale conservation activities and research. Sakhalin Energy has agreed to implement all reasonable recommendations that this panel produces.

Whale protection measures and commitments would be contractual obligations under any loan agreements between Sakhalin Energy and the potential lenders, and these commitments would be monitored and publicly reported on.

Written Answers to Questions

Thursday 4 May 2006

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Media Briefing

Norman Baker: To ask the Leader of the House pursuant to his answer of 30 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 771W, whether paragraph 7.1 prohibits the issuing of embargoed statements to media outlets; and what rules govern the issuing of embargoed statements to the media. [68509]

Mr. Hoon: There is no reference in paragraph 7.1 which prohibits the release of material under embargo. It has been the practice of successive Governments to release specific reports and other documents under timed embargo to assist the media in their coverage.

There are no specific rules governing the issue of embargoed statements to the media, but Departments and their press offices are made aware of the need to observe the importance of Parliament being informed in the first instance.

Ministerial Cars (Fuel Costs)

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Leader of the House what the fuel costs were for ministerial cars used by the Department in each of the last five years. [67126]

Nigel Griffiths: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 27 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 1226W, by my hon. Friend the Minister of State, Department for Transport.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Air Quality

Mr. Robathan: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what steps are taken to enforce the air quality management areas regulations inside the House of Commons precincts; and if he will make a statement. [65855]

Nick Harvey: Westminster city council has declared an air quality management area which covers the whole borough. It has produced an air quality action plan which sets out the main measures that Westminster will implement in working towards meeting the objectives. In order to reduce emissions, steps are also being taken to remind those responsible for vehicles using the estate on a regular basis that engines should be turned off when stationary.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Anthrax (Wales)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with her counterpart in Wales on the incidence of anthrax; and what measures she has taken to prevent spread of the disease to England. [66624]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Chief Veterinary Officer for Wales has responsibility for the control of the incidence of anthrax in Wales and she is working closely with the Chief Veterinary Officer (UK). Officials in the Department have been in close, direct daily contact with their counterparts in the Welsh Assembly Government. Since the outbreak was confirmed on 22 April, the CVO Wales has convened three telephone conferences, involving partner organisations including representatives from the Environment Agency, relevant local authority, public health officials and the State Veterinary Service who have advised on environmental sampling, public health protection and animal health aspects accordingly.

A movement restriction was placed on the affected premises on 19 April 2006 and will continue until it is considered safe for it to be lifted. Investigations are continuing.

Avian Influenza

Mr. Vara: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures are in place for the inoculation of the population in the event of an outbreak of avian influenza in Britain. [65767]

Mr. Bradshaw: The vaccination of poultry offers potential benefits in disease control, but currently available vaccines are too limited to provide a general solution. Crucially, although these vaccines protect against disease, they will not prevent birds from becoming infected and shedding virus, hiding the symptoms of disease.

We remain convinced that early detection, application of rapid and robust control measures, and enhanced biosecurity and surveillance are key to the successful eradication of avian influenza in poultry.

We recognise that there are specific circumstances in which vaccination could play a role. For example, we have ordered 2.3 million doses of vaccine as a contingency reserve for zoo birds. The present situation concerns one dead wild bird and to date there is no evidence of any associated disease in UK commercial poultry.

In these circumstances we do not see any role for vaccination.

Policy for human vaccination is the responsibility of the Department of Health.

Cetaceans

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 17 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 2506W, on cetacean by-catch, how much Government funding for

the Cetacean and Turtle Strandings Scheme *(a)* has been spent in each year since it was established and *(b)* has been allocated for future years. [67077]

Mr. Bradshaw: Defra (and previously DETR) has funded the Cetacean and Turtle Strandings Scheme since its inception in 1990. From 2005–06 onwards the Scottish Executive and Welsh Assembly Government have provided a financial contribution to the scheme.

(a) Funding figures for the current year, along with the previous 10 years are:

	£
2006–07	[1]305,000
2005–06	[1]454,752
2004–05	455,761
2003–04	361,265
2002–03	351,371
2001–02	392,094
2000–01	337,548
1999–2000	204,257
1998–99	189,072
1997–98	159,374
1996–97	182,703

[1] Includes SE/WAG contribution.

(b) Defra are currently reviewing requirements for research into cetacean strandings. Until this review is completed, budgets have not been allocated for 2007–08 and future years.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 17 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 2506W, on cetacean by-catch, what estimate she has made of common dolphin by-catch in the 2005–06 season. [67116]

Mr. Bradshaw: Estimates of by-catch for the 2005–06 season are not yet available. Results of observer schemes which monitor cetacean by-catch will be used to meet the obligations of Council Regulation (EC) 812/2004, which requires the UK Government to report to the Commission by 1 June 2006 on by-catch monitoring in particular fisheries.

Fly-tipping

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many incidents of fly-tipping have *(a)* been reported and *(b)* led to a prosecution in (i) South East Essex and (ii) Southend-on-Sea since April 2004. [66878]

Mr. Bradshaw: Defra and the Environment Agency have established a national database on fly-tipping (Flycapture), operational since April 2004.

Flycapture collects data at local authority level only. It is important to note that the following data are probably an underestimate and will increase as authorities get better at collecting and reporting information.

Southend-on-Sea borough council reported 1,736 incidents of fly-tipping between April 2004 and March 2005 (an average of 157.8 per month) and 1,591 incidents between April 2005 and February 2006 (an average of 132.6 per month). Waste collection authorities across the whole of Essex reported 25,083 incidents in 2004–05 (an average of 2,090.3 per month) and 21,741 incidents in 2005–06 (an average of 1,811.8 per month).

Prosecutions data are available only from April 2005 to February 2006. During this period no prosecutions were reported by Southend-on-Sea borough council. Local authorities in Essex took forward 9 prosecutions in this time period.

The following table shows the relevant data broken down by individual local authorities in Essex.

Local authorities in Essex

	April 2004 to March 2005			*April 2005 to March 2006*			
	Number of returns	*Number of incidents*	*Average per month*	*Number of returns*	*Number of incidents*	*Average per month*	*Prosecutions*
Basildon District Council	12	11,639	969.9	12	8,586	715.5	1
Braintree District Council	11	2154	195.8	12	2,184	182.0	0
Brentwood Borough Council	10	502	50.2	12	388	32.3	1
Castle Point Borough Council	8	349	43.6	12	544	45.3	0
Chelmsford Borough Council	12	1,048	87.3	12	517	43.1	2
Colchester Borough Council	12	195	16.3	12	141	11.8	0
Epping Forest District Council	11	2,276	206.9	12	2,492	207.7	0
Harlow District Council	12	2234	186.2	12	2220	185.0	0
Maldon District Council	2	143	71.5	12	576	48.0	0
Rochford District Council	12	416	34.7	12	419	34.9	0
Southend-on-Sea Borough Council	11	1,736	157.8	12	1,591	132.6	0
Tendring District Council	11	578	52.5	12	523	43.6	0
Thurrock Borough Council	12	1571	130.9	12	1,320	110.0	5
Uttlesford District Council	10	242	24.2	12	240	20.0	0
Essex Total	12	25,083	2,090.3	12	21,741	1,811.8	9

Herdwick Indigenous Sheep Flock

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what funding her Department has made available for the protection of the Herdwick indigenous sheep flock in each year since 1997. [67481]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 3 May 2006]:* In 2001, Defra granted £10,000 to create the Heritage Gene Bank which was set up to preserve semen and embryos from breeds considered to be at-risk due to the FMD outbreak of the time. The Herdwick was one of those breeds considered to be at-risk because the majority of

its breeding population were in or near to areas heavily affected by FMD.

Defra recognises the need to have a long term view on managing the genetic health of our livestock breeding population and the need for a co-ordinated effort to support initiatives that will encourage the characterisation, conservation and utilisation of our livestock genetic resources—which includes rare, mainstream and heritage livestock breeds. The National Steering Committee for Farm Animal Genetic Resources is about to report to Ministers with a national action plan to identify what the Government, industry stakeholders and other organisations can do to improve the management of Farm Animal Genetic Resources and this plan will help inform our future policy in this area.

Import of Seal Skins Regulations

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the operation of the Import of Seal Skins Regulations 1996. [66879]

Jim Knight: The Import of Seal Skins Regulations 1996 prohibit the commercial importation of skins (and other listed products) of White coat, Harp and Blueback Hooded seal pups, as required by European Council Directive 83/129/EEC (as amended). These Regulations are enforced at the border by HM Revenue and Customs.

Fisheries

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much money the Moroccan Army has received from the issuing of fishing licences in Western Sahara under the last EU-Morocco Fisheries Partnership Agreement; how much it is expected to receive under the currently proposed agreement; and if she will make a statement. [67176]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department does not hold this information.

Television Disposal

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the number of analogue televisions which will be sent to landfill as a result of switching off the analogue television signal; and what steps she is taking to find means by which televisions can be reused or recycled. [67765]

Mr. Bradshaw: Digital switchover does not require any equipment to be thrown away. However, as the regulatory impact assessment on the timing of digital switchover acknowledges, there may be a temporary acceleration in the disposal of some secondary televisions that people choose not to adapt after switchover in each region. In light of this, Defra and the Department for Trade and Industry (DTI) have jointly commissioned the Market Transformation Programme to establish and quantify any changes in patterns of disposal of consumer equipment, including televisions, due to digital switchover. This project is due to report in June.

Televisions disposed of following digital switchover will be subject to regulations implementing the EU Waste Electronic and Electrical Equipment (WEEE) Directive, which aims to prevent electronic and electrical waste and promote reuse, recycling and other forms of recovery in order to reduce the amount of such waste going to landfill. The directive requires producers, or those acting on their behalf, to set up systems for treatment, recovery and environmentally sound disposal of WEEE.

Transposition of the majority of the WEEE directive is the responsibility of the DTI. However, Defra is drawing up regulations amending the Waste Management Licensing Regulations 1994, to transpose the treatment-permitting requirements of article 6 of the directive. Defra also intend to introduce exemptions from the need to obtain a waste management licence for those storing waste electrical equipment prior to its recovery and those repairing such equipment to promote its reuse.

These regulations will help ensure that less waste electrical equipment ends up in landfill. They will also help to ensure that more of it is either reused or recycled in an environmentally sound manner.

The DTI plan to consult on the draft regulations and accompanying guidance later this spring.

Water Conservation/Resources

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to use the planning system to promote water conservation; and if she will make a statement. [54708]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The prudent use of natural resources is set out in PPS 1, "Delivering sustainable development"; this includes the sustainable use of water.

Water use in buildings is also related to design and installation. Consequently the promotion of water conservation can also be served through building or water regulation.

Water conservation is a key element of sustainability. We intend to regulate to increase water efficiency in new homes and will consult on proposals late this year. Proposals for water conservation are set out in the consultation paper for the Code for Sustainable Homes that was published on 6 December; the Code sets out a base line target that water used in homes should be 20 per cent. less than the current norm. The Code will have a range of performance standards with a five star rating system. Housing schemes that are publicly funded or built on sites released or assembled by Government will have to achieve a three star rating.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answers to the hon. Member for Meriden (Mrs. Spelman) of 28 March 2006, *Official Report*, columns 844–5W, on water, if she will place in the Library a copy of the *(a)* joint sustainability impact study, *(b)* incidence effects of charging for domestic water and sewerage services (DETR, June 1998) *(c)* cross-Government review of water affordability

(DEFRA, December 2004) and *(d)* current 25 year water resource plan for each water company in England. [66792]

Mr. Morley: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is placing copies of *(a)* sustainability impacts study of additional house building scenarios in England in the House Library.

The Department is placing copies of *(b)* Incidence Effects of Charging for Domestic Water and Sewerage Services, and *(c)* the Cross-Government Review of Water Affordability in the House Library.

The Department does not hold copies of the companies' water resource plans, which are currently produced voluntarily. I will, however, place in the Library, a copy of the Environment Agency report to Ministers on those plans, Maintaining Water Supply. Summaries of plans are also available on company websites. When these plans are made statutory under the Water Act 2003, the non-commercially confidential aspects of both draft and final plans will be publicly available.

TRANSPORT

Airport Security

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 26 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 1089W, whether any of the incidents referred to were deemed to be a threat to the lives of passengers, staff or the general public. [68104]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 3 May 2006]:* If an incident involves circumstances indicating that an accident nearly occurred, it is defined as a serious incident under the Civil Aviation (Investigation of Air Accidents and Incidents) Regulations 1996. Of the 43 occurrences referred to in my earlier answer, four were either accidents or serious incidents. All serious incidents and accidents are investigated by the Department's air accidents investigation branch. The reports of all AAIB investigations are published on their website.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 26 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 1089W, how many incidents there were at each of the airports in each of the three preceding years. [68105]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 3 May 2006]:* The number of incidents investigated by the Civil Aviation Authority at or in the locality of Belfast international airport, Belfast city airport and Londonderry airport in each of the years 2002, 2003 and 2004 is set out in the following table:

	Belfast international	*Belfast city*	*Londonderry*
2002	8	11	1
2003	115	13	3
2004	12	15	4

Of these, four were accidents or serious incidents as defined in the Civil Aviation (Investigation of Air Accidents and Incidents) Regulations 1996.

British Transport Police

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the financial position is of the British Transport Police pension fund. [50760]

Derek Twigg: The latest valuation of the British Transport Police Superannuation Fund was carried out as at 30 June 2004 and completed on 31 December 2004. For valuation purposes the fund is split into three parts and the results were:

	£ million
1970 Section—Preserved Part	[1]1.1
1970 Section—Contributory Part	[2]9
1968 Section	[1]0.3

[1] Surplus
[2] Shortfall

Climate Change

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has *(a)* made and *(b)* plans to make of the effects of (i) English local authorities' local transport plans and (ii) the road schemes included in those plans on the Government's Public Sector Agreement target for greenhouse gas emissions. [64478]

Dr. Ladyman: Statutory Local Transport Plans are subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment, and the implications for greenhouse gas emissions will be carefully considered as part of this process. All new major road schemes proposed by local authorities within Local Transport Plans will remain subject to normal approval processes. Decisions on schemes will take account of climate change impacts alongside other environmental, economic and safety factors.

Colin Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessments have been made of the impact on climate change of decisions taken by his Department since it assumed joint responsibility for the Public Service Agreement target on reducing climate change emissions in April 2005; and if he will publish those assessments. [67833]

Dr. Ladyman: The transport measures included in CM6764 "Climate Change: The UK Programme 2006" were subjected to analysis on a number of measures including cost-effectiveness, distribution and air quality and other environmental impacts. Details of this are available at: http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/climatechange/uk/ukccp/pdf/ukccp06-ria.pdf.

In addition, Statutory Local Transport Plans and Regional Transport Strategies are subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment, and the implications for greenhouse gas emissions are carefully considered as part of this process. Ministers' decisions on schemes will take account of climate change impacts alongside other environmental, economic and safety factors.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Dartford Crossing

Derek Conway: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will undertake a review of traffic delays related to the Dartford Crossing, the method of toll collection at the crossing and the part which the method of toll collection plays in the creation of vehicle tailbacks. [67958]

Dr. Ladyman: The Highways Agency keeps journey times and journey time reliability under review for all its roads, including the Dartford Crossing.

Paying to use the crossing is not the limiting factor on traffic at the crossing, but rather the capacity of the crossing itself, particularly the tunnels. The toll plazas perform an important safety role in controlling the demand and speed of vehicles both through the tunnels and away from the bridge.

Government Vehicles

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many cars are available for *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials (i) through the pool and (ii) through individual assignment. [67449]

Dr. Ladyman: There are 85 cars and drivers permanently allocated to Ministers and 25 cars and drivers permanently allocated to senior officials. The Government Car Service (GCS) also operates 35 pool cars. Official cars and drivers are provided by the GCS in accordance with the Prime Minister's guidance "Travel by Ministers".

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the total expenditure on motor vehicles for Ministers and senior officials was in 2005–06. [67450]

Dr. Ladyman: The contracted cost of providing allocated cars and drivers to Ministers and senior officials in 2005–06 was £7,079,400.

Railways

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what changes rail passengers may expect to *(a)* their expectation of a seat, *(b)* the availability of cheap day returns and *(c)* fare levels as a result of the Great West Franchise being awarded to First, with particular reference to the service between Cardiff and Portsmouth; and if he will make a statement. [65399]

Derek Twigg: The franchise agreement requires First Great Western (FGW) to use reasonable endeavours to minimise the need for passengers to stand on off-peak services, and for no more than 20 minutes on peak services. Rises in commuter fares and long-distance Saver Return fares are regulated in accordance with the Department's current policy, which limits annual rises in each category to an average of 1 per cent. above inflation. Other fares are unregulated, and FGW is free to set them on a commercial basis FGW are investing £200 million across the franchise to upgrade trains and stations. Trains on this route will benefit from this investment.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many passengers used *(a)* the St. Ives Bay line, *(b)* the Looe Valley line, *(c)* the Tamar Valley line, *(d)* the St. Albans Abbey Branch, *(e)* the Grantham to Skegness line, *(f)* the Penistone line and *(g)* the Esk Valley line in each of the last five years. [61281]

Derek Twigg: Statistics for passenger journeys are generally presented on the basis of railway financial year which runs from April to March. The figures for the last five financial years are set out in the following tables.

All of these lines have been chosen to demonstrate aspects of the Community Rail Development Strategy and most of them have long established community rail partnerships to promote and develop them (partnerships were established during 2005–06 for the Skegness Line and St. Albans Line). The figures need to be treated with caution (see following notes), but demonstrate that there has been growth on all lines over the last five years.

Number of passengers and average number of passengers per train

	2001–02		*2002–03*		*2003–04*	
	Total (Thousand)	*Average*	*Total (Thousand)*	*Average*	*Total (Thousand)*	*Average*
St. Ives	297	25	324	27	331	28
Looe	58	11	69	11	76	13
Tamar	123	24	117	23	110	22
St. Albans	367	25	344	25	367	25
Skegness[1]	760	70	704	71	722	69
Penistone	783	67	752	68	836	72
Esk Valley	145	52	155	52	175	65
Total	2,533	41	2,465	41	2,617	42

	2004–05		*2005–06*	
	Total (Thousand)	*Average*	*Total (Thousand)*	*Average*
St. Ives	329	26	364	22
Looe	72	12	68	9
Tamar	115	23	130	25
St. Albans	374	26	389	27
Skegness[1]	795	73	764	71
Penistone	969	83	1,033	88
Esk Valley	169	68	170	65
Total	2,823	45	2,918	42

[1] Passenger figures for the Skegness Line include all passengers on the Nottingham—Grantham—Skegness service.

Notes:

1. The date of the Easter holidays can impact on the carryings of lines dependent on tourist traffic and in some financial years, there is no Easter (e.g. financial year 2005–06).

2. Data based on ticketing system supplied by the train operator. All such data may be subject to adjustment.

3. The Esk Valley line was used by passengers on trains run by the North Yorkshire Moors Railway during the summer of 2005 this adds approximately 5,000 to the total passengers shown in the table).

4. The St. Ives line figures as presented have been adjusted to account for a ticketing system error which led to an under-reporting of journeys in financial years 2003–04 and 2004–05.

5. Several lines have had periods of closure for engineering work. These include closures of a week or more on the Esk Valley and West Country branches and a closure to allow the commissioning of the new link between the Skegness Line and the East Coast Main Line last Autumn. These closures can reduce loadings significantly.

6. The number of trains used to calculate the average number of passengers per train is based on an analysis of the public timetable and generally reflects trains running the whole length of the line with the following exceptions:

St. Ives includes trains terminating at Lelant Saltings

Tamar Valley includes trains terminating at Calstock

Skegness is based on all trains on the section of line east of Grantham (some start/terminate at Boston or Sleaford) (as the Middlesbrough—Nunthorpe services do not run the whole length of the Esk Valley these are also excluded).

7. No allowance is made for engineering closures or other similar disruption. Where buses are included in the public timetable rail tickets are valid on the bus, these are included trains for the purposes of calculating the averages.

Road Construction

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the average cost was of constructing a mile of *(a)* motorway and *(b)* trunk road in the latest period for which figures are available. [68098]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 3 May 2006]:* The average cost of constructing a mile of three lane motorway was £28.4 million per mile and for constructing a mile of dual carriageway was £15.3 million per mile, based on prices at the end of 2005.

Transport Subsidies

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) whether he plans to review the rate of the Bus Service Operators Grant; and if he will make a statement; [63504]

(2) what recent assessment he has made of *(a)* the appropriateness of the rate of the Bus Service Operators Grant and *(b)* its impact on local bus operators; and if he will make a statement. [63505]

Dr. Ladyman: We will be reviewing the rate of Bus Service Operators Grant in the light of the changes to fuel duty from 1 September this year contained in the Budget Statement on 22 March and will make an announcement in due course.

For the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007 we are of course considering all transport spending, including spending on bus subsidies and concessionary fares, and the various impacts of that spending.

Travel Costs

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the percentage change in real terms has been of the costs of travelling by *(a)* private car, *(b)* bus and *(c)* train since 1997. [68057]

Dr. Ladyman: Between 1997 and 2005 the real cost of motoring declined by 9 per cent. Bus and coach fares increased by 15 per cent., and rail fares increased by 5 per cent.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Crown Prosecution Service

Mr. Amess: To ask the Solicitor-General how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females in each branch of the Crown Prosecution Service have been *(a)* disciplined and *(b)* dismissed in the last 10 years as a result of a complaint against them of (i) bullying and (ii) sexual harassment being upheld; and if he will make a statement. [67943]

The Solicitor-General: Data setting out the reasons for leaving the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) prior to 1 April 2001 are not available. This date coincides with the change of the HR database. Since that date, one male has been disciplined—in February 2002—for sexual harassment. No males have been disciplined for bullying and no females have been disciplined for either bullying or sexual harassment. No staff have been dismissed as a result of a complaint of bullying or sexual harassment being upheld against them. All complaints of bullying and sexual harassment are investigated in accordance with the CPS' Equality and Diversity Complaints Procedure.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Solicitor-General how much compensation the Crown Prosecution Service has paid out in each the last 10 years as a result of complaints of *(a)* bullying and *(b)* sexual harassment being upheld; and if he will make a statement. [67944]

The Solicitor-General: Complaints of bullying and sexual harassment are investigated by the Crown Prosecution Service in accordance with its equality and diversity complaints procedure. If a complaint is upheld, a disciplinary authority is appointed who will decide on what action would be appropriate. That does not include the payment of compensation and it therefore follows that no compensation has been paid in the last 10 years.

SCOTLAND

Corporate Hospitality

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland on how many occasions he has accepted corporate hospitality in the last 12 months. [67528]

David Cairns: Paragraph 5.28 of the ministerial code sets out the rules on the registration of hospitality.

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many *(a)* EU foreign nationals and

(b) non-EU foreign nationals have been employed in his Department in each of the last five years; what vetting procedures are in place for each category of staff; and whether these include liaison with foreign law enforcement agencies. [68020]

David Cairns: The staff in the Scotland Office are employees of the Scottish Executive or the Department for Constitutional Affairs and it is the responsibility of those Departments to undertake any necessary vetting. The Office does not hold information on the nationality of staff.

Departmental Televisions

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many television sets are in operation in the Department (a) in total, (b) in Ministers' private offices and (c) in each building in the Department; and how many television licences are held by the Department. [62810]

David Cairns: The Scotland Office has 10 television sets; five in Melville Crescent, Edinburgh and five in Dover House, London, of which two are in the ministerial private offices.

Regarding licences, I refer the hon. Member to the answer she received on 13 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1920W from the Minister for Creative Industries and Tourism.

Equal Pay

Ms Katy Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many (a) women and (b) men are employed in the Department; what the average pay was for (i) women and (ii) men in the Department in (A) 1997 and (B) 2006; what women's average pay is as a percentage of men's average pay; and how many (1) women and (2) men the Department employed in each of the last five years, broken down by grade. [67779]

David Cairns: The Scotland Office was established on 1 July 1999.

The Cabinet Office collects and publishes annually statistical information on the civil service by Department. These include data on the employment of men and women. Information on the numbers of women and men employed in the civil service broken down at 31 December 2005 is available in the Library and on the civil service website at:

www.civilservice.gov.uk/management/statistics/employment/index.asp

The staff in the Scotland Office are on loan from the Scottish Executive and the Department for Constitutional Affairs and information on average salaries and percentages is not available. The percentages of women in each grade have been published in the Office's departmental and annual reports since 2002.

PRIME MINISTER

Honours (Prevention of Abuses) Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Prime Minister what recent representations he has received from (a) hon. Members, (b) Members of the House of Lords, (c) Members of the Scottish Parliament and (d) members of the public about (i) the operation of and (ii) reform of the Honours (Prevention of Abuses) Act 1925; and if he will make a statement. [66176]

The Prime Minister: The information is not held in the format requested. However, since January I have received over 400 letters and cards about the issue of honours. Given the volume of correspondence I receive, thousands of letters each week covering a broad spectrum of issues, my office records letters by subject rather than by the view expressed.

Ministerial Code of Conduct

Derek Conway: To ask the Prime Minister on which dates the Cabinet Secretary advised him of the application of the ministerial code of conduct in relation to the relationship between the Deputy Prime Minister and a civil servant. [67792]

The Prime Minister: I have regular meetings and discussions with ministerial colleagues and others on a wide range of subjects. Information relating to internal meetings, discussion and advice is not disclosed as to do so could harm the frankness and candour of internal discussion.

TREASURY

Budget 2006

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many copies of the summary leaflet Budget 2006 were distributed to (a) hospitals, (b) doctors' waiting rooms, (c) libraries and (d) other public places following the Budget; how many (i) hospitals, (ii) doctors' waiting rooms and (iii) libraries requested such leaflets; and what the total cost was of printing and distribution of these leaflets. [66844]

John Healey: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for South-West Hertfordshire (Mr. Gauke) on 24 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 8710W.

Some 175,000 copies of the summary leaflet were distributed to libraries in the UK.

EU Accession States

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the potential impact on (a) employment trends and (b) public expenditure in (i) the UK and (ii) Peterborough and Cambridgeshire of the accession of Bulgaria and Romania to the European Union after 1 January 2007; and if he will make a statement. [67506]

John Healey: Based on the UK's experience of the recent accession of eight countries in May 2004, the accession of Bulgaria and Romania to the European Union is likely to make a positive contribution to growth of the UK labour force and employment. It is very difficult to estimate the exact impact on employment trends and public expenditure of potential migration flows from Bulgaria and Romania, and even

more difficult to estimate these impacts at the sub-regional level. However, some assessment can be made based on UK experience, particularly from the accession of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, and Slovenia in May 2004.

With respect to the labour market, since May 2004 employment levels in the UK have risen to record highs, in part due to the expansion of the work force from immigration. A paper entitled "The Impact of Free Movement of Workers from Central and Eastern Europe on the UK Labour Market" (2006) published by the Department for Work and Pensions, suggests that the impact of migration from the new EU member states has been broadly positive, reflecting the flexibility and speed of adjustment of the UK labour market. The authors also found no discernible statistical evidence supporting the view that the inflow of A8 migrants is contributing to a rise in claimant unemployment in the UK.

With respect to potential effects on public expenditure, evidence from the most recent Home Office Accession Monitoring Report suggests

> "nationals from the Accession 8 countries continue to come to the UK to work, contributing to the success of the UK economy, whilst making very few demands of our welfare system or public services."

Financial Exclusion

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the number of people in Tamworth constituency who did not have access to a bank account on 31 December *(a)* 2005 and *(b)* 1997. [68365]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The most recent information available that allows assessment to be made of the number of households with no access to a bank account is the family resources survey from 2002–03. This indicates that 8 per cent. of households in the United Kingdom had no bank account of any kind. This equated to 1.9 million households containing around 2.8 million adults. The data are broken down to Government Office regional level. This shows 10 per cent. of households in the West Midlands were unbanked.

In 1997–98, the family resources survey was collected on a Great Britain basis, excluding Northern Ireland. 9 per cent. of households in the West Midlands were unbanked at that time compared to 8 per cent. of households in Great Britain as a whole.

In December 2004, the Government and the banks agreed to work together towards the goal of halving the number of adults in households with no access to a bank account of any kind and of making significant progress within two years. The Financial Inclusion Taskforce has been asked to monitor progress. The taskforce recently made its first annual report, which concluded that steady progress has been made towards the goal but also encouraged banks to continue to address the difficulties faced in opening a bank account.

Fiscal Autonomy (Scotland)

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what discussions he has had with *(a)* the Secretary of State for Scotland and *(b)* the First Minister of Scotland on fiscal autonomy for Scotland. [67103]

Mr. Des Browne: Treasury Ministers meet Scottish Ministers from time to time to discuss matters of common interest.

Free Bus Travel

David Howarth: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the effects on *(a)* service users and *(b)* local authorities of the proposal he announced in the Budget of introducing funding for cross-district free off-peak bus travel for pensioners from April 2008 instead of (i) immediately and (ii) from April 2007. [64802]

Mr. Des Browne *[holding answer 24 April 2006]:* No assessment has been made of the effect on *(a)* service users or *(b)* local authorities of the Budget 2006 announcement of free off-peak nationwide bus travel for all pensioners and all disabled people, in England from April 2008 instead of (i) immediately or (ii) from April 2007. This is because legislative change is necessary to enact the announcement. The scheme could therefore not commence until April 2008.

Fuel Duty (Northern Ireland)

David Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the impact of fuel duty levels on the Northern Ireland economy. [65149]

John Healey: Fuel duty rates were announced in the Budget, the Government continues to attach a high priority to tackling fraud. Northern Ireland's economy is continuing to grow and benefits from the range of Government economic policies set out in the Budget.

Ministerial Cars (Fuel Costs)

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the fuel costs were for ministerial cars used by his Department in each of the last five years. [67017]

John Healey: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Minister of State, Department of Transport on 27 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 1226W.

Non-fossil Fuels

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry to the hon. Member for Leominster (Bill Wiggin) of 31 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 331W, on non-fossil fuels, if he will place in the Library a copy of the legal advice advising that funds in the non-fossil fuel obligation fund were hereditary revenues. [68111]

John Healey: It would not be appropriate to release the legal advice concerned, as it is confidential and subject to legal professional privilege.

Nursery Places

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many nursery and crèche places are provided for people working in his Department; what charges are made for the provision of such services; and what other facilities are provided for the children of employees of his Department. [67366]

John Healey: The Treasury does not provide any nursery or crèche facilities. The Department is a member of the Westminster holiday play-scheme, which operates during school holidays and is open to children aged four years and nine months up to 12 years of age. The Treasury has two bespoke play-scheme rooms, which can cater for up to 18 children. The cost per child is £24.89 per day and the Treasury subsidises the costs by 51.78 per cent. The total subsidy to Treasury parents using the play-scheme from February 2005 to February 2006 inclusive has been £8,947.

The Treasury also supports the child care cost of eligible staff. Staff who work full-time receive child care vouchers up to the value of £40 per week per family, part-timers receive a pro-rated amount. Currently 103 members of staff receive child care vouchers. The cost of child care vouchers, since the scheme was introduced in January 2004 up to and including April 2006 is £354,300.

Overseas Aid

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the target of 0.7 per cent. of gross domestic product to be allocated to overseas aid will include the £8.5 billion for education in Africa and Asia announced by the Chancellor in April 2006. [67693]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: In 2005 the international community, under the leadership of the UK presidency of the G8, made substantial promises to increase the amount of aid. The £8.5 billion announced for education is part of the UK's commitment to delivering these aid promises, which means that it will be included in our target of 0.7 per cent. of GDP for overseas aid.

Pensions

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment the Government Actuary has made of contingent public sector liabilities in respect of employee pension funds of privatised companies. [67630]

Mr. Des Browne: The Government Actuary has not been asked to make any assessment of these liabilities.

Plastic Bags

Lynne Jones: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) if he will make it his policy to introduce a tax on plastic carrier bags; and if he will make a statement; [67880]

(2) what discussions he has had with his counterpart in the Republic of Ireland on the operation of their plastic bag tax. [67881]

John Healey: The Chancellor continues to keep all taxes under review. The Government currently has no plans for a plastic bag tax.

The Treasury carried out an assessment of the Irish plastic bag tax following its introduction in 2002. A copy of this assessment is available in the Library of the House.

Poverty Reduction (Developing Countries)

Mark Hunter: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what progress was made at the recent International Monetary Fund/World bank meeting in Washington towards poverty reduction in developing countries; and if he will make a statement. [68117]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: At the spring meetings the World bank governors confirmed the 100 per cent. debt cancellation for the heavily indebted poor countries, matching the debt relief which the IMF has been providing since January. The Development Committee of Board of Governors of the bank and fund called on all donors to fully implement the commitments they have made for substantial increases in aid volumes. The Committee emphasised the importance of universal access to primary education and sustained support for good quality education plans, and the key role the education for all—fast track initiative could play in all qualifying low income countries. The Development Committee also called on donors to fill the current financing gap. The UK has announced that it will provide an extra £100 million to the fast track initiative over the next two years which represents a downpayment to meet our share of the current financing gap.

Public Sector Charges/Fees

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the impact on the competitiveness of the United Kingdom economy of higher than inflation increases in public sector charges and fees to private sector businesses. [66913]

John Healey: None.

Suggestion Schemes

Philip Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what suggestion schemes are available for employees of HM Revenue and Customs to pass on their ideas; and what rewards are given for suggestions implemented. [64817]

Dawn Primarolo: HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) have established a Recognition Bonus Scheme (RBS) to recognise and reward work-related suggestions, which was launched in March 2006. This replaces a number of schemes previously used in the Inland Revenue and HM Customs and Excise.

The RBS specifically recognises an individual or team contribution to the promotion and delivery of innovation in working arrangements. Payments made under the RBS can range from £100 to £1,000 gross, depending on the value and impact of the suggestion.

HMRC is also developing a new scheme to encourage ideas for small changes, which will help people to develop them and see them through to completion, and enable decisions about them to be made quickly. Financial recognition within this scheme will also be supported by the RBS.

Tax Credits

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer in how many cases in *(a)* 2003–04 and *(b)* 2004–05 where HM Revenue and Customs contacted child care providers to verify the details that had been provided by the claimant, the child care element of child tax credit was (i) reduced and (ii) stopped. [48439]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* I refer the right hon. Member to my response of 28 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 946W, which gave the number of child care providers HMRC contacted. As a result of this work 9,541 adjustments were made to tax credit claims in 2003–04 and 18,274 in 2004–05. All adjustments reduced the amount of tax credits paid, but it is not possible to say how many of these were stopped.

Valuation Office Agency

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will place in the Library a copy of the presentation or handouts produced by Valuation Office Agency staff for its session at the Integrating GIS and CAMA Conference held from 19 to 22 February in Disney's Coronado Springs Convention Center, Orlando, Florida. [56193]

Dawn Primarolo: A copy of the Valuation Office Agency's presentation for the Integrating CIS and CAMA 2006 Conference entitled "improving Efficiency by Estimating the Confidence in Property Valuations" has been placed in the Library.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will place in the Library a copy of the presentation or handouts produced by Valuation Office Agency staff for its session at the International Property Tax Institute conference between 6 and 7 February in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. [56194]

Dawn Primarolo: A copy of the Valuation Office Agency's presentations and handouts for the International Property Tax Institute conference between 6 and 7 February 2006 entitled "Training in the valuation of specialised properties in the UK" and "Valuation for Taxation Public Infrastructure" have been placed in the Library.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will place in the Library a copy of the presentation or handouts produced by Valuation Office Agency staff for its session at the 8th International Conference of the Institute of Revenues Rating and Valuation which took place from 22 to 25 February 2005 in Alicante, Spain. [56212]

Dawn Primarolo: A copy of the Valuation Office Agency's presentation for the 8th International Conference of the Institute of Revenues Rating and Valuation entitled "Valuation Specialist Properties for Rating" has been placed in the Library. This was part of a joint presentation on "Valuing Specialist Properties".

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Nuclear Fusion Plants

1. **Mr. Binley:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will increase future investment in the development of nuclear fusion plants. [67722]

Alan Johnson: The UK is making a significant investment in fusion through the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) totalling around £56 million over four years from 2004. This is in addition to the very significant EU investment in fusion research through participation in the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) which will have a construction cost of around €5 billion.

Manufacturing (South Wales)

14. **Julie Morgan:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans he has to help manufacturing industry in South Wales. [67737]

Alun Michael: Manufacturing is vital to the UK economy and Government are taking action through the Manufacturing Strategy to help manufacturers in all parts of the UK to move to high value added production through the application of science and innovation, best practice and skills development. We work closely with colleagues at the Welsh Assembly on these matters. For example, we have set up the Manufacturing Advisory Service which has generated £213 million of added value throughout the UK, including £15 million in Wales.

Unfair Dismissal Claims

15. **Simon Hughes:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what percentage of unfair dismissal claims which were upheld by an industrial tribunal resulted in reinstatement of the claimant in each of the last four years. [67738]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The percentage of unfair dismissal claims upheld by an Employment Tribunal which resulted in an order for reinstatement in each of the last four years ranges consistently from 0.1 to 0.2 per cent. of cases.

Sunday Trading

16. **Mr. Ellwood:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans he has to change Sunday trading laws. [67739]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer given earlier today by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State to the hon. Member for Banbury (Tony Baldry).

Gas Storage

17. **Miss McIntosh:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will review the arrangements for gas storage in the UK. [67740]

Malcolm Wicks: Some 10 new commercially-funded gas storage facilities are under development; subject to regulatory consents, they could more than double GB's gas storage capacity by 2012.

The Government are pursuing a number of initiatives to improve the regulatory framework in order to facilitate new gas storage facilities.

Business Bankruptcies

18. **Mark Pritchard:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many small businesses in England went bankrupt in 2004–05. [67741]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It is not currently possible to identify the size of business in the official bankruptcy statistics published by the Insolvency Service.

Arms Trade Treaty

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions he has had with his counterparts in the *(a)* Foreign and Commonwealth Office, *(b)* Ministry of Defence and *(c)* Department for International Development regarding the Arms Trade Treaty; and if he will make a statement. [67834]

Malcolm Wicks: Given my responsibilities for export control, I am fully engaged in the Government's policy, led by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, of securing support for an international Arms Trade Treaty.

Assisted Area Status

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry at what stage his Department's consultation on which areas will be covered by assisted area status is; and what representations he has received in favour of maintaining the status quo in Merseyside. [67603]

Alun Michael: On 15 February 2006, the Department for Trade and Industry invited responses to the first stage of the Assisted Area Review by 19 April. These responses are currently being assessed and the government's response to the first stage of the consultation will be published this summer when stage 2 is launched. We received a total of 203 written replies within the deadline and almost all addressed the extent to which Merseyside and South Yorkshire should be covered.

Business Regulations

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps his Department is taking to reduce the burden of regulation on UK businesses. [67731]

Barry Gardiner: The Department has published a draft Simplification Plan which sets out our programme for reducing the burden of regulation on UK business. It delivers more than £1 billion in regulatory savings for business by 2010. We will be updating and improving on this shortly.

Central and Eastern Europe

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the level of the UK's international trade with Central and Eastern Europe was in 2005–06; and if he will make a statement. [67736]

Ian Pearson: UK trade in goods and services with Central and Eastern Europe in 2004 was over £15 billion, more than double the 1997 figure. From 2004 to 2005 there was a further 8 per cent. increase in trade in goods.

Coal Pension Properties Ltd

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what *(a)* direct and *(b)* indirect communication his Department has had with Coal Pension Properties Ltd. in the last five years. [66680]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department has no record of any communication with Coal Pension Properties Ltd.

Companies' Business Reviews

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when the Government will announce the findings of its consultation on the proposed content of companies' business reviews. [67492]

Alun Michael *[holding answer 2 May 2006]:* Yesterday we laid amendments to Chapter 6, Part 15 of the Bill in order to give effect to changes to the content of companies' business reviews. As part of our proposals, we also intend to clarify the position on liability for disclosures under the Companies Act and for implementation of the EU Transparency Obligations Directive. Draft clauses on a proposed regime for liability have been published via the DTI website (at http://www.dti.gov.uk/cld/facts/clr.htm) for a short period for public comment. This package of proposals represents consistent and balanced policy after considering carefully the responses to the consultation and engaging in discussion with interested parties on the whole range of options for narrative reporting.

The requirements for narrative reporting have been streamlined so that the requirements for quoted companies are closely aligned to those for unquoted companies. The proposed new narrative reporting arrangements include the requirement that all companies will need to produce a business review, as required by the EU Accounts Modernisation Directive. The amendments make clear that the purpose of the review is to inform shareholders of the company and help them assess how the directors have performed their duty under section 156 (duty to promote the success of the company). Quoted companies will need to ensure that, to the extent necessary for an understanding of the development, performance or position of the company's business, their business review includes:

(a) the main trends and factors likely to affect the future development, performance and position of the company's business; and

(b) information about:

(i) environmental matters (including the impact of the company's business on the environment),

(ii) the company's employees, and (iii) social and community issues, including information about any policies of the company in relation to those matters and the effectiveness of those policies.

Directors will need to state in their Review if they do not think it necessary to include information about (i), (ii) or (iii) above.

The new system will also mean that for all companies:

Auditors will continue to be required to report on the consistency of the directors' report with the annual accounts (as is required by the Accounts Modernisation Directive) but there will not be any additional requirement to check for other inconsistencies;

All companies will be exempted from disclosing in the business review information which is seriously prejudicial to the company's interests. This exemption was previously only provided for companies that had to produce an OFR; and

There will be no statutory reporting standards for the Business Review.

The draft clauses on liability cover:

Provision for liability under Part 15 of the Bill for directors' reports, directors' remuneration reports or summary financial statements derived from them;

Provision for liability for disclosures under Transparency Obligations Directive implementation;

Liability for untrue or misleading statements or omissions made in bad faith or recklessly or where there is deliberate and dishonest concealment.

The Government's aim has always been to encourage meaningful strategic, forward-looking information to assist shareholder engagement, while avoiding disproportionate burdens on business. The Government have decided that the additional burden imposed by the statutory OFR requirement is not justified in light of the competitiveness of UK businesses. The changes to narrative reporting requirements announced yesterday will add value to the quality of reporting without imposing unnecessary costs.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what his plans are for bringing forward proposals to Chapter 6, Part 15 of the Company Law Reform Bill. [67594]

Alun Michael *[holding answer 2 May 2006]:* I refer the hon. Member to my response to his parliamentary question number 67492 answered today.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when his Department will publish the proposed new Table A of the Company Law Reform Bill. [68089]

Alun Michael *[holding answer 3 May 2006]:* The Company Law Reform Bill contains a power to enable my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State through secondary legislation, to prescribe, stand-alone model articles for different types of company. The model articles are to replace the Companies Act 1985 Table A for companies formed under the Bill and we intend to make sure that regulations made under this power will be in place by the time that the Bill comes into force.

A draft of the model articles for private companies limited by shares, and draft guidance notes on those model articles, was published in the March 2005 White Paper and we will shortly publish a draft of the model articles for public companies. We will then turn to the draft model articles for private companies limited by guarantee.

We look forward to receiving comments on the draft model articles for public companies and are working with interested parties to make sure that the final versions of the various model articles are both useful and relevant to people who rely on the model articles: the owners and managers of companies. There will be full public consultation before regulations are made.

Compensation Claims (VAT)

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on how many occasions his Department has agreed to pay VAT as part of a costs settlement for *(a)* noise induced hearing loss claims, *(b)* vibration white finger claims and *(c)* chronic obstructive pulmonary disease claims. [66681]

Malcolm Wicks: All cost settlement made in noise induced hearing loss, vibration white finger and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease claims will include VAT as part of that settlement.

Defence Exports

Mr. Crausby: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the value was of defence equipment sold by UK defence manufacturers to *(a)* Iran, *(b)* China and *(c)* Turkey in 2005. [68076]

Malcolm Wicks: The DTI Export Control Organisation (ECO) is responsible only for holding information on the export licences it has issued, not on the value of UK defence equipment sales. However, the Government publish detailed information on its strategic export licensing decisions which include defence equipment. The total value of Standard Individual Export Licences (SIELs) issued, by destination, is available in its Annual and Quarterly Reports on Strategic Export Controls. HM Revenue & Customs collects some data on exports of Military List items, which is published, by destination, in the Annual Reports.

The Annual Reports are available from the Libraries of the House, and the Quarterly Reports, from the DTI Export Control Organisation website at:

www.dti.gov.uk/export.control.

We expect to publish the 2005 Annual Report by June 2006.

EU Directives (Organ Pipe Manufacturing)

Dr. Blackman-Woods: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what progress the Government have made in discussions on the exemption of the organ pipe manufacturing industry from EU Directives on restrictions on hazardous substances and waste electrical and electronic equipment. [67159]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department has been working with the pipe organ industry for some time and will continue to do so in order to secure a favourable outcome on this issue.

The UK Government do not consider that pipe organs fall within the scope of this Directive, a view widely accepted within the E.C. The DTI is working closely with the European Commission, and our aim is to reach a successful conclusion before the Directive comes into force on 1 July.

EU Energy Shortages

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether the UK is under an obligation to share national oil *(a)* stocks and *(b)* reserves in the event of energy shortages in the EU. [68571]

Malcolm Wicks: The UK is obliged as a member state of the European Union to hold emergency stocks of oil equivalent to 67.5 days' annual consumption for use in the event of disruption, and as a member of the International Energy Agency to take part in any collective response to disruption. The purpose of both these obligations is to enable a release of stocks onto the global oil market when there is collective agreement that this is necessary. The release of stocks following Hurricane Katrina by EU and other states, co-ordinated through the IEA, showed that the system was able to respond well to the disruption which occurred.

Export Control Act

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when the proposed review of the Export Control Act 2002 is expected to commence; and which body he plans to ask to carry out the review. [67835]

Malcolm Wicks: In line with Cabinet Office guidance, my intention is to start the review of the regulations introduced under the Export Control Act after they have been in force for three years—from May 2007. The review will be carried out by DTI's Export Control Organisation, which has responsibility for the legislation, in consultation with other interested Departments and parties.

Fuel Prices

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the average price of a gallon of *(a)* unleaded and *(b)* diesel fuel was in (i) Milton Keynes and (ii) the UK in each week since May 2005. [68144]

Malcolm Wicks: Weekly prices for Milton Keynes are not available. Average weekly prices for the UK as a whole are as follows.

£/gallon

	Diesel	*Unleaded petrol*
2 May 2005	4.07	3.88
9 May 2005	4.07	3.88
16 May 2005	4.06	3.88
23 May 2005	4.05	3.85
30 May 2005	4.02	3.83
6 June 2005	4.01	3.82
13 June 2005	4.04	3.86
20 June 2005	4.07	3.89
27 June 2005	4.10	3.94
4 July 2005	4.14	3.98
11 July 2005	4.18	3.99
18 July 2005	4.21	4.03
25 July 2005	4.23	4.05
1 August 2005	4.24	4.06
8 August 2005	4.26	4.08
15 August 2005	4.30	4.12
22 August 2005	4.30	4.13
29 August 2005	4.33	4.16
5 September 2005	4.42	4.29
12 September 2005	4.45	4.32
19 September 2005	4.42	4.29
26 September 2005	4.38	4.24
3 October 2005	4.39	4.25
10 October 2005	4.41	4.28
17 October 2005	4.41	4.28
24 October 2005	4.40	4.25
31 October 2005	4.39	4.22
7 November 2005	4.39	4.20
14 November 2005	4.32	4.12
21 November 2005	4.24	4.03
28 November 2005	4.21	4.00
5 December 2005	4.17	3.97
12 December 2005	4.16	3.96
19 December 2005	4.17	3.98
26 December 2005	4.19	4.00
2 January 2006	4.19	4.00
9 January 2006	4.23	4.03
16 January 2006	4.24	4.05
23 January 2006	4.26	4.07
30 January 2006	4.27	4.09
6 February 2006	4.27	4.08
13 February 2006	4.26	4.08
20 February 2006	4.26	4.07
27 February 2006	4.26	4.07
6 March 2006	4.26	4.06
13 March 2006	4.27	4.07
20 March 2006	4.29	4.10
27 March 2006	4.32	4.13
3 April 2006	4.35	4.17
10 April 2006	4.38	4.22
17 April 2006	4.44	4.28
24 April 2006	4.48	4.33

Gas Supplies

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 19 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 675W, on gas supplies, if he will provide his Department's detailed calculations based on the IMF data and the Royal Bank of Scotland data which were used as the basis for the statement on German gas prices. [67468]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is as follows:

	As at December	
	2004	*2005*
IMF Data: Russian Natural gas border price in Germany (US$/thousand cubic metres)	156.24	250.56
RBS Data: US$: Euro exchange rate	0.74596	0.84371
Conversion of thousand mcm to Mwh	1000 cm =	11.06 Mwh
Russian gas at German border price (Euro/Mwh)	10.54	19.11
Increase over 2005	80 per cent	

Notes:

IMF data is publicly available (from http://www.imf.org/external/np/res/comnaod/index.asp) and has been converted to standard European units for the sale of gas using Royal Bank of Scotland publicly available exchange rate data (from http://www.rbs.com/content/media_centre/rbs_and_the_economy/rate_calculator/) and appropriate conversion rate

Miners' Compensation

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on how many occasions his Department has agreed to pay a fee to Vendside as part of the costs settlement for a noise-induced hearing loss claim. [66679]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department pays Vendside the costs incurred by the Union of Democratic Mineworkers in handling hearing loss claims. To date, 9,377 hearing loss claims have been settled by payment and a payment will have been made to Vendside in each of these.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 26 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 2355W, on Union of Democratic Mineworkers/Vendside, if he will place in the Library the minutes of these meetings. [67769]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 3 May 2006]:* It would not be appropriate for the Department to publish the minutes of these meetings without the prior consent of the other parties.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will place in the Library copies of agreements between his Department and *(a)* the Union of Democratic Mineworkers and *(b)* Vendside. [67770]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 3 May 2006]:* The agreement are commercially confidential so it would not be appropriate for the Department to publish them.

Ministerial Cars (Fuel Costs)

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the fuel costs were for ministerial cars used by the Department in each of the last five years. [66958]

Alan Johnson: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 27 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 1226W by my hon. Friend the Minster of State for Transport.

Mobile Telephone Tracking

Margaret Moran: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he intends to take to ensure informed consent is obtained from children under the Privacy and Electronic Communications Directive in respect of mobile telephone tracking. [67750]

Alun Michael: The Privacy and Electronic Communications Directive (2002/5 8/EC) applies a number of privacy safeguards to value added services based on traffic and location data, including a requirement for informed consent from subscribers or users of the communications service involved. In the case of location data services, there is a requirement that subscribers or users must be able to withdraw their consent on a temporary as well as a long term basis, each time they connect to the network or make a phone call or other form of communication. The directive was implemented in the UK by the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003, which came into force on 11 December 2003.

Mobile phone location services are regulated under the Privacy and Electronic Communication (EC Directive) Regulations 2003 and the Data Protection Act 1998. Enforcement is the responsibility of the Information Commissioner. My officials will be working closely with the Information Commissioner's Office to consider any issues as they arise. They are aware of concerns raised by representatives of Children's Charities and will be arranging meetings to discuss these further.

Post Offices

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for North Shropshire of 6 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1160, on post offices, whether he plans to assist the Post Office *(a)* to advertise and *(b)* to promote the facility to withdraw cash from bank accounts and the link network in post offices. [67500]

Barry Gardiner *[holding answer 3 May 2006]:* The advertising and promotion of post office facilities are operational matters for Post Office Ltd. (POL). My officials are in regular contact with POL to discuss ways of encouraging people to take up bank accounts accessible at post offices.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many sub-post offices there are in Wales; and how many there were in 1997. [67397]

Barry Gardiner *[holding answer 2 May 2006]:* Historic information on the network of Post Office branches by individual country area is only available from the year 1998–99, as this level of data was not maintained prior to this.

For the year ending 1998–99, Post Office Ltd.'s records show that there were a total of 1,501 branches operating in Wales, made up of 1,473 agency branches and 28 branches that were directly managed by the company. The last published figures up to the end of December 2005 show 1,182 branches operating in Wales, 1,157 agency branches and 25 directly managed branches.

The full year figures for the end of 2005–06 will be available in the next few weeks and will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

TVR

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assistance he is giving to TVR to find a new business location in Lancashire. [67805]

Alun Michael: The Northwest Regional Development Agency is working with Blackpool borough council to retain TVR within the immediate vicinity. They are working on the latest requirements outlined by the company. A previous specific offer of new premises was rejected and a more suitable location has now been identified. TVR has indicated that this offer is more in line with their future operational requirements and further discussions will take place next week, when Mr. Smolenski, the owner of TVR, next visits Blackpool.

Utilities (New Developments)

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations he has received on delays by utility companies in providing connections to utility supplies for new developments. [66276]

Alun Michael: Ministers are periodically contacted on matters relating to connections in relation to gas, electricity and telecommunications. However, these are ultimately matters for the relevant regulators, Ofgem and Ofcom.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Art Collection (Security)

Mr. Mark Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether she plans to increase security for items in the Government's art collection located outside the UK. [66825]

Mr. Lammy: Nearly all of the works of art from the Government art collection that are located outside the UK are in British Government buildings and are subject to existing high levels of security. The security arrangements for Government buildings are kept under constant review.

BBC

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how she will ensure value for money from the BBC's proposed licence fee settlement. [68069]

Tessa Jowell: We are currently conducting an open and robust review of the BBC's funding, drawing on independent advice from PKF and others on a range of issues including the value for money of the BBC. The final settlement will deliver a strong BBC, independent of Government, and value for money for the licence fee payer. Under the new Charter and Agreement, the BBC Trust, as steward of the licence fee, will have a clear responsibility to ensure that the BBC delivers value for money.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what research she has commissioned on the BBC licence fee; and if she will publish it. [68070]

Tessa Jowell: We are commissioning survey research on the public's willingness to pay for the BBC; the findings of which will be published in due course. This survey research will be in addition to the financial analysis conducted by PKF which was published on 26 April 2006.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment has been made in the context of the BBC's licence fee bid of the value for money and efficiency savings expected to be achieved following the BBC's proposed move to Greater Manchester. [68071]

Tessa Jowell: In line with the commitment in the Green Paper, the Government are currently conducting a funding review to determine the level of the licence fee to apply from April 2007. It will take all relevant issues into account.

Correspondence

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when Carolyn Warner of the Right to Swim campaign will receive an answer to her letter to the Secretary of State of January 2006. [67144]

Tessa Jowell *[holding answer 2 May 2006]:* My officials have responded to Mrs Warner advising her that we are currently awaiting the formal report of the initial results of research by the National Water Safety Forum into the correlation between adult/child ratios at swimming pools and incidences of drowning.

This report will be available by the end of May, at which point I will be a position to respond substantively to Mrs Warner's letter.

MINISTER FOR WOMEN

Single Mothers

22. **Mr. Bone:** To ask the Minister for Women and Equality what steps the Government have taken to enable single mothers to return to work. [67746]

Meg Munn: The Government have a range of measures to help single mothers move into work such as new deal for lone parents, the national child care strategy, the national minimum wage and tax credits which are making work possible and making sure that work pays.

Civil Service (Pay Levels)

23. **Miss McIntosh:** To ask the Minister for Women and Equality what representations she has received on levels of pay for women in the civil service. [67747]

Meg Munn: Representations have been received from civil service unions and their members about equal pay issues. The Government continue to have regular strategic discussions with key stakeholders, including civil service organizations and the civil service unions on taking the equal pay agenda forward.

25. **Tony Baldry:** To ask the Minister for Women and Equality if she will make a statement on the gender pay gap in the civil service. [67749]

Meg Munn: The median gender pay gap in the civil service is 25 per cent. but does not compare work of equal value. When the gender gap is compared by responsibility level the pay gap is around 5 per cent.

Commission for Equality and Human Rights

24. **Keith Vaz:** To ask the Minister for Women and Equality when she plans to appoint the members of the Commission for Equality and Human Rights. [67748]

Meg Munn: We hope to appoint the chair of the new commission by summer this year, with commissioners and the chief executive to follow in late autumn.

Equality Audits

Anne Moffat: To ask the Minister for Women and Equality what her assessment is of the merits of equality audits. [68063]

Meg Munn: Equal pay audits or reviews can identify unlawful pay inequalities between men and women. The Equal Opportunities Commission has developed a useful toolkit which describes a model equal pay review process. This is available on their website at www.eoc.org.uk.

The merits of equal pay reviews in addressing the gender pay gap were most recently independently examined by the Women and Work Commission. The commission found that there were pros and cons to undertaking an equal pay review depending on the issues or activities which have most potential impact on women's opportunities and pay in a particular company or sector. For example, there may not be any unlawful inequality in pay between men and women but greater access to flexible working could enable more women to reach higher and better paid positions in an organisation or company.

Job Sharing

Anne Moffat: To ask the Minister for Women and Equality what steps she is taking to encourage employers to provide job shares. [68062]

Meg Munn: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to my hon. Friend the Member for Coventry, South (Mr. Cunningham) on 28 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 658W.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Advanced Skills Teacher Programme

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what financial support the Department has committed to the advanced skills teacher programme. [66036]

Jacqui Smith: Since the introduction of the Advanced Skills Teacher (AST) grade in 1998 the Department has provided grant funding for AST posts through the Standards Fund.

By the end of 2007–08 the Department will have committed £455 million through the standards fund to the AST programme, made up of £310 million in government grant and £145 million in required local authority contributions.

Since April 2004 the level of grant funding specifically for ASTs has been fixed nationally to reflect the number of posts in existence in each local authority at the start of that financial year. New local funding flexibilities mean that schools and local authorities can chose to fund additional AST posts either using delegated funding or other appropriate grant funding.

In addition to this the Department funds the external assessment of teachers against the AST standards which applicants for AST posts must meet. Total funding for AST assessment up to and including financial year 2004–05 is £3.4 million. Figures for 2005–06 are not yet available.

Arson

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the total number of arson attacks was for the 100 *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools with the (i) highest and (ii) lowest percentage of children receiving free school meals in each of the last 10 years. [66093]

Jacqui Smith: The requested information is not available.

Children's Centres

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children's centres have been established in each month since November 2004; what the location is of each; and if she will make a statement. [67411]

Beverley Hughes: I have placed in the Library copies of a table listing the numbers of children's centres designated in each month since November 2004. The figure for each month is broken down by local authority.

The first phase of children's centres from 2004–06 focused on creating children's centres in the most disadvantaged areas of the country, building largely on existing provision. Children's centres were offering services to over 650,000 children by the end of March 2006.

For phase 2 (2006–08), centres will begin to be established in the relatively less disadvantaged areas, to meet the interim objective of creating 2,500 children's centres by March 2008. Our aim is to have 3,500 children's centres across the country by 2010, one for every community.

Creationism

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on the teaching of creationism in schools in England. [67195]

Jacqui Smith: Creationism is not taught as a subject in schools, and is not specified in the science curriculum.

The National Curriculum for science clearly sets down that pupils should be taught that the fossil record is evidence for evolution, and how variation and selection may lead to evolution or extinction.

Creationism could be discussed in RE lessons as one of the many religious views on how the world was created.

Education Expenditure

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what the total public expenditure per head of population on *(a)* capital and *(b)* running costs of education was for the Metropolitan area of (i) Greater Manchester, (ii) West Yorkshire, (iii) South Yorkshire, (iv) West Midlands, (v) Merseyside, (vi) Tyne and Wear and (vii) South Tyneside in each of the last 10 years; [67280]

(2) what the total public expenditure per head of population on *(a)* capital and *(b)* running costs of education was in (i) London and (ii) each of the English regions in each of the last 10 years. [67321]

Jacqui Smith: Information on education expenditure is not collected on the basis requested. Annual expenditure returns are made on the basis of current

local authority areas, and do not relate expenditure to general population. It would be possible to aggregate local authority figures to give overall figures for current Government Office regions, but these would again not be related to population.

Equal Pay

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps are undertaken within her Department to ensure that women are obtaining equal pay to men doing work of equal value. [65850]

Maria Eagle: The Department carries out equal pay reviews. The gender analysis, covering the three-year pay settlement from April 2003 to March 2006, did not identify any inequality in the pay of women.

EU Students (Loans)

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students from other EU member states who received loans for study at a higher education institution in England defaulted on repayment of those loans in each of the last five years. [66429]

Bill Rammell: For the past five years students from other EU member states have not been entitled to student loans.

Exclusions

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the exclusion rates were for the 100 *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools with the (i) highest and (ii) lowest percentage of children receiving free school meals in each of the last three years. [65992]

Jacqui Smith: The requested information has been placed in the Library. Figures relate to children educated in schools in England only.

Exclusions data for the 2004/05 academic year are expected to be available in June 2006.

Ed Balls: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils in *(a)* Wakefield District and *(b)* Normanton constituency have been permanently excluded from school in each of the last five years. [66025]

Jacqui Smith: The requested information is given in the tables.

Figures for the number of permanent exclusions during 2004/05 academic year are expected to be available in June 2006.

Maintained primary and secondary schools: Number of permanent exclusions 1999/2000 to 2003/04

	Permanent exclusions			
Wakefield district	*Primary*		*Secondary*	
	Number	*Percentage*[1]	*Number*	*Percentage*[1]
1999/2000	6	0.02	47	0.23
2000/01[2]	4	0.01	34	0.16
2001/02[2]	11	0.04	56	0.26
2002/03[2]	[3]—	[3]—	40	0.18
2003/04[2]	4	0.01	40	0.18

	Permanent exclusions			
Normanton parliamentary constituency	*Primary*		*Secondary*	
	Number	*Percentage*[1]	*Number*	*Percentage*[1]
1999/2000	[3]—	[3]—	14	0.26
2000/01[2]	0	0.00	14	0.25
2001/02[2]	[3]—	[3]—	12	0.21
2002/03[2]	[3]—	[3]—	10	0.17
2003/04[2]	0	0.00	8	0.14

[1] The number of exclusions expressed as a percentage of the total number of pupils on the school roll in January of the same school year. Excludes dually registered pupils.

[2] There are known quality issues with exclusions data for these years. Figures shown here are as reported by schools but are unconfirmed and should be used with caution.

[3] 1 or 2 exclusions, or a rate based on 1 or 2 exclusions

Source:

Annual Schools Census

Extended School Hours

Kitty Ussher: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funding is available to ensure extended school hours are available to children in Burnley and Padiham. [66484]

Beverley Hughes: Over 2003–08 we are making available £840 million nationally to support the development of extended services accessed in or through schools. £9,871,039 of this will go to Lancashire over the period 2005–08. Local authorities are responsible for the distribution of funding in their area so that they can plan services across schools and communities. We do not breakdown funding by parliamentary constituency.

Lancashire has to date received £1.8 million, and will receive £3,531,061 in 2006–07 and £4,515,291 in 2007–08. Funding will be released to schools in accordance with each local authority's strategy for extended services.

Looked-after Children

Andrew Stunell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the total number of looked after children was in each local authority in each year since 1997. [65451]

Maria Eagle: The information requested is provided in a table entitled "Children looked after at 31 March by local authorities, 1997–2005" which can be accessed on the DfES website at:

http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DBA/VOL/v000646/index.shtml.

Andrew Stunell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children have been taken into care in each local authority in each year since 1997. [65452]

Maria Eagle: The information requested is provided in a table entitled "Children who started to be looked after by local authorities in the years ending 1997 to 2005" which can be accessed on the DfES website at:

http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DBA/VOL/v000646/index.shtml.

Ministerial Cars (Fuel Costs)

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the fuel costs were for ministerial cars used by her Department in each of the last five years. [67023]

Maria Eagle: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Minister of State, Department for Transport on 27 April, *Official Report*, column 1226W.

Nuffield Speech and Language Unit

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what discussions she has had with the Secretary of State for Health about the future of the Nuffield Speech and Language Unit. [65289]

Ruth Kelly: None.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will place in the Library copies of letters she has received about the Nuffield Speech and Language Unit. [66671]

Ruth Kelly: I have not received any letters about the Nuffield Speech and Language Unit.

Prison Education

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) if she will list the mentoring programmes run by charitable organisations in prisons; [65575]

(2) if she will increase the role of mentoring in prison education. [65576]

Phil Hope: Information is not collected on the individual programmes run by the voluntary and community sector in prisons. The use of mentors is promoted in the 'Offender's Learning Journey' that sets out the offer to prisoners.

Plans to increase the role of mentoring are set out in our recent Green Paper 'Reducing Re-Offending through Skills and Employment'. This will play an important part of our new and stronger focus on employment for prisoners as well as supporting the delivery of literacy, numeracy and communications skills.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research has been undertaken by her Department into the impact of education and training on reconviction. [65805]

Phil Hope: Research on reconviction rates is a matter for the Home Office and they are undertaking a research study 'Surveying Prisoner Crime Reduction' (SPCR). In our recent Green Paper 'Reducing Re-Offending Through Skills and Employment' we outlined that there is research evidence to indicate that improving skills and employment for offenders can have a positive impact on the incidence of re-offending. In particular, evidence strongly suggests that employment and offending are linked, although this relationship is complex.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps her Department has taken to inform the general public of the purpose and importance of prison education. [65806]

Phil Hope: A communications campaign is being conducted to inform the public about the importance of learning and skills for all offenders, whether in prison or under supervision in the community. This is promoted through the DfES website, newsletters, conferences and seminars.

The recently published Green Paper 'Reducing Re-offending through Skills and Employment' set out our future plans and its launch was covered in local, sectoral and national media.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of education staff turnover rates in prisons in each year since 1997. [66551]

Fiona Mactaggart: Educational staff are generally employed under contract by educational providers. The information requested is not held by the Prison Service or by Department for Education and Skills or could be collated only at disproportionate cost.

Pupils (Lincolnshire)

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of pupils attending Lincolnshire county council schools reside in North East Lincolnshire; and if she will make a statement. [67032]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested has been provided in the following table.

Percentage of pupils[4] attending schools maintained by Lincolnshire local authority (LA) residing within North East Lincolnshire LA

	Number of pupils in schools maintained by Lincolnshire LA	*Number of pupils in residence in North East Lincolnshire LA attending schools maintained by Lincolnshire LA*	*Percentage of pupils in residence in North East Lincolnshire LA attending schools maintained by Lincolnshire LA*
Primary[1]	45,145	77	0.2
Secondary[2]	41,741	486	1.2
Special[3]	1,116	2	0.2
Total	88,011	565	0.6

[1] Includes middle deemed primary

[2] Includes middle deemed secondary.

[3] Includes special and non-maintained special.

[4] Includes pupils aged 5 to 15 years, solely registered or main registration of dually registered pupils, excludes boarders.

Source:

Annual Schools Census 2005.

Faith Schools

Colin Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what requirements are placed on maintained faith schools in relation to respecting the wishes of non-religious pupils and parents; [65144]

(2) what the legal responsibilities of *(a)* faith and *(b)* non-faith trust schools are in relation to (i) discrimination by religion in the employment of staff, (ii) the religious education syllabus, (iii) the holding of a daily act of worship and (iv) parental excusal from religious education and collective worship. [65174]

Jacqui Smith: Religious education must be provided for all registered pupils in maintained schools, including trust schools.

All maintained schools, including trust schools, are under a statutory duty to provide a daily act of collective worship for all pupils. This will be of a general Christian nature unless the school is designated as having a religious character in which case the collective worship will be in the tenet of the faith school.

Parents of pupils at all maintained schools can request that their children be withdrawn from any or all parts of religious education and collective worship and the school is expected to comply with the request.

All schools, including trust schools but excluding voluntary aided schools with a religious designation, will follow the locally agreed syllabus for religious education as drawn up by Standing Committee on Religious Education and agreed by the local authority.

Trust schools are foundation schools with a foundation. Where this is a religious foundation and the school is designated as having a religious character the Governing Body, as employers, may take into account any candidates' suitability and ability to preserve and develop the religious character of the school in the appointment of the headteacher and reserve teachers in the schools.

The aforementioned flexibilities do not apply to non-faith schools. There are no such provisions for the appointment of other teaching staff or non-teaching staff.

In addition, all employers need to have regard to their responsibilities under employment and European law relating to equal opportunities.

Service Children's Education

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of key stage 3 pupils from service children's education schools achieved levels *(a)* 3, *(b)* 4, *(c)* 5, *(d)* 6, *(e)* 7 and *(f)* 8 in (i) English, (ii) mathematics and (iii) science during the academic year 2004–05. [65439]

Jacqui Smith: The requested information is shown as follows:

	Percentage of pupils achieving:						
	3	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*Total*[1]
English							
Boys	0	20	50	21	3	—	100
Girls	0	9	51	29	5	—	100
All	0	14	51	25	4	—	100
Mathematics							
Boys	2	13	18	36	23	5	100
Girls	3	9	22	39	20	4	100
All	2	11	20	38	21	5	100
Science							
Boys	0	15	38	33	10	—	100
Girls	1	19	43	29	5	—	100
All	1	17	40	31	8	—	100

[1] The total includes absent pupils (A), pupil below the level assessed by the test (B) and pupils not awarded a test level (N). This analysis is based on approximately 500 pupils who sat the 2005 KS3 tests.

Sexual Acitivity (Under-16s)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will estimate the number of individuals under the age of 16 years who were sexually active in each of the last five years. [66909]

Beverley Hughes: We estimate that between a quarter and a third of young people have sex before age 16. This estimate is based on figures from NATSAL 2000 (National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles), which showed that 30 per cent. of boys and 26 per cent. of girls had sex under-16 and the Teenage Pregnancy Strategy Evaluation Tracking Survey for each year between 2000 and 2004, which shows on average 27 per cent. of boys and 29 per cent. of girls have had sex before age 16. The Teenage Pregnancy Strategy Evaluation Tracking Survey reports no change in the proportion of young people having sex before age 16 over the first 4 years of the strategy.

Specialist Schools

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many specialist schools there are in England, broken down by specialism; and how many of such schools are electing to select up to 10 per cent. of their intake by aptitude. [67276]

Jacqui Smith: There are currently 2502 designated specialist schools (2378 operational): 408 Arts; 217 Business and Enterprise; 47 Engineering; 72 Humanities; 216 Languages; 222 Maths and Computing; 18 Music; 282 Science; 345 Sports; 583 Technology; 80 Combined and 12 with a Special Educational Needs (SEN) specialism.

Specialist schools are bound by the school admissions code of practice. Relatively few specialist schools select by aptitude, our figures suggest that 45 schools or 6.5 per cent. of schools that were specialist in summer 2001 did so.

Teacher Selection

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what action her Department takes to prevent advocates of terrorism obtaining positions as teachers. [66060]

Jacqui Smith: While the ultimate responsibility for considering the professional suitability of recruits lies with the individual governing bodies and with the local authorities as the employers of teachers, the Department plays a key role in supporting them in this process. We have provided comprehensive guidance highlighting the importance of thorough checks on anybody who will be working in schools, emphasising the need for governing bodies and local authorities to employ appropriate rigour in ensuring unsuitable people cannot obtain positions in our schools.

All initial teacher training providers are required to interview applicants for teacher training, enabling them to explore their personal qualities and potential to meet the professional values and practices of those aspiring to teach. These values include respect for other people, a positive attitude towards learning, respect for cultural diversity and social responsibility.

The Terrorism Act which gained royal assent on 30 March makes it an offence to 'encourage terrorism' and we have made it clear in successive guidance that CRB checks are strongly recommended as part of the appointment process on anybody who will be working in schools. In addition, the Secretary of State recently announced that existing arrangements will become compulsory for schools through proposed amendments to regulations to be made under sections 35 and 36 of the Education Act 2002 (and section 72 of the School Standards and Framework Act (SSFA) 1998)—this will affect amendments to the current School Staffing (England) Regulations 2003 and will make an 'on appointment' CRB check compulsory for all new appointments to the schools workforce.

We place great trust in the professionalism and dedication of teachers and the wider school workforce and expect that they will leave personal prejudices at home. Where we find that teachers have not behaved professionally the General Teaching Council (GTC) has the necessary power to remove those teachers from schools. Through their Statement of Professional Values and Practices and their Code of Conduct and Practice for registered teachers they have the means to ensure that a person espousing support for terrorism could be prevented from entering the profession or, if already a registered teacher, called before a disciplinary hearing. The sanctions available to the GTC include prohibition from practice as a registered teacher.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what restrictions there are on individuals who have been sentenced to a term of imprisonment obtaining employment as teachers. [66061]

Maria Eagle: A decision by an educational establishment on whether or not to appoint an individual into its workforce should take into account, in addition to a list 99 check, the standard previous employers' references, qualifications check and (in the case of teachers) General Teaching Council for England registration, as well as a criminal records check from the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB).

Individuals who have been convicted of certain offences will be automatically barred from working with children in an education setting, under the Department's list 99. In other cases, the Secretary of State, taking advice from Sir Roger Singleton's expert panel, may decide to bar an individual convicted of other offences, even if those offences do not result in an automatic bar.

Where an individual is not barred from working with children in an education setting, and following receipt of the CRB disclosure, an offer of employment is at the discretion of the employer. The Department cannot advise employers whether or not they should employ a particular person but in deciding the relevance of convictions current guidance[1] states a number of points should be considered:

The nature of the offence

In general, convictions for sexual, violent or drug offences will be particularly strong contra-indications for work with children.

The nature of the appointment

Often the nature of the appointment will help to assess the relevance of the conviction. For example, serious sexual, violent, drug or drink offences would give rise to particular concern where a position was one of providing care. Driving or drink offences would be relevant in situations involving transport of children.

The age of the offence

Offences which took place many years in the past may often have less relevance than recent offences. However, convictions for serious violent or sexual offences or serious offences involving substance abuse are more likely to give cause for continuing concern than, for instance, an isolated case of dishonesty committed when the person was young. The potential for rehabilitation must be weighed against the need to protect children.

The frequency of the offence

A series of offences over a period of time is more likely to give cause for concern than an isolated minor conviction.

The CRB has also produced guidance for employers on judging the suitability of applicants.

[1] 'Child Protection: Preventing Unsuitable People from Working with Children and Young Persons in the Education Service', Ref: DfES/0278/2002, issued May 2002.

Teachernet Website

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many hits the teachernet website received in each month of the last two years. [67275]

Bill Rammell: The Department has reduced the number of websites for schools over the last 2 years. It now manages just three main portals (TeacherNet, GovernorNet and the Standards Site) which contain important information and resources for members of the schools workforce. Extensive work is currently being undertaken to rationalise and migrate these three portals into a single new online service. This is due to be fully completed in mid-2007.

The following table shows the number of hits received by the TeacherNet website each month for the last two years.

March 2006	37,363,271	March 2005	27,501,009
February 2006	31,494,483	February 2005	26,440,032
January 2006	37,241,118	January 2005	29,183,678
December 2005	24,060,325	December 2004	18,046,712
November 2005	35,312,527	November 2004	29,959,059
October 2005	34,060,109	October 2004	26,390,921
September 2005	31,632,303	September 2004	25,351,729
August 2005	17,024,394	August 2004	14,200,461
July 2005	23,128,655	July 2004	18,380,721
June 2005	27,427,281	June 2004	22,665,026
May 2005	28,573,698	May 2004	30,089,504
April 2005	28,382,229	April 2004	26,989,786

Teachers (Preparation Time)

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of progress on the implementation of the scheme for allowing time for all teachers for planning, preparation and assessment. [66279]

Jacqui Smith: We, our partners on the Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group and the Training and Development Agency for Schools-Development Directorate (TDA D-formerly the National Remodelling Team) have been working, and continue to work, with schools and local authorities in England to make sure that planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time for teachers is both introduced successfully and sustained.

The latest information we have indicates that almost every school has successfully introduced PPA time, using a range of strategies including greater use of support staff. The TDA-D is actively supporting those schools that have yet to fully implement PPA through its extensive network of local remodelling advisers and is also working to ensure that all schools have sustainable PPA solutions.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Financial Assistance Scheme

Ms Gisela Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much public money the Government estimate, in net present value terms, will be required for the Financial Assistance Scheme over the next 40 years to cover benefits promised to all those within three years of scheme pension age as at May 2004. [63861]

Mr. Timms: We estimate that the Financial Assistance Scheme will cost £280 million in net present value terms over the next 40 years.

Pathways to Work

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of Pathways to Work participants have made use of *(a)* job brokering, *(b)* the condition management programme and *(c)* return to work credit. [59801]

Margaret Hodge: The information is in the following table.

Proportion of Pathways to Work participants and of Choices starts in Pathways

Percentage

	Registered with a New Deal for Disabled People Job Broker		*Referred to the Condition Management Programme*		*Awarded the Return to Work Credit*	
	All new claimants in Pathways areas	*Claimants who volunteer to participate in Choices Programme*	*All new claimants in Pathways areas*	*Claimants who volunteer to participate in Choices Programme*	*All new claimants in Pathways areas*	*Claimants who volunteer to participate in Choices Programme*
Existing customers-volunteers	12	62	8	32	27	30
New/Repeat mandatory customers	6	54	5	40	7	17
Existing customers-mandatory extension	6	27	11	47	3	Not Available

Note:
Data is to October 2005.
Source:
Pathways to Work Evaluation Database.

HEALTH

Blood Products

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether her Department has carried out an internal review into the use of blood and plasma products infected with HIV and hepatitis C; and if she will make a statement. [65513]

Caroline Flint: The Department has not carried out an internal review into the use of blood and plasma products infected with HIV and hepatitis C. However, on 27 February the Department published a report, 'Self-Sufficiency in Blood Products in England and Wales'. This report was the result of an internal review of papers on self-sufficiency in blood products.

The review was commissioned following suggestions that the policy of self-sufficiency in blood products during the 1970's and early 1980's might have prevented haemophilia patients being treated with infected blood products. The report makes clear that self-sufficiency in blood products would not have prevented the infection of haemophilia patients.

Care Homes

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the Government's policy is on care homes. [66682]

Mr. Byrne: The Government believe that care homes provide an important part of the social care service. They are one of a range of options that should be available for supporting people with long-term care needs. The Government recognise that most people want to live in their own home for as long as possible, but that there will always be some whose needs are such that care in a care home will be best for them.

Service users should have a choice about where and how the receive they care they need. No one should be admitted into a care home until all other options have been explored and discussed with the service user, their carers and relatives. To enable people to have real choice about the type of care they receive, the Government have encouraged substantial investment in care settings, such as domiciliary care and extra care housing.

Under the Care Standards Act 2000 and the Health and Social Care Act 2003, the Government have set up an independent inspection and regulation regime. All care homes in England are registered and inspected by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI).

CSCI regulates care homes in accordance with statutory regulations and national minimum standards. CSCI has strong enforcement powers and will take action to raise the quality of care and ensure a high level of protection for vulnerable people.

Carers (Respite)

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what steps her Department has taken to provide respite support for carers as set out in paragraph 5.55 of the 'Our Health, Our Care, Our Say' Health White Paper; [65997]

(2) by what date she expects carers to be able to call upon respite support as set out in paragraph 5.55 of the 'Our Health, Our Care, Our Say' Health White Paper, broken down by local authority area; and what criteria will be used to allocate such support. [65998]

Mr. Byrne: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given on 2 May 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1532–33W.

Chiropody Care

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many general hospitals provide free chiropody care for patients who require such treatment other than as part of other clinical treatment. [67972]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not collected centrally. It is for primary care trusts to commission services to meet the needs of their local population.

Continuing Care

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people received fully funded NHS continuing care in each year since 2002, broken down by strategic health authority; and if she will make a statement. [64770]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not available in the format requested.

A count of the numbers of people receiving national health service continuing care on 31 March of each year is reported in local delivery plan reports, and the available information for each strategic health authority (SHA) is in the table.

Number of people receiving continuing care as at 31 March

	2003	*2004*	*2005*
All SHAs	17,019	19,723	20,842
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	127	435	411
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	700	830	604
Essex	834	698	465
North West London	500	1,468	1,998
North Central London	294	320	355
North East London	812	733	809
South East London	635	580	651
South West London	232	433	523
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	461	1,081	916
County Durham and Tees Valley	904	1,374	1,197
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	410	705	442
West Yorkshire	1,374	688	618
Cumbria and Lancashire	343	376	252
Greater Manchester	1,039	984	936
Cheshire and Merseyside	1,084	1,074	1,153
Thames Valley	259	632	920
Hampshire and the Isle of Wight	673	530	1,141
Kent and Medway	770	770	883
Surrey and Sussex	1,047	719	961
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	927	741	653
South West Peninsula	239	516	406
Dorset and Somerset	94	241	428
South Yorkshire	216	192	103
Trent	509	928	1,147
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	137	215	602
Shropshire and Staffordshire	673	663	453
Birmingham and the Black Country	1,165	1,107	1,119
West Midlands South	561	690	696

Note:
Data are only collected annually in Q4 of each year (LDPR, line 8228)

Later this month we plan to publish for consultation a national framework for NHS continuing care which will give further clarity and consistency on the responsibilities of NHS and social services for long term care. The national framework will include guidance on the processes and considerations to take into account when making decisions on the responsibility of the NHS and social services for long-term care.

Contraception

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health under what legislation RU 486 is regulated in the United Kingdom; and if she will make a statement. [66881]

Jane Kennedy: RU 486 (Mifegyne, mifepristone) is an anti-progestogenic steroid medicine, which is licensed for use in medical abortion. The legislation under which RU

486 is authorised for marketing in the United Kingdom is the Medicines for Human Use (Marketing Authorisations Etc.) Regulations 1994. These regulations implement Directive 2001/83/EC, the European Community Code relating to Medicinal Products for Human Use. The sale and supply of RU 486 is also subject to restrictions in Part III of the Medicines Act 1968 and orders and regulations made under that Part. Clinical trials of RU 486 are subject to the Medicines for Human Use (Clinical Trials) Regulations 2004, which implement Directive 2001/20/EC.

As with all medicines, the safety of RU 486 is continuously monitored by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency.

Debt Recovery

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the merits of using private debt collection agencies to recover debts owed to her Department. [67872]

Mr. Byrne: As most of the Department's debtors are other national health service bodies it is not deemed appropriate to use a debt collection agency.

Dentistry

Mr. Beith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what arrangements exist under the new dentists' contract to ensure that domiciliary treatment is provided to patients in cases where there is a medical need for it. [67398]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Domiciliary services are one of the additional services, under a general dental services contract or personal dental services agreement, which the primary care trust may commission separately to meet the need for domiciliary services in its area.

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists in Milton Keynes have *(a)* signed and *(b)* declined to sign the new NHS contract. [68156]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the number of dentists who have signed the new contract and the number who have not signed is not available centrally. We do however have some provisional information that covers contracts. A contract may well be for more than one dentist so cannot be broken down further to individual dentist level.

	Number/percentage
Contracts signed	
Number	24
Approximate units of dental activity (UDA) value	245,600
Contracts still in discussion	
Number	0
Approximate UDA value	0
Contracts rejected	
Number	5
Approximate UDA value	19,982
UDAs (percentage)	7.5
Contracts signed	
Number signed without dispute	8
Number signed in dispute	16
Disputes (percentage)	66.7

Note:
The information provided is not validated. It represents a snapshot of the position in early April 2006.

A contract may be for either a practice or an individual dentist.

Primary care trusts are working with dentists to resolve as many disputes as possible locally.

Departmental Leave (Stress)

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many staff have been on sick leave suffering from stress in the Department in each of the last three years; and what percentage of the total staff number this represents. [63536]

Mr. Byrne: The Department records stress related sickness absence under the umbrella category of mental illness and therefore figures reflecting absences from stress are not available.

A new sickness absence management policy has been launched that provides managers with guidance and support in their management of sickness within their teams.

A monthly workforce information report is published identifying the main areas of absence encouraging senior managers to focus their attention on the critical areas.

East Sussex Primary Care Trust

Michael Jabez Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the representations received by Surrey and Sussex Strategic Health Authority from organisations and individuals who supported *(a)* a single East Sussex Primary Care Trust (PCT) and *(b)* two PCTs within East Sussex to include a separate PCT for Hastings and Rother. [64664]

Caroline Flint: This information requested is not held centrally, however Surrey and Sussex Strategic Health Authority (SHA) have been asked to provide details to my hon. Friend directly.

The local consultation on primary care trust reconfiguration in East Sussex was managed by Surrey and Sussex SHA and it is for them to provide information about respondents to the local consultation.

Easter Celebrations

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost was of Easter celebrations in NHS hospitals in 2006. [67098]

Mr. Byrne: The Department has no central record of this information which cannot be obtained without incurring disproportionate cost.

End of Life Care

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent discussions she has had on improving end of life care; and who participated in those discussions. [67441]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 2 May 2006]:* The public's views about end of life care were sought as part of the consultation leading up to the publication of "Our health, our care, our say" White Paper (Cm 6737). The Secretary of State and other members of the ministerial team attended regional consultation events in Gateshead, Leicester and London and a national citizen's summit in Birmingham which was attended by nearly 1,000 people.

The Secretary of State is due to meet Marie Curie Cancer Care, the National Council for Palliative Care and the Association for Children's Hospices to discuss the White Paper commitment on end of life care in the near future.

Endometriosis

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funding has been made available for endometriosis research in each of the last 10 years. [60480]

Jane Kennedy: The main agency through which the Government supports medical and clinical research is the Medical Research Council (MRC). The MRC is an independent body funded by the Department of Trade and Industry via the Office of Science and Innovation.

MRC expenditure in the 10 years of research into endometriosis started from 1997–98 and is shown in the table.

	Amount (£ million)
1997–98	1.7
1998–99	1.8
1999–2000	1.8
2000–01	1.2
2001–02	1.2
2002–03	1.0
2003–04	1.2

The MRC does not normally allocate funds to particular topics. Research proposals in all areas compete for the funding available. When appropriate, high quality research in particular areas of strategic importance may be given priority in competition for funds, but research excellence and importance to health continues to be the primary considerations in funding decisions. The MRC always welcomes high quality applications for support into any aspect of human health and these are judged in open competition with other demands on funding.

The Department funds research to support policy and to provide the evidence needed to underpin quality improvement and service development in the NHS. The Department's national research programme has, since 1997, funded one project related to endometriosis at a cost to 31 March 2004 of £320,000.

Over 75 per cent. of the Department's total expenditure on health research is devolved to and managed by national health service organisations. Details of completed and ongoing projects, including a number concerned with endometriosis, can be found on the national research register on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/research.

Equal Pay

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps are undertaken within her Department to ensure that women are obtaining equal pay to men doing work of equal value. [65851]

Mr. Byrne: The Department is committed to reviewing our pay systems on a regular basis and to prepare action plans to close any equal pay gaps. Any equality proofing is undertaken in consultation with our trade unions. Departmental managers are asked to consider equal pay issues when setting starting pay and awarding pay flexibilities.

We undertook an equal pay analysis of our current systems in 2005 which did not indicate gender issues.

Fluoridation Schemes

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 29 March 2006 to the hon. Member for Central Ayrshire (Mr. Donohoe), *Official Report*, column 1062W, on fluoridation schemes, if she will add hon. Members for relevant constituencies to the list of those whom strategic health authorities are advised to notify of proposals for water fluoridation. [66348]

Caroline Flint: The Department will amend the Chief Dental Officer's letter of September 2005 to advise strategic health authorities to notify Members of Parliament with constituencies that would be affected when they are undertaking a consultation about a fluoridation scheme.

Folic Acid

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations her Department has received in the last 12 months on the effects of folic acid ingestion on the elderly. [66097]

Mr. Byrne: Over the last 12 months, there were 32 responses to the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition's consultation on its draft report on folate and disease prevention, Of the 32, 13 responses covered vitamin B12 deficiency in the elderly. The Department, together with the Food Standards Agency, has also received parliamentary questions as well as letters from hon. Members and from members of the public on the subject.

Food Supplements

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what estimate she has made of *(a)* the number of food supplements on the market which contain boron and *(b)* the value of (i) wholesale and (ii) retail annual sales of such supplements; and whether she plans to have discussions with industry representatives about the potential impact of decisions by the European Union not to permit the use of boron in food supplements; [66728]

(2) what assessment she has made of the implications for the setting of maximum permitted levels for nutrients in food supplements of the decision of the General Food Law section of the European Union's Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health on 9 February not to permit the addition of boron to the list of ingredients permitted under the provisions of the Directive on Foods for Particular Nutritional Purposes; whether she plans to make representations to *(a)* the European Commission and *(b)* the German Government on this matter; and if she will make a statement; [66729]

(3) what Government policy is on boron in food supplements; and what assessment she has made of the implications of this decision for objectives for the setting of maximum permitted levels of nutrients in food supplements; [66730]

Caroline Flint: A decision has not yet been taken at the standing committee on the food chain and animal health on the addition of boron to the list of ingredients permitted under the provisions of the directive on foods for particular nutritional purposes or of the food supplements directive. An assessment of the number or market value of food supplements containing boron that are available in the United Kingdom has not been made.

The Government supports the addition of boron to the positive list in the food supplements directive, and supplements containing boron are permitted on the UK market.

The outcome of recent discussions at the European Commission (EC) standing committee on the food chain and animal health on the use of boron in food supplements was discussed at a meeting with industry representatives on 15 March 2005.

Representations have been made to the EC and the German authorities regarding the UK position on the addition of boron to the positive lists of the directives on food supplements and foods for particular nutritional uses.

Any substance on the positive list in the food supplements directive will be subject to the provisions of the directive. This includes making provisions for establishing maximum levels of vitamins and minerals in food supplements. The EC has indicated that it will bring forward discussion documents at the end of 2006 to consult stakeholders and member states on this issue.

Freedom of Information

Greg Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance her Department issues to primary care trusts on charges made for freedom of information requests. [67170]

Mr. Byrne: The Department has not issued any guidance to primary care trusts (PCTs) on charges made for freedom of information requests. PCTs are public authorities in their own right in terms of the Act and therefore have the option to charge in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 and following the guidance on the regulations provided by the Department for Constitutional Affairs.

General Practitioners

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many general practitioners in each primary care trust are participating in out-of-hours work in the same area as they are registered as a general practitioner. [65973]

Mr. Byrne: The information is not collected by the Department. It is for individual primary care trusts to ensure that out-of-hours provision in their areas continue to be improved and developed into a better service for patients.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the effect of the new general practitioner contract on clinical outcomes. [66830]

Mr. Byrne: The new general medical services contract was introduced in April 2004. Part of the contract is the quality and outcomes framework (QOF), which rewards practices for the work they do rather than simply the number of patients they treat. High achievement in the first year of the QOF (over 91 per cent., average achievement of points) means that patients are receiving a higher standard of care and treatment from their local general practitioner practices.

Research by the national primary care research and development centre at the University of Manchester (published in the Journal of Quality and Satisfaction in Healthcare in 2004) shows that significant health gains could result from achieving the quality targets in the QOF. The research estimated the amount of cardiovascular events, including heart attack and death, which could be prevented over five years in a general practice population of 10,000.

Reaching the cholesterol reduction targets could prevent, in an average practice, 15 events in people with coronary heart disease, seven events in people with a history of stroke and seven events in people with diabetes. Achieving blood pressure control targets in hypertensive patients without those conditions could prevent 15 cardiovascular events.

The amount of health gain is sensitive to current quality of care, prevalence of conditions and risk factors. Nevertheless, it is clear that achievement of QOF targets across the country could prevent thousands of serious events, including deaths, from cardiovascular disease.

Health Care Staff

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action her Department is taking to ensure placements and employment for medical and other health care staff at all levels who will be completing their training in 2006. [66059]

Mr. Byrne: The Department has provided the national health service with funding to provide more than enough foundation programme year 1 posts, for all graduates from English medical schools in 2006–07.

There are still lots of job opportunities within the NHS, with NHS Jobs advertising between 3,000 and 4,000 jobs at any given time.

The NHS still needs newly qualified staff to replace those who retire or take career breaks. However there is now more competition and new staff may not always be able to find the job they want in the location they want and may need to be more flexible.

Strategic health authorities and NHS trusts are working proactively to find slots for both clinical placements and newly qualified staff within their overall work force plans.

Imported Blood Products

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether her Department *(a)* asked and *(b)* required individuals with haemophilia to sign a waiver in 1991 intended to block legal redress in the event of infection with hepatitis C from NHS blood products after a hepatitis C test was completed; and if she will make a statement. [64130]

Caroline Flint: In 1988, a special payments scheme was introduced for haemophiliacs infected with HIV through blood products. This scheme is administered by the Macfarlane Trust. In 1991, as part of a settlement of court proceedings a further lump sum payment was made under the scheme for haemophilia patients infected with HIV. From that time, all beneficiaries of the Trust have been required to sign a waiver undertaking not to take legal action against the Department or any other public body in respect of infection from HIV, or hepatitis viruses. It is usual in litigation that when a settlement is reached, claimants cannot then reopen the proceedings.

We deeply regret that so many people with haemophilia were infected with HIV and hepatitis C through blood products. In 2004, the Government set up the Skipton Fund to administer the ex-gratia payment scheme for people infected with hepatitis C from national health service blood or blood products.

Malnutrition

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations her Department has received on nutrition, under-nutrition and malnutrition in each year since 2000. [64287]

Caroline Flint: Since 2000, the Department has received Parliamentary Questions, letters from hon. Members and letters from members of the public on nutrition, under nutrition and malnutrition. Letters have also been sent to the Chief Medical Officer, Deputy Chief Medical Officer and Chief Executive, as well as Departmental officials in the nutrition team. Similar representations on these subjects have also been received by the Food Standards Agency. These representations are from a wide variety of sources.

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she will specify nutrition standards for meals supplied to patients and service users by *(a)* nursing homes, *(b)* residential homes, *(c)* hospitals and *(d)* meals on wheels and lunch clubs. [64288]

Mr. Byrne: Food and nutrition in nursing and residential homes is extensively covered in the existing 'Care Homes for Older People—National Minimum Standards', which is available in the Library. The national minimum standards, which the Commission for Social Care Inspection has to take into account when it inspects homes against the Care Homes Regulations 2001, address food and nutrition from various perspectives, including nutritional content, religious or cultural requirements, preparation and hygiene and the social value of meals and mealtimes.

'Standards for Better Health', which is available in the Library, requires health care organisations, including hospitals, to offer patients a choice of food, which is safely prepared, provides a balanced diet and meets their individual nutritional, personal and clinical dietary requirements. Compliance with these requirements is mandatory for any provider treating national health service patients and is measured via the Healthcare Commission's annual health check process.

Nutritional standards in hospitals are also included in the Essence of Care framework for clinical governance, launched in February 2001. The Essence of Care benchmarking guidance and toolkit was published in April 2003. This includes guidelines that all hospital patients should be screened and assessed to identify their nutritional needs and that further assessment will take place for all patients identified as at risk. Plans of care, based on ongoing nutritional assessments, will be devised, implemented and evaluated for those patients who need them.

'Essence of Care' is available at:

www.modern.nhs.uk/home/key/docs/Essence%20of%20Care.pdf.

A copy has been placed in the library.

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is contributing to improving the nutrient and food intake as provided by major public institutions, including nursing homes, residential homes, hospitals and meals on wheels or lunch clubs across the United Kingdom. This will include the development of nutrient and food-based guidance as well as example menus to assist caterers in menu planning, both of which will meet nutritional guidance.

The FSA has met with the National Association of Care Caterers and the Women's Royal Voluntary Services and they are supportive of this work.

Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether applications to the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency for European procedures in handling product licence applications are given priority over national procedure applications; and if she will make a statement. [67298]

Jane Kennedy: Applications to the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) for product licences should be handled within the timescales established by legislation. The medicines directive implemented into United Kingdom legislation requires us to take all appropriate measures to ensure that authorisation procedures are completed within 210 days of submission of a valid application.

However, the legislation also establishes additional timescales, which must be met where the authorisation is to be granted following European procedures

amongst one or more other member states or within the entire community. For example, within the so-called mutual recognition procedure, we must make sure to have completed our scientific evaluation within 90 days. And within the community-wide centralised procedure, we must complete our scientific assessment within 80 days.

These tighter European procedural timescales do dictate that such applications receive some priority within the MHRA since to do otherwise might mean that we were obliged to allow marketing of the product in the UK regardless of any concerns we may have for its quality, safety or efficacy.

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the length of time taken by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency to acknowledge an application for a product licence *(a)* is measured and *(b)* is included in the processing time reported by the agency. [67299]

Jane Kennedy: The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has included the time it takes to receive and acknowledge applications for product licences in its overall processing times. However, for incomplete or potentially invalid applications the time taken by the company to correct the application is not included in the processing times. Incomplete or potentially invalid applications include those not accompanied by appropriate data or documents, submitted under the wrong legal basis or without payment of the correct fee.

The MHRA information management system sends the applicant a notification of receipt letter as soon as the application is entered into the database and showing the date on which the application was received. A subsequent acknowledgement of submission letter is sent to the applicant as soon as the application has been validated and is ready for the start of assessment.

The MHRA measures the time taken to enter submissions onto the database and to complete their validation as part of its internal monitoring of business processes.

Misoprostol

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent research her Department has evaluated on the *(a)* uses and *(b)* effects of the drug misoprostol; and if she will make a statement. [66882]

Jane Kennedy: Misoprostol is a synthetic analogue of a naturally occurring hormone (prostaglandin). As a licensed medicine, the uses and effects of misoprostol are evaluated by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA).

Misoprostol is licensed for the treatment and prevention of gastrointestinal ulcers induced by non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs). It can be given alone, or combined with NSAIDs such as diclofenac or naproxen, and is effective in reducing gastric acidity, which may be the cause of ulcers. Misoprostol is especially suitable for the frail and elderly who need to take long-term NSAIDs for arthritic conditions, and who are therefore at risk of ulcers.

As with all medicines, misoprostol may be associated with side effects in some patients, and safety is continually monitored by the MHRA. The known side effects of this drug are described in product information for healthcare professionals and patients. When used for the treatment or prevention of gastrointestinal ulcers, the recognised adverse effects of misoprostol include diarrhoea, abdominal pain, dyspepsia (indigestion), flatulence, nausea and vomiting, skin rashes and dizziness. As prostaglandin hormones also have effects on the lining of the uterus in women, misoprostol can also lead to vaginal bleeding.

Doctors may decide to use a medicine outside the terms of the marketing authorisation, on their own responsibility, if they consider that it is in the best interests of their patients. Unlicensed uses of misoprostol include the induction of labour and medical abortion, where it is sometimes used in combination with other drugs such as mifepristone. This is in line with the advice of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists in its evidence based clinical guideline. Side effects of misoprostol in unlicensed indications have been documented to include abnormal uterine contractions and haemorrhage, retained placenta, release of amniotic fluid into the circulation (embolism), incomplete abortion and premature birth.

NHS Appointments Commission

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2726W, on the Public Appointments Annual Report, when the NHS Appointments Commission will publish a list of the appointments to the bodies for which it is responsible. [67445]

Mr. Byrne: Information on appointments to local national health service boards has been published by the NHS Appointments Commission and can be found on their website at: www.appointments.org.uk/publications.asp.

Information on appointments to national bodies will be published shortly.

NHS Direct

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 10 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1824W, on NHS Direct, if she will make a statement on the growth in the cost of NHS Direct. [66722]

Mr. Byrne: Since its inception in 1998, NHS Direct has grown from small-scale pilot sites to a substantial national service. The increased funding reflects the increased popularity of the service and the wider range of services provided. For example, the NHS Direct telephone service, launched in 1998, and nationally available from 2000, is now complemented by the NHS Direct Online website (1999) and the NHS Direct Interactive digital TV service (2004). This multi-channel service now handles around 2 million patient contacts each month compared to around 9,000 per month in 1998–99.

In addition to the nationally directed service, NHS Direct now provides primary care trusts with a range of telephone-based solutions to support the delivery of their service objectives, including out of hours and unscheduled care; long-term care; outpatient services; and health information and access to local services.

NHS Pension Scheme

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the employer contribution rates to the NHS pension scheme are; what assumed rate of return underlies those contribution rates; and what the contribution rate would be if the assumed rate of return were in line with current redemption yield on index-linked gilts. [61397]

Mr. Byrne: Current employer contribution rates to the national health service pension scheme are 14 per cent. of pensionable payroll, and the last actuarial valuation on which this recommendation was based assumed a rate of return of 3.5 per cent. The information on the impact of different actuarial and accounting assumptions can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

NHS Recruitment

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will place a duty on NHS bodies not to discriminate in their recruitment practices against applicants who have previously acted as whistle-blowers within the NHS. [51906]

Mr. Byrne: Recruitment of staff in the national health service is a local matter. NHS employers are expected to have fair and transparent recruitment processes in place which comply with relevant legislation.

The Department issued updated guidance in 2003 to support the development and remedy of whistle-blowing policies in the workplace.

Overseas Doctors

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of doctors, who are non-European Economic Area citizens work in the NHS; and if she will make a statement. [67007]

Mr. Byrne: The number of doctors employed in the national health service who qualified in non-European Economic Area countries is shown in the following table. No information is collected relating to the country of origin of NHS staff.

General and personal medical services and hospital community health services (HCHS): All doctors[1,2,3] by specified country of primary qualification group, England as at 30 September 2005

Number (headcount) and percentages

	All countries of qualification	*All EEA countries*	*EEA countries (percentage)*	*All non-EEA countries*	*Non-EEA countries (percentage)*
All doctors	119,017	86,057	72.3	32,960	27.7
All HCHS medical staff[2,3]	83,073	55,762	67.1	27,311	32.9
All GPs[1]	35,944	30,295	84.3	5,649	15.7
Of which:					
GPs (excluding retainers and registrars)	32,738	27,990	85.5	4,748	14.5
GP registrars	2,564	1,684	65.7	880	34.3

[1] Practitioners includes contracted GPs, QMS Others, PMS Others, GP registrars and GP retainers
[2] Excludes medical hospital practitioners and medical clinical assistants, most of whom are GPs working part time in hospitals
[3] Excludes ail dental staff. Information about country of qualification is derived from the General Medical Council. For staff in dental specialties, with a General Dental Council registration, the country of qualification is therefore unknown.
Sources:
The Information Centre for health and social care medical and dental workforce census. The Information Centre for health and social care general & personal medical services Statistics

Pharmacies

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the number of pharmacists who are being held liable by an oxygen supplier for the loss or damage of oxygen cylinders. [67883]

Jane Kennedy: The supply of oxygen cylinders to pharmacies is a matter for agreement between the pharmacy and the oxygen supplier concerned. The Department does not hold information on these business arrangements and therefore cannot provide an estimate of the number of pharmacists held liable for loss or damage to cylinders.

Primary Care Trusts

Chris Huhne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the revenue allocation per head of population is for each primary care trust in *(a)* 2007–08 and *(b)* 2006–07; and what the out-turn figures were in (i) 2004–05 and (ii) 2005–06. [64853]

Mr. Byrne: Information showing the revenue allocation per head of population for each primary care trust in 2007–08 and 2006–07 has been placed in the Library.

I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for South Cambridgeshire (Mr. Lansley) on 10 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1828W, in respect of 2004–05 expenditure per head. Expenditure per head figures for 2005–06 will be available in the autumn.

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the expected final outturn position is of Milton Keynes Primary Care Trust for the 2006–07 financial year. [68154]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The financial plans for 2006–07 have not yet been finalised.

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Health from which *(a)* frontline staff and *(b)* support staff posts Milton Keynes Primary Trust is considering removing funding. [68155]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Funding is allocated directly to primary care trust (PCTs). It is for PCTs in partnership with strategic health authorities and other local stakeholders to determine how best to use their funds to meet national and local priorities for improving health, tackling health inequalities and modernising services.

Sexual Health

Laura Moffatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures her Department is implementing to encourage women aged between 16 and 24 to practise safer sex. [66486]

Caroline Flint: Our current plans are to aim to launch the next sexual health campaign later this year. This will target 16 to 34-year-old men and women but with a concentration on the key 16 to 24 year age bracket. The campaign will focus on the risks of unprotected sex and the benefits of using condoms to avoid sexually transmitted infections including HIV and unintended pregnancies.

Also, the national chlamydia screening programme provides opportunistic screening for genital chlamydia infection and is offered to all sexually active women and men aged between 16 and 24 years old attending a variety of health and non health care settings in England. Every young person who accepts a chlamydia test is given an information leaflet which explains that using condoms every time they have sex can reduce the risks of getting or passing on chlamydia and other sexually transmitted infections including HIV.

This programme is linked to the implementation of the teenage pregnancy strategy, led by Department for Education and Skills, which seeks to both encourage young people to delay early sex and to improve their access to sexual health advice and services when they do become sexually active.

The teenage pregnancy strategy is achieved through a national media campaign; improved delivery of sex and relationships education in schools, and by making services more young people friendly and delivered closer to the point of need—in schools, further education colleges and other youth settings. Since the start of the strategy, the under-18 conception rate has fallen by 11.1 per cent., to its lowest level since the mid-1980s.

Unsocial Hours Payments

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether unsocial hours payments are paid to *(a)* existing NHS Direct and *(b)* new NHS Direct staff; and if she will make a statement. [64182]

Mr. Byrne: This information is not centrally held. It may be available from NHS Direct Special Health Authority and you may wish to contact the chairman of NHS Direct for details.

Voluntary Sector

Mr. Vara: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how her Department is seeking to encourage further voluntary sector involvement in the provision of health services. [66910]

Mr. Byrne: The Department is encouraging further voluntary third sector involvement in the commissioning and provision of health services as part of the implementation of commitments made in the recent White Paper, 'Our health, our care, our say', working with partners and agencies across the statutory and voluntary sectors at regional and national levels. The ministerial third sector commissioning task force, which was set up to strengthen the commercial relationship between the third sector and the public sector will be publishing a report in the summer. The report will make recommendations on removing obstacles to the third sector in the provision of health and social care.

Mr. Vara: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the effect of the time taken to announce decisions on the allocation of section 64 funding to voluntary sector organisations in the health field on the work of these organisations. [66911]

Mr. Byrne: The Department recognises the implications of the delay in notifying voluntary and community organisations of the result in their Section 64 applications. Those organisations with a second or third year project will receive an interim amount equivalent to the first quarter payment, which will enable them to continue the project without interruption. Organisations still awaiting the outcome of the application for 2006–07 have been regularly informed of the situation by email and telephone for those organisations that have directly contacted the Department.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Child Soldiers

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what sanctions his Department has taken against countries in breach of UN conventions on the employment and use of child soldiers. [65887]

Mr. Straw: I have been asked to reply.

The UK has signed and ratified both the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict and encourages all other states to do likewise.

The UK actively supports work in the UN Security Council on this issue. UN Security Council resolution 1612 of July 2005 on children and armed conflict established a mechanism to monitor and report on grave violations against children, including the recruitment and use of child soldiers and a Security Council Working Group to make recommendations to the Council on possible measures to promote the protection of children.

Security Council resolution 1612 also reaffirms the Security Council's intention to consider imposing multilateral sanctions against parties to situations of armed conflict which are on its agenda and are in violation of applicable international law relating to the rights and protection of children in armed conflict. Multilateral sanctions are usually applied taking into account a broad range of factors and have already been applied in relation to several conflict situations where the recruitment of child soldiers is a serious concern, such as those arising in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Sudan and Cote d'Ivoire. Relevant Security Council resolutions also call for those responsible for violations of international humanitarian law to be brought to justice, including where appropriate by the International Criminal Court (ICC). I welcome the transfer of the first individual indicted by the ICC, Thomas Lubanga Dyilo, a national of the DRC, to The Hague on 17 March. He is charged with conscripting and enlisting children under the age of 15 and using them to participate actively in hostilities. The UK also works through the EU to promote the protection of children affected by armed conflict, including through Troika démarches.

Development Objectives

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assistance the Government are providing to developing countries in producing their 10 year plans on achieving their development objectives. [66836]

Mr. Thomas: The international community agreed at the 2005 World Summit that all countries would adopt and implement comprehensive national development strategies to achieve the millennium development goals.

Many developing countries already have poverty reduction strategies or other national poverty plans, which set the agenda for development assistance from donors. We are working with the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme both to encourage developing countries to build these poverty plans into 10-year strategies for achieving the millennium development goals by 2015; and to ensure that donors agree with partner countries the increased development assistance necessary to finance them.

Longer-term planning by developing countries and support by donors is particularly important in education and health. On 10 April, I and my right hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, announced that the UK Government will provide $15 billion (approximately £8.5 billion) funding for education by 2015. This will help to give our partner countries confidence to prepare 10 year plans to achieve the education goals. DFID will be working with governments and through existing collective donor arrangements to support the development of these plans. In particular the Fast Track Initiative for education provides assistance with education planning and long-term predictable finance in support of plans to achieve education goals. DFID has doubled the UK's contribution to the Fast Track Initiative's Programme Development Fund to £5 million, and will be providing an additional £100 million to the Fast Track Initiative for education over the next two years.

EU Water Initiative

Mr. Andrew Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many people have received sanitation and clean water as a result of the implementation of the EU Water Initiative in the four years since its inception. [67579]

Mr. Thomas: The 25 EU member states and the European Commission are together the largest donors in Africa and in 2003–04 spent over £1.4 billion on water and sanitation. The EU Water Initiative (EUWI) was created to increase the impact of this aid, by co-ordinating efforts to ensure that the sector receives appropriate political profile and increased levels of investment. This is why we have been keen to make the Initiative work.

DFID has been actively involved since the outset with the EUWI but like others, has been disappointed with slow progress. We are currently working with Tearfund and WaterAid to strengthen commitment to the Initiative across the EU and in particular to improve monitoring and accountability.

One of the aims of the EUWI was to catalyse additional funding for water and sanitation and the African, Caribbean and Pacific Countries (ACP)—EU Water Facility (EUWF), was established in 2004 in response to this aim. In contrast to the EUWI, the EUWF is a funding mechanism. Although progress has been slow, mainly due to lengthy procurement procedures, approximately €230 million is now committed to co-fund 97 projects in ACP countries, which are valued at €412 million. An initial analysis of these selected proposals by the EUWF has found that by 2010 approximately 10 million people will benefit from access to drinking water and approximately 5 million people will benefit from access to basic sanitation. A second call for proposals has been launched this year and the full €500 million of the EUWF will be committed by 2007.

Governance

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what recent discussions he has had with the Governments of *(a)* India, *(b)* Bangladesh, *(c)* Pakistan, *(d)* Sri Lanka, *(e)* Botswana, *(f)* Cameroon, *(g)* Ghana, *(h)* Kenya, *(i)* Lesotho, *(j)* Malawi, *(k)* Mozambique, *(l)* Namibia, *(m)* Nigeria, *(n)* South Africa, *(o)* Tanzania, *(p)* Uganda and *(q)* Zambia on (i) strengthening Government-business relations, (ii) supporting free media, (iii) ensuring that justice is consistent and reliable, (iv) providing efficient administration and (v) ensuring effective government; [65712]

(2) what recent discussions he has had with the Governments of *(a)* Botswana, *(b)* Cameroon, *(c)* Ghana, *(d)* Kenya, *(e)* Lesotho, *(f)* Malawi, *(g)* Mozambique, *(h)* Namibia, *(i)* Nigeria, *(j)* South Africa, *(k)* Tanzania, *(l)* Uganda, *(m)* Zambia, *(n)* India, *(o)* Bangladesh, *(p)* Pakistan and *(q)* Sri

Lanka on (i) corporate governance, (ii) industrial relations, (iii) human resources, (iv) infrastructure, (v) the financial framework and (vi) business regulation; [65716]

(3) what recent discussions he has had with the Governments of *(a)* Botswana, *(b)* Cameroon, *(c)* Ghana, *(d)* Kenya, *(e)* Lesotho, *(f)* Malawi, *(g)* Mozambique, *(h)* Namibia, *(i)* Nigeria, *(j)* South Africa, *(k)* Tanzania, *(l)* Uganda, *(m)* Zambia, *(n)* India, *(o)* Bangladesh, *(p)* Pakistan and *(q)* Sri Lanka on (i) environmental protection, (ii) corruption reduction, (iii) tax policy and (iv) competition policy. [65953]

Mr. Thomas: My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for International Development has had recent discussions with the Governments of most of the countries mentioned. The discussions were wide ranging and included governance, infrastructure, the environment, human resources and trade and growth. In addition, DFID officials engage in regular policy dialogue with the various Governments on a number of topics. They include: public sector reform, public financial management, Government accountability, access to justice and corruption, the importance of infrastructure links and business regulation for improved trade and growth, and management of human resources in areas such as health and education. In pursuing our growth and poverty reduction goals, DFID also attaches importance to the reform of tax policy and administration and to fostering a more competitive market environment. Jointly with other donors, DFID is supporting a number of country and regional projects in Africa and Asia that address these two issues.

Botswana and Namibia

Neither I nor my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for International Development have had discussions with the Governments of Botswana and Namibia on the issues raised in the recent past. Both are middle income countries and DFID does not have significant programmes in either country.

Cameroon

I met the Prime Minister of Cameroon in London on 8 March. We discussed Cameroon's progress towards reaching heavily indebted poor countries completion point and prospects for debt relief and also reviewed Cameroon's progress on tackling corruption. DFID is supporting the Government of Cameroon's Forestry Programme to tackle illegal logging and improve sustainable forest management.

Ghana

My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for International Development recently met the Ghanaian Minister for Finance and Economic Planning in Washington. They discussed a wide variety of topics relating to the development of Ghana including how to deepen democracy and the importance of a well regulated business environment.

Kenya: DFID officials have regular dialogue on many of the subjects raised in relation to a number of sectoral programmes which DFID supports in Kenya. These include the Public Sector Reform programme, Public Finance Management programme, Governance Justice Law and Order Sector programme and the Political Empowerment programme.

Lesotho

My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for International Development met recently with the Government of Lesotho's Minister of Finance. The discussions concentrated on education, HIV/AIDS, infrastructure and trade and investment in Lesotho. DFID supports Lesotho's revenue authority to improve tax collection and management.

Malawi

My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for International Development met the Malawian Minister for Finance in London in November and discussed the response to Malawi's food shortages and progress by the Government to achieve economic stabilisation and tackle corruption. I visited Malawi in October to monitor progress on health and HIV/AIDS programmes which aim to address human resources constraints in the health and education sectors in Malawi. DFID and other development partners are finalising a review which has covered a broad range of development issues including the economy, the social sectors and governance.

Mozambique

Mozambique has recently completed its second poverty reduction strategy plan following consultations with civil society and donors, including DFID. Strengthening Government, improving efficiency of the public sector and its administration, improving the justice sector and enhancing business relation were all key issues for discussion.

Nigeria

My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for International Development met the Nigerian Minister of Finance, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala in April at the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) spring meetings in Washington. Their discussion covered the Nigerian debt relief deal, recent economic events, and Nigeria's economic reforms. The UK Government strongly supports the reforms in Nigeria which focus on improving governance, stimulating private sector development and improving basic services.

South Africa

Recent discussions with the Government of South Africa have focused on the follow-up commitments made at the G8 Summit in Gleneagles in July 2005, to improve infrastructure in Africa, support good governance and tackle corruption, to address human resource constraints, to boost trade and growth and tackle climate change and water resources.

Tanzania

My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for International Development spoke to President Kikwete of Tanzania last month. They discussed a variety of issues relating to Tanzania's development and welcomed President Kikwete's commitment to reducing poverty and fighting corruption. My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for International Development also met with the Tanzanian Minister of Finance at the International Monetary Fund (IMF)/World Bank (WB) annual meetings from 22–23 April. Among the issues discussed was Tanzania's progress on development. DFID has supported Tanzania to assess the impact of its revenue authority on small businesses and the investment climate.

Uganda

My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for International Development met President Museveni in the margins of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Malta in November. A wide ranging discussion covered a number of our concerns about recent governance developments. DFID's programme in Uganda includes direct support for more accountable and effective Government.

Zambia

In February, my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for International Development met Zambia's Minister of Commerce, Trade and Industry Dipak Patel, who is the current chair of the least developed countries group in the World Trade Organisation (WTO) trade negotiations. They discussed a range of issues concerning trade and in particular the Hong Kong WTO trade negotiations. I met with the Minister of State for Health Services in October 2005 and discussed Zambia's human resource strategy.

In March, DFID co-hosted the Asia 2015 conference in London with the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. The conference brought together many senior politicians, officials and business leaders from the across the Asia region. Among the main topics discussed were the importance of tackling climate change and the need to ensure growth and effective Government. My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for International Development and I had a number of discussions about how to increase state capacity and effectiveness in order to increase access to services and reduce poverty.

India

DFID is engaged in regular policy dialogue with the Government of India and state governments across on policies and programmes to improve Government effectiveness and efficiency. DFID has been supporting a Centre for Good Governance in Andhra Pradesh for several years and has now been asked to assist in the establishment of a national centre. These initiatives provide a clear framework for discussion and planning for enhancing Government effectiveness.

Pakistan

My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for International Development has had two recent discussions with the Prime Minister of Pakistan. The first in Islamabad in October last year following the tragic earthquake, and the second during the Asia 2015 conference. Their discussions were wide ranging and focused on the UK's £128 million response to the earthquake. My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for International Development also reiterated the UK's continued commitment to support Pakistan's poverty reduction efforts. They discussed plans for a development partnership with Pakistan; Pakistan's economic growth and progress in Pakistan's social sectors and in water and sanitation.

Bangladesh

My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for International Development met with the Bangladesh Minister of Finance and Planning, Saifur Rahman, during a visit to Dhaka in December and more recently during the Asia 2015 conference. On both occasions they had wide ranging discussions which touched on many of these issues.

Sri Lanka

Our main priorities in Sri Lanka are recovery actions after the tsunami and improving prospectus for peace. We have also agreed to provide £41 million of Debt Relief to Sri Lanka over the next 10 years, in order to release Government finances for tsunami recovery and poverty reduction. Key to recovery is rebuilding infrastructure and a regulatory framework so that small enterprises can re-establish their businesses. I visited Sri Lanka last year and discussed many of these issues with the Government.

HIV/AIDS

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what estimate his Department has made of the percentage of aid promised to developing countries at the G8 Gleneagles Summit that will go towards tackling HIV/AIDS. [67884]

Mr. Thomas: At the G8 Gleneagles Summit; commitments were made to increase aid to developing countries by US$50 billion per year by 2010. The percentage of this aid that will go towards tackling HIV and AIDS for all developing countries was not specified.

Of the additional $50 billion per year by 2010, $25 billion will go to Africa. The best resource needs estimates have only considered global needs to 2008 and these suggest a resource gap of around $18 billion from 2006–2008 for AIDS-related programmes.

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what estimate his Department has made of the cost of implementing the Gleneagles commitment to achieve universal access to anti-retroviral treatment for all HIV/AIDS sufferers by 2010. [67885]

Mr. Thomas: The Joint United Nations programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) reports on global resource needs estimates for AIDS. Anti-retroviral treatment resource needs alone are not available. However, the UNAIDS have produced global resource needs estimates of the costs of scaling up a comprehensive response to AIDS, to get as close as possible to universal access by 2010. These estimates propose total global annual needs of US$15 billion in 2006, US$18 billion in 2007 and US$22 billion in 2008. The estimates include a range of services covering treatment, prevention and care for people made vulnerable by AIDS.

Global resource needs estimates have not yet been published for 2009 onwards.

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent discussions his Department has had with the UN General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS on interim targets towards the Government's G8 commitment to achieving universal access to anti-retroviral treatment for all HIV/AIDS sufferers by 2010. [67886]

Mr. Thomas: Since Gleneagles, the UK has taken a number of steps to advance the commitments on AIDS. These will be a central part of discussions at the UN General Assembly high level meeting (31 May-2 June 2006). In establishing the UN General Assembly high level meeting, the General Assembly resolution (23 December 2005), established a Global Steering

Committee (GSC) on scaling up towards universal access which DFID co-chaired. Building on the recommendations of more than 100 national and seven regional consultations, the GSC advised the Joint United Nations programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) on the priority actions required to scale up access to treatment, prevention and care for HIV and AIDS. These recommendations were incorporated in the UNAIDS report "Towards Universal Access" published on 21 April 2006 for consideration at the UN General Assembly high level meeting. This report includes a recommendation that countries should set both interim targets for 2008, and 2010 targets in the areas of treatment, prevention and care.

The UK is now working with UNAIDS, the presidency of the General Assembly and other governments to press for a strong and ambitious Political Declaration at the UN General Assembly high level meeting on 2 June. We are working to agree a Declaration which incorporates the recommendations of the UNAIDS report; promotes and protects human rights, women's rights, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and harm reduction as central components of an effective response; and endorses the principle that no credible, sustainable country plan should go unfunded. We will continue these discussions in the run-up to the high level meeting in June.

Iraq

Ann Clwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what action the UK Government are taking to assist in the provision of clean drinking water for the people of Halabja in Iraq. [67178]

Mr. Thomas: Since 2003, DFID and other donors have worked hard to restore water supplies in Iraq. We estimate that 4 million more Iraqis have access to safe drinking water than before the conflict. In most cases, the main barrier to access to safe drinking water is the condition of the pipelines, rather than the water supply itself. This is partly due to the tendency for insurgents to target water, electricity and oil pipelines, as well as the reconstruction staff working to repair them. However, the poor condition of many pipelines is primarily the result of decades of underinvestment under Saddam's regime, which has left Iraq with crumbling infrastructure in desperate need of maintenance, and a shortage of trained engineers who know how to carry out repairs.

DFID's bilateral support for improving water and sanitation has been provided in southern Iraq, where our regional office is located and where UK military efforts to provide security are also focused. As Halabja is in the north of Iraq, DFID has not been directly involved in supporting projects in the city. DFID's funding to the water sector in central and northern Iraq has been provided through the United Nations Trust Fund for Iraq, to which we contributed £30 million in 2004.

Significant donors in the water sector have been the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the United Nations Development Programme, and UNICEF. The US recently completed a water well project to restore water supply to Halabja. They have also recently completed a broad assessment of the water and sewage services in Sulaymaniyah province, where Halabja is situated, to help plan future assistance to this sector.

In the south of Iraq, DFID is providing the following assistance to improve water and sanitation systems:

We have built a water training centre in Basra, which I opened in March this year. The training centre will help train water engineers from all four southern provinces. The expertise they gain will strengthen the ability of the local water directorates to deal with the huge amount of maintenance that is now required.

We are building three water towers in one of the poorest areas of Basra. These will ensure a steady availability of water to over 250,000 people.

We are co-funding, with UNICEF, the refurbishment of a desalination plant that will provide the people of Basra with 500,000 litres of clean drinking water per day.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent reports he has received of the discussions between the International Monetary Fund and the Government of Iraq concerning oil policy; and if he will make a statement. [66772]

Mr. Thomas: While the UK is not party to discussions between the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Iraqi Government, we understand that officials from the IMF and the Iraqi Ministry of Finance have held numerous discussions on economic policy since 2004. They have continued to meet with representatives of the Iraqi government, both in the region and in Washington, following the approval of the Stand-by Arrangement on 23 December 2005.

So far, most of their discussions have focussed on the implementation of the Iraqi Government's economic programme supported by the Stand-by Arrangement. The programme includes commitments to reorganise and improve governance of the oil sector. More details of the programme, as well as reports from IMF staff and the Government of Iraq's memorandums on economic and financial policies, are available on the IMF's website (www.imf.org).

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what role UK officials had in the International Monetary Fund technical assistance to Iraq on petroleum sector policies, dated January 2005; and if he will make a statement. [66773]

Mr. Thomas: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) does not assist the Government of Iraq directly on petroleum sector policies. Indirectly they do provide technical assistance in related areas e.g. the Iraqi Ministry of Finance have asked for assistance on how to tax natural resources, including a proposed 10 per cent. levy on oil imports.

In July 2003, the IMF established the £3.7 million Technical Assistance Sub-Account for Iraq at the request of the Governments of Australia, Canada, Italy, Sweden, India and the United Kingdom. The purpose of this programme is to provide training and advice to the Government of Iraq to help restore macroeconomic stability, and thus long-term sustainable economic growth. To date the IMF has delivered training to key staff in the Ministry of Finance on issues of fiscal management, monetary, foreign exchange and financial

policy, as well as macro-economic and financial statistics. So far, DFID has made a contribution of £787,500 to the sub-account.

Poliomyelitis (Nigeria)

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many cases of poliomyelitis there were in Nigeria in each of the last five years; and what steps the Government are taking to reducing incidences of the disease in Nigeria. [66840]

Mr. Thomas: Confirmed cases of wild polio virus (WPV) in Nigeria by year are shown in Table 1 as follows:

Table 1: Annual cases of wild polio virus in Nigeria

	WPV cases
2001	56
2002	202
2003	355
2004	782
2005	801

Surveillance was poor up to 2001, and so the 2001 figure may not be very accurate. The figures for 2002 and subsequent years can be assumed to be accurate. Despite the rising number of cases, recent World Health Organisation (WHO) virological surveillance, which tracks the genetic sequencing of the virus, indicates a restriction of the circulation of WPV. (This means that the number of subtypes of the virus in circulation is steadily decreasing, indicating that the immunity of the general population is increasing.) The geographical spread has also been restricted, as evidenced in Table 2.

Table 2: Distribution of wild polio virus in Nigeria during first quarter of the year

State	*2004*	*2006*
Anambra	1	0
Bauchi	1	4
Bayelsa	1	0
Benue	1	0
Borno	1	0
Delta	1	0
Enugu	1	0
Fed Capital Territory	1	1
Imo	1	0
Jigawa	2	26
Kaduna	21	17
Kano	20	70
Katsina	8	11
Kebbi	4	3
Kwara	1	0
Lagos	1	0
Nassarawa	0	2
Niger	0	3
Osun	2	0
Oyo	6	0
Plateau	1	1
Sokoto	8	3
Taraba	1	0
Yobe	2	2
Zamfara	3	10
Total cases	89	153
Infected states	23	13

There are two main reasons why progress on interrupting transmission of the polio virus in Nigeria is so slow. First, over decades of military rule the routine immunisation services, which should be a central component of the primary health care system, were allowed to collapse. The polio eradication effort has therefore had to depend on supplementary immunisation activities alone, with door-to-door campaigns repeated five or six times every year. However, the second reason for slow progress is that these door-to-door campaigns are not well accepted by the general population in northern Nigeria and so large numbers of children are missed by every campaign as their parents refuse to allow them to be immunised.

The Government of Nigeria is firmly committed to eradicating polio and DFID is working intensely with the WHO, UNICEF and other international partners to help Nigeria address the current problems. DFID lobbied successfully for a greater emphasis to be placed on rebuilding routine immunisation services that address several childhood diseases, instead of the exclusive emphasis on polio campaigns. Routine services provided from fixed sites are much more acceptable to the general public than single- disease door-to-door campaigns. DFID Nigeria has designed a £20 million project to support the reviving of routine immunisation in several low-coverage northern states. This project is expected to go live later this year.

DFID also financed a consultative workshop in Kano in January this year which was very successful in getting key opinion leaders from across northern Nigeria to give their full support to polio eradication activities in the context of greater attention being paid to other childhood diseases at the same time.

Another recent development is the decision to convert polio-only national immunisation days into what are being termed "immunization plus days". DFID and other international partners, especially the European Commission, the US Government and UNICEF, had been pressing for this for some time. During "immunization plus days" BCG[1], DPT[2] and measles vaccines will be provided alongside the polio vaccine, and children will also be given vitamin A and anthelmintic[3] tablets.

These tactics are necessary in order to increase the acceptability of the polio vaccine among the general population, especially in northern states where the transmission of the wild virus has not been checked. Children cannot be immunised against their parents' will and so it is necessary to win over people's hearts and minds so that they accept the polio vaccine. DFID is financing various advocacy initiatives in this regard, and has also funded anthropological research by the Institute of Development Studies in Sussex into the reasons for non-acceptance of the oral polio vaccine in northern Nigeria. The results of this research are now informing Nigerian government strategy at national, state and local levels.

[1] Baccille Calmette-Guerin vaccine against childhood tuberculosis

[2] Diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough) and tetanus

[3] i.e. acting against parasitic worms

Water and Sanitation

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many UN agencies are working to provide water and sanitation to the developing world; and what steps are being taken to harmonise their activities. [66838]

Hilary Benn: The UN currently has 23 agencies working on some aspect of water and sanitation. The agencies have different functions and only a handful have significant programmes in the provision of water and sanitation services to developing countries. Both UN agencies and donors recognise the need to improve harmonisation and have agreed a proposal for a co-ordinating body, "UN Water". This will provide a mechanism for co-ordinating the work of the existing agencies. DFID is working with others to establish UN Water, and will be providing financial support to a Secretariat in the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA).

DFID is also proposing that, in discussion with national governments, the UN should decide which UN agency is best placed to lead on water and sanitation in any country. This lead agency, and not others, should be the channel for donor money allocated to the UN in this sector.

In light of the World Summit Outcome document, the UN Secretary General is considering proposals for improving UN coherence across its development operations including the environment.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent assessment he has made of the ability of the *(a)* EU Water Initiative and *(b)* EU water facility to deliver clean water and sanitation to those who need it; and if he will make a statement. [66947]

Mr. Thomas: The 25 EU member states and the European Commission are together, the largest donors in Africa and in 2003–04 spent over £1.4 billion on water and sanitation. The EU Water Initiative (EUWI) was created to increase the impact of this aid, by co-ordinating efforts to ensure that the sector receives appropriate political profile and increased levels of investment. This is why we have been keen to make the initiative work.

DFID has been actively involved since the outset with the EUWI but like others, has been disappointed with slow progress. We are currently working with Tearfund and WaterAid to strengthen commitment across the EU and in particular to improve monitoring and accountability.

The EU Water Facility (EUWF), in contrast to the EUWI, is a funding mechanism. It was established in 2004 in response to the clear need for more money in the water sector. Although progress has been slow, mainly due to lengthy procurement procedures, approximately €230 million is now committed to co-fund 97 projects, which are overall valued at €412 million. A second call for proposals has been launched this year and the full €500 million of the EUWF will be committed by 2007.

World Bank (Oil Revenue)

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment his Department has made of the ongoing dispute between the World Bank and the Government of Chad regarding frozen Chadian oil royalties; what discussions he has had with members of the US Administration regarding their offer of mediation in this dispute; and if he will make a statement. [66637]

Mr. Thomas: Chad is one of the poorest countries in Africa. UK development aid is provided indirectly through multilateral organisations. When oil reserves were discovered in the 1990s, the industry asked the World Bank to invest in the building of a 1,070 km pipeline to carry Chad's petroleum to the Atlantic coast for export. The World Bank saw this as a unique opportunity for Chad to climb out of extreme poverty. Before it became involved, the World Bank obtained assurances that the new revenues would be used to lift the population out of deprivation.

On 6 January 2006, the World Bank announced that it would withhold new loans and grants to the Government of Chad and suspend disbursement of International Development Association (IDA) funds allocated to the country. The value of funds suspended was approximately $124 million. This action followed passage of amendments to the country's Petroleum Revenue Management Law by the National Assembly. These changes substantially weakened programmes to improve the lives of poor people, which the World Bank had been supporting.

The World Bank offered to assist the Government to address their financial difficulties by analysing and helping to address them, including how public finances had been managed. It had also proposed a review of how the Petroleum Revenue Management Law had been implemented to identify which, if any, amendments to the law might be warranted. The World Bank has remained open to dialogue with the Government on the best ways to address their current financial crisis while protecting poverty reduction programmes. On 26 April, the World Bank and the Government announced that they had completed a third round of discussions and reached an interim agreement. Based on this, the World Bank has agreed to resume some loan disbursements for education, health, community development, HIV/AIDS, agriculture, electricity, water and infrastructure.

The Government of Chad have agreed to pass a 2006 budget law specifying that 70 per cent. of the oil revenues will be used for priority poverty programmes. This allocation excludes security spending, which is to be funded from general revenues. If the Bill does achieve this, as soon as the oil consortium submits payments owed, the World Bank will release one third of the total amount on deposit in the escrow account over each of the next three months, with the understanding that the World Bank and the Chad Government will work on a further, more permanent agreement during that period. The Chad authorities have also agreed to parallel actions to strengthen the monitoring, transparency and accountability of direct and indirect oil revenues and development aid.

We welcome the steps which the Government of Chad have taken to restore the confidence of the international donor community. While a final agreement is still to be reached, we welcome the Government's efforts to address the issues. We believe the steps agreed provide a way forward to ensure that the people of Chad see the benefits of the aid and oil revenue their country receives.

I have not discussed with the US Administration its offer of mediation in this dispute.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what assessment his Department has made of the oil revenue management measures promoted by the World Bank in Africa; and if he will make a statement; [66638]

(2) what assessment his Department has made of the oil fund established by the government of East Timor and the oil revenue management measures promoted by the World Bank in Africa; and if he will make a statement. [66639]

Mr. Thomas: On 12 January 2006 in Sydney, Australia and East Timor concluded the terms of a "Treaty on Certain Maritime Arrangements in the Timor Sea" (CMATS Treaty) which provides for an interim agreement to allow exploitation of the Greater Sunrise gas reservoirs to proceed while suspending maritime boundary claims for 50 years and maintaining the current treaty arrangements in place. Under this creative solution, Australia has agreed to share equally (50:50) the upstream revenues from the resource.

DFID has not made a direct assessment of the impact of the discovery of oil on poverty reduction in East Timor, apart from noting that once the Greater Sunrise project proceeds, it could result in transfers of revenue to East Timor of as much as US$4 billion over the life of the project. The revenue will be paid to East Timor's Petroleum Fund, the balance of which is already around $330 million derived from the 90 per cent. share of production East Timor receives from the Joint Petroleum Development Area (JPDA). The exact benefit to East Timor will depend on the economics of the project but we hope that it will assist in securing East Timor's development and economic stability.

From the outset the Government of East Timor has pursued a rigorous approach to transparency with revenues and contracts in the public domain. The Government have conducted thorough public consultations on several initiatives on transparency and management of oil and gas revenues. Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri stated Timor's official support for the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) at the Lancaster House conference in June 2003. He also set out a policy to ensure transparency. We encourage this approach which will help promote poverty reduction along with good governance and transparency.

Within Africa, DFID has assessed the oil revenue management measures promoted by the World Bank in Chad and supports the Bank's efforts to ensure that these revenues are used to improve the lives of poor people.

The World Bank has also promoted the adoption of the EITI in a number of resource rich African countries. We encourage this since effective implementation of the Initiative will help promote poverty reduction along with good governance and transparency.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Consultants

Keith Vaz: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs pursuant to the answer of 28 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 873W, on consultancy fees, what each of the consultants were used to accomplish; and how much was paid in fees to each organisation. [64078]

Ms Harman: My Department used consultants during 2004–05 to support its programme of modernisation and change, to increase efficiency, and to provide better customer service and value for money for the taxpayer. Information on what each of the consultants was used to accomplish is not held centrally, and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

A list of the consultancy companies and individuals, and the fees paid to each of them, is as follows.

Fees paid by DCA/Court Service for the provision of consultancy in 2004–05

	Fees (£)
Adult Learning Inspectorate	19,309
Alexander Cameron Ltd.	5,837
Anagram	119,035
Analogue	1,972
Ask Europe PLC	28,616
Assessment and Development Consultancy	60,750
Barry Sutlieff	413
BTA Consulting	196,859
BTF Associates	176,076
Capita Resourcing	39,140
Chesterton	45,134
CIMTECH	750
Cleo Nicolau	33,353
Communication Engagement and Change Ltd.	61,000
Computer Sciences Corporation	16,000
Cornwell Management Consultants	49,081
Craigforth	16,884
David Coates	22,000
Deloitte MCS Ltd.	1,683,229
Dennis Battle Associates	2,288
Design Systems Technology Ltd.	1,000
Digital Public	21,000
DTZ Debenhan Tie Leung	244,774
Elborough Consulting/TSO Consulting	5,689
Eleri Evans	617
Enodian Ltd.	172,377
Ernst and Young LLP	235,256
Gartner UK Ltd.	112,103
GIC Ltd.	11,600
Haygarth Group	28,000
Hedra	20,000
Horwood Safety Limited	1,881
Hudson Global Resources	42,600
Human Assets Ltd.	85,341
Hurd Rolland	153,361
Ilogic Ventures	22,688
Insight Consulting Ltd.	132,924
IPPR Consulting Ltd.	29,417
Issan Ghazni Partnership	624
JMH Consultancy	39,000

Fees paid by DCA/Court Service for the provision of consultancy in 2004–05

	Fees (£)
John Garnett	79,762
KPMG	1.061,907
Largos Ltd.	3,614
Lexicon Ltd.	24,687
Logica CMG UK Ltd.	31,012
Maitland Consultancy	25,000
Mandurai Ltd.	3,494
Methods Consulting	98,065
MORI	59,000
Mouchel Consulting Limited	469,965
NCC Services Ltd.	53,449
ORC International	290,785
PA	1,304,050
Parity Resources	36,270
Penna	15,548
PricewaterhouseCoopers/PWC	2,223,071
Professor Susskind	10,764
Punter Southall	24,674
Rene Caroyal	4,700
Reshan Sandhu	2,058
Rick Evans Ltd.	2,677
Synopsis Communication Consulting Limited	38,764
The Ingram Partnership	243,000
Towers Perrin	296,752
Tribal MPC	15,045
UCL Consultants	19,035
Venn Group Ltd.	6,663
VP Treen and Associates	43,200
Watson Associates	51,475
Wheelers	132,646

Legal Aid

Mrs. James: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what progress is being made in reducing claimant legal aid fraud; and if she will make a statement. [65079]

Ms Harman: The Legal Services Commission (LSC) has powers to investigate where doubts arise about whether a funded client is financially eligible for civil legal aid. The LSC takes action to deal with people who abuse the system, including referring them to the police where appropriate.

In order to improve the verification of means of applicants for civil legal aid, the LSC set up the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) in 1996. This unit considers cases of apparently wealthy individuals applying for civil legal aid. Following the successful introduction of the SIU for civil legal aid, its role was extended to cover Criminal Legal Aid from 1998.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Business Rates

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what the average business rates liability of a small firm in England was *(a)* before and *(b)* after claiming small business rate relief in 2005–06; [66261]

(2) how many and what proportion of eligible small firms claimed small business rate relief in England in 2005–06. [66262]

Mr. Woolas: This information is not held centrally, and can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

City Regions

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to introduce city regions in *(a)* England and *(b)* the West Midlands. [66275]

Mr. Woolas: Ministers visited the eight English 'Core Cities', in a series of city summits during autumn of last year. Following these summits, the 'Core Cities', in partnership with surrounding areas, have been developing business cases which set out their strategic vision, and their case for change to enable improved economic performance and social cohesion. Representatives from the West Midlands metropolitan authorities and their partners met with the Minister of Communities and Local Government (Mr. Miliband) on 23 March to discuss their business case.

These discussions will inform the forthcoming Local Government White Paper.

Council Tax

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many written representations he has received since January protesting about council tax; and if he will make a statement. [66444]

Mr. Woolas: Between 1 January and 25 April 2006 the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister received approximately 3,260 written representations about council tax. The Office has also received just over 3,000 copies of council tax bills without a separate written representation.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans the Government has to provide assistance specific to pensioners with their council tax bills in 2006–07. [66327]

Mr. Woolas: Council tax benefit is available to pensioners on a low income. When pension credit was introduced in October 2003, the Government invested almost £½ billion a year in increasing the amounts on which housing benefit and council tax benefit are based: this meant that around 2 million pensioner households became either entitled to council tax benefit for the first time or qualified for more help. The Government has also announced an extension of winter fuel payments for the remainder of this Parliament at a cost of around £700 million a year.

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many people in his Department have been *(a)* disciplined and *(b)* dismissed for (i) inappropriate use of the internet while at work and (ii) using work telephones to access premium rate numbers in each of the last five years. [68003]

Jim Fitzpatrick: None

Departmental Staff Handbook

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will place in the Library a copy of his Department's most recent staff handbook. [66328]

Jim Fitzpatrick: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 20 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 818W to the hon. Member for Meriden (Mrs. Spelman).

Euro

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when the local authorities Euro preparation group last met. [66306]

Mr. Woolas: A meeting between local authorities and central Government officials to discuss Euro preparations took place on 21 February 2006.

Gypsy and Traveller Sites

Andrew George: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister under what legislation he published the Planning Circular 01/06: Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites. [66075]

Yvette Cooper: The Government publish planning policy in various forms such as through circulars, planning policy statements and policy guidance notes. These documents build on the framework set out in legislation, and provide guidance on different aspects of land use planning and the delivery of sustainable development through the planning system.

Government planning guidance does not require the formal backing of legislation, but it is considered material considerations and must be taken into account when an authority is making a decision on a planning application.

The draft circular was subject to 13 weeks formal consultation in 2005. The circular was issued on 2 February 2006.

Home Working

David Simpson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many people in his Department have been enabled to work from home in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [68004]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) does not collect such data. Staff in ODPM may work at home subject to the agreement of their line manager and the business needs of ODPM. In making such arrangements full account is given to the rights of staff with children under the age of six under the Employment Act 2002 to request a flexible working pattern. ODPM supports such arrangements which assist staff maintain a satisfactory work/life balance, subject to there being a business justification for the arrangement.

Housing

Helen Southworth: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will take steps to increase the number of shared equity homes in *(a)* Warrington and *(b)* other housing hot spots in the North West. [67848]

Yvette Cooper: The Government are committed to tackling affordability. It has extended its range of housing options to include Homebuy, an equity sharing scheme, which will extend the opportunity for home ownership to 100,000 households by 2010. In support of this, HomeBuy agents will provide a 'one stop shop' and gateway to low cost home ownership opportunities in 37 Zones across the nine English regions. Already in the North West £9.7 million has been allocated to the Open Market Homebuy scheme, delivering 340 units.

Furthermore, the Government have increased investment of £970 million through the Housing Corporation's Affordable Housing programme to deliver 35,000 homes by registering social landlords over the next two years. In the North West £201 million has been allocated for the Affordable Housing programme for 2006–08 delivering 2,248 affordable homes for rent, 1,573 low cost home ownership options with an additional 205 improved homes for rent. In Warrington £1.7 million over the same period has been allocated, providing 40 units and affordable housing in one of the most deprived wards.

The scale of the task is not underestimated and that is why the Chancellor announced the establishment of a joint Office of the Deputy Prime Minister/Treasury Shared Equity Task Force in the Budget. The taskforce, led by myself and my hon. Friend financial secretary John Healey, will consider the case for Government intervention in the housing market to assist 'intermediate' households into home ownership using shared equity products. The taskforce will report at the end of the year, to inform comprehensive Spending Review decisions in summer 2007.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the Government's definition is of affordable housing. [66266]

Yvette Cooper: Current planning policies, in Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: "Housing" (PPG3) and Department for Environment, Transport and the Regions Circular 6/98 "Planning and Affordable Housing", require a local planning authority to define what it considers to be affordable in its areas in terms of the relationship between local income levels and house prices or rents for different types of households.

Draft Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3): "Housing" (PPS3), published for consultation in December 2005 and which will, once finalised, replace PPG3 and Circular 6/98, has a new draft definition of affordable housing:

> "Non-market housing provided to those whose needs are not met by the market, for example homeless people and key workers. It can include social rented housing and intermediate housing. Affordable housing should:
>
> Meet the needs of eligible households, including availability at low enough cost for them to afford, determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices.
>
> Include provision for the home to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or, if a home ceases to be affordable, any subsidy should generally be recycled for additional affordable housing provision."

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which councils have stock transferred *(a)* some and *(b)* all of their council housing; and when they did so. [66437]

Yvette Cooper: A table containing the information requested has been placed in the Library of the House.

Local Government Finance

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much additional revenue has been raised by local authorities using their discretionary power to abolish the council tax discount on second homes since 2004. [66285]

Mr. Woolas: The amount of additional revenue raised by local authorities using their discretionary powers to reduce the council tax discounts on second homes was:

£84 million in 2004/05; and

£92 million in 2005/06.

These figures are estimates based on information reported by local authorities on the CTB1 and CTB1(S) forms.

Local Government Strikes

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many man-hours have been lost as a result of recent industrial action in connection with the Local Government Pension Scheme. [66436]

Mr. Woolas: This information is not held centrally, and can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Ministerial Cars (Fuel Costs)

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the fuel costs were for ministerial cars used by his Department in each of the last five years. [67022]

Jim Fitzpatrick: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Minister of State for Transport (Dr. Ladyman) on 27 April 2006, *Official Report*, column 1226W.

Muscular Dystrophy

Anne Milton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what Government grants are available to people with muscular dystrophy to adapt their home environment to their needs. [46667]

Yvette Cooper: Social service authorities have a duty under the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 to arrange for a disabled person, practical assistance in the home, and any works of adaptation or the provision of additional facilities designed to secure greater safety, comfort or convenience. The social services have a duty to ensure that any assistance required by the disabled person is secured and they may charge for any services they provide.

One principal way in which such assistance is available is through the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) programme which is the responsibility of my Department and administered by local housing authorities. This is a mandatory entitlement for eligible disabled people in all housing tenures which provides financial assistance up to a maximum of £25,000 per application for adaptations to make the home safe and to secure access for the disabled person to all the main facilities in the home. This grant is also means-tested.

Community care equipment which a disabled person has been assessed to need by social services and which costs less than £1,000 is provided free-of-charge.

New Deal

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what arrangements there are for governance and scrutiny of the new deal for communities programmes. [66303]

Mr. Woolas: New deal for communities (NDC) partnerships are governed by boards comprising elected resident members and representatives of delivery partners such as the council, providers of local services (e.g. health, housing, community safety, education), and the commercial sector and are therefore directly accountable to the community.

The NDC partnerships operate within a legal framework involving their accountable body (usually the local authority) and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (largely through the Government office). Grant is paid to the accountable body pursuant to a funding agreement between the accountable body and ODPM.

The NDC partnerships work with their accountable body to develop delivery plans which are approved by Government offices on behalf of Ministers. The accountable body is responsible for ensuring that they and the NDC comply with the terms and conditions of NDC grant including financial reporting requirements. The Government office monitors the performance of the accountable body (AB) and ensures that it properly monitors the partnership.

Guidance on governance issues are set out in the NDC programme notes on the website at www.neighbourhood.gov.uk (particularly programme notes 20 on codes of conduct and 27 on board effectiveness).

Pathfinder Programme

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what average amount has been spent on household improvements in each pathfinder scheme area; and how many houses have been subject to improvements in each area. [64433]

Yvette Cooper: Provisional figures from pathfinders to end March 2006 are in the following table.

Pathfinder	*HMRF spent on household improvements (£ million)*	*Number of properties improved*	*HMR spend by property (£000)*
Birmingham Sandwell	11.3	6,125	1.8
East Lancashire	16.3	1,504	10.8
Hull and East Riding	0	0	n/a
Manchester Salford	27.3	7,760	3.5
Merseyside	5.7	7,157	0.8
Newcastle Gateshead	11.8	561	21.1
North Staffordshire	2.2	2,584	0.9
Oldham and Rochdale	8.5	1,970	4.3
South Yorkshire	20.0	1,900	10.5

This is in addition to the decent homes programme which is also refurbishing social housing in many areas.

Planning

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Meriden

of 16 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 2248W, on planning, when he will place a copy of the publication referred to in the Library. [66319]

Yvette Cooper: My officials have confirmed with the Library that a copy of the 1992 version of Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 : "Housing" referred to in my earlier answer has now been registered and is available for viewing in the Library of the House.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans his Department has to revise Planning Policy Guidance Note 13. [66438]

Yvette Cooper: It is not proposed to replace PPG13 at present.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether Planning Policy Statement 3 imposes any obligation on local authorities to sell their own land to meet housing demand; and if he will make a statement. [66339]

Yvette Cooper: Draft Planning Policy Statement 3: "Housing" (PPS3), published for consultation in December last year, does not impose any obligation on local authorities to sell their own land to meet housing demand.

Mr. Soames: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will publish a new planning policy statement on water. [64447]

Yvette Cooper: Water issues are already covered extensively in existing planning guidance. Over 300 separate references to water ensure that planning authorities take account of the availability of water in their planning decisions, making more efficient use and re-use of water to minimise the need for new resources and avoid placing additional demands on the environment. We have no plans to publish a separate planning policy statement on water.

CABINET OFFICE

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster when he will answer the letter to him dated 14 March from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Mr. N. McHugh. [67485]

Mr. Jim Murphy: I apologise for the delay in replying to the right hon. Member. A reply was sent on 3 May.

Legislative Programme Committee

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will make a statement on the work of the Legislative Programme Committee. [67164]

Mr. Jim Murphy: Information relating to internal meetings, discussion and advice and the proceedings of Cabinet and Cabinet committees is generally not disclosed as to do so could harm the frankness and candour of internal discussion.

Details of the membership and terms of reference of the Committee are available in the Library and on the Cabinet Office website.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

International Arms Trade Treaty

Mr. Crausby: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps he has taken to promote the Arms Trade treaty amongst the UK defence industry. [68075]

Dr. Howells: In May 2005 defence industry representatives attended an inaugural meeting organised by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in London to discuss the concept of an International Arms Trade treaty. Since then we have engaged with industry groups as part of our regular briefings on export control issues, and in meetings to specifically discuss work towards a treaty. We will continue to do so as this initiative progresses. The industry remains supportive, judging that a treaty will create a more level playing field for export control standards.

Iraq (Oil Policy)

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether Government officials consulted the private sector during discussions on Iraqi oil policy *(a)* between March and December 2003 and *(b)* after December 2003; and if he will make a statement. [66823]

Dr. Howells: Yes. There have been frequent contacts between Government officials and private sector staff in the period since March 2003. The Government of Iraq has been fully responsible for policy on the development of its oil sector since it assumed sovereignty in June 2004. All decisions on the future of the Iraqi oil sector will be taken by the elected Government of Iraq.

The UK is keen to play a role supporting the Iraqi Government as it moves forward with oil sector development. To do this we need to consult a wide range of views in order to understand the workings of the sector and the challenges it faces. To this end, we maintain contact with a range of stakeholders in order to form a UK Government view. These include non-governmental organisations, parliamentary groups, technical and constitutional experts as well as private sector groups.

Israel

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 3 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 10027W, on Israel, what further representation he has made to the Israeli government with regard to their failure to respond to his original representations of November 2005 in respect of the anti-semitic harassment of the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton by an Israeli official at Tel-Aviv airport. [67493]

Dr. Howells: The Israeli authorities have now completed their investigation. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary expects to receive a reply addressing my right hon. Friend's concerns within two weeks. On receipt of the reply, my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary will write to my right hon. Friend.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what interventions he has made with the Israeli government regarding the case of James Miller. [67867]

Dr. Howells: Between May 2003 and March 2006 my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary raised the case of James Miller with the Israeli authorities on 13 occasions. Most recently, he wrote to the Israeli Foreign Minister on 1 March 2006 expressing the Government's disappointment that no one has been held accountable for James Miller's killing and supporting the family's request for compensation. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has also made an additional 27 interventions on this case with the Israelis, at ministerial and official level.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he plans to participate in further discussions with the Israeli government regarding the deaths of James Miller and Tom Hurdnall and the coroner's verdict on both cases. [67868]

Dr. Howells: The St. Pancras Coroner has formally written to my noble and learned Friend the Attorney-General and my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary about these two cases. The Attorney-General will be meeting both the Miller family and the Hurndall family later this week. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary will also meet both families this month. We will decide on the next steps once the Attorney-General has assessed the Coroner's findings and Ministers have discussed the cases with the families.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he next plans to meet the families of James Miller and Tom Hurdnall. [67869]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary will be meeting the family of Tom Hurndall on 8 May and the family of James Miller on 11 May.

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the Government *(a)* funds and *(b)* supports co-existence projects in (i) Israel and (ii) the West Bank; and if he will make a statement. [65725]

Mr. Straw: My department supports co-existence projects in Israel and the West Bank. In the 2005–06 financial year funding from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Global Conflict Prevention Pool allocated approximately £174,000 to promote peaceful co-existence between the Palestinians and the Israelis. This supported projects such as the Executive Action Team water project, which works with Israeli, Palestinian and Jordanian officials to manage shared water resources to limit pollution.

Kyoto Protocol

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the application to overseas territories of the Kyoto protocol and the clean development mechanism, with particular reference to the possible benefits accruable from projects that reduce carbon emissions; to what extent carbon reductions associated with a project in an overseas territory would be eligible for carbon credits; and who would receive such credits. [66716]

Dr. Howells: The United Kingdom ratified the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 1993. The United Kingdom ratified the Kyoto protocol in 2002. It is open to the Government to extend the ratification of the convention and the protocol to include overseas territories. In practice the Government would do so only at the request and with the consent of the territory concerned.

The Kyoto protocol's flexible mechanisms, international emissions trading, clean development mechanism (CDM) and joint implementation (JI), would be available to an overseas territory (OT) that had the UK's instrument of ratification extended to it and would therefore become part of an Annex I Party. As part of an Annex I Party it cannot host CDM projects and therefore be eligible for carbon credits since these are only available to non Annex I Parties, generally developing countries. However, it may invest in non Annex I countries and purchase credits that it could sell on the international carbon market.

There is also the possibility that an OT could take part in JI projects between two Annex I Parties, but the detailed arrangements to provide for this would peed to be agreed between the Government and relevant OT.

Palestine

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the status is of the EU Police Mission in the Palestinian territories following the January 2006 Palestinian legislative elections. [65727]

Mr. Straw: The EU is currently reviewing the status of the EU Police Mission in the occupied territories and I will write to the right hon. Member once the results of the review are known, and place a copy in the Library of the House.

Spain

Mark Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions *(a)* he and *(b)* diplomatic and consular staff in Spain have had with Spanish authorities on child custody cases in Spain where British parents experience restrictions on legitimate access. [67901]

Dr. Howells: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) provides appropriate consular assistance, when requested, to British nationals involved in disputes over child residence and contact, in conjunction with the Department for Constitutional Affairs (DCA) as the central authority handling cases brought under the 1980 Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction. A delegation of FCO and DCA officials visited the Spanish Ministry of Justice on 26 March 2005 as part of ongoing discussions on how to resolve residence and contact disputes. These issues were raised by my noble and learned Friend the Lord Chancellor at a recent meeting with the Spanish Justice

Minister. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and FCO Ministers have had no recent discussions with the Spanish authorities on such issues.

Mark Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many British parents have contacted his Department since 2003 regarding assistance with cases relating to access to children involved in custody disputes in the Spanish courts. [67902]

Dr. Howells: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Child Abduction Section, which was established in 2003, has records of 52 cases concerning child residence or contact disputes in Spain.

UK-South East Europe Forum

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much funding the UK-South East Europe Forum has received *(a)* from (i) central and (ii) regional government and *(b)* via the British Council in each year since its creation. [66310]

Mr. Straw: The British Council provided £355,000 to the Forum in 2004–05 and £360,000 to the Forum in 2005–06. All of this funding came from the British Council's grant in aid, which it receives from central government. No further funding was received from either central or regional government.

Visas

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) on what basis the UK embassy in Amman, Jordan, granted Iraqi citizen Mr Nabeel Sami Fathallah (HO Ref 10776940) a UK visa within 24-hours of his application; and if he will make a statement; [67351]

(2) what background checks were carried out following the receipt of a visa application from Iraqi citizen Mr Nabeel Sami Fathallah (HO Ref 10776940) at the UK Amman embassy; whether inquiries were made about *(a)* his links with the former regime in Iraq, *(b)* his financial position, *(c)* the reasons he was denied a visa by other countries and *(d)* the refusal of protection by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; and if he will make a statement. [67395]

Dr. Howells: In accordance with Exemption 5 of Part 2 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government information, I regret that I cannot provide details of any individual entry clearance case in a public forum.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the scale of charges for visas to enter to the UK is at *(a)* Amman, Jordan and *(b)* other UK embassies in the Middle East. [67352]

Dr. Howells: UKvisas is mandated by HM Treasury guidelines to recover its costs without burdening the UK taxpayer. Therefore, the applicant must meet the full cost of processing an entry clearance application. The visa application fee for each category of entry clearance is the same, wherever in the world an individual applies. The application fee is payable in local currency at the consular rate of exchange, which is within 10 per cent. of the commercial rate. The visa application fees in the Middle East, in local currencies and Pound Sterling, are as follows.

		A	*B*	*C*	*D*	*E*
Pounds Sterling	GBP	30	50	85	260	Free
Bahrain	BHD	23	38	64	195	Free
Iran	IRR	500,000	830,000	1,410,000	4,290,000	Free
Israel	ILS	255	425	723	2,2 10	Free
Jordan	JOD	39	65	111	338	Free
Kuwait	KWD	16,250	27	46	140,500	Free
Lebanon	LBP	84,000	140,000	238,000	728,000	Free
Oman	OMR	21	35	60	182	Free
Qatar	QAR	210	350	595	1,820	Free
Saudi Arabia	SAR	210	350	600	1,820	Free
Syria	SYP	3,000	5,000	8,500	26,000	Free
United Arab Emirates	AED	205	340	575	1,755	Free
Yemen	YER	10,800	18,000	30,600	93,600	Free

Key:

A—Handling applications on behalf of Commonwealth countries.
Handling applications on behalf of UK Overseas Territories.
Direct Airside Transit.
Visitor in transit.
Join ship or aircraft.
B—Visit, single, double and multiple, valid up to six months.
C—Visit, multiple, valid for one, two, five or ten years.
D—Settlement, marriage (fiancé(e)), civil partner.
E—EEA/Swiss family permit.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs in what circumstances a UK visa section may issue a visa within 24 hours of application in *(a)* Amman, Jordan and *(b)* other UK embassies. [67354]

Dr. Howells: UKvisas' target, under its public service agreement, is for 90 per cent. of straightforward non-settlement visa applications to be processed and available for return to the applicant within 24 hours from the date of receipt by a visa section of the

application and all supporting documents including the fee. This target is currently being met, both in Amman and worldwide.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many visas to the UK have been issued in Amman, Jordan, to non-Jordanian residents in each of the last five years; and from which countries those issued with visas were from. [67358]

Dr. Howells: The figures on the numbers of visas to the UK issued in Amman to non-Jordanian residents by nationality in each of the last five years is as follows:

	Financial Year				
Nationality	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Afghanistan	0	0	1	2	1
Algeria	1	3	0	5	19
Armenia	0	0	0	1	0
Australia	0	0	0	2	2
Bahamas	0	0	0	0	1
Bahrain	3	1	7	3	2
Bangladesh	4	8	1	1	2
Belarus	1	0	0	0	1
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0	1	3	2	0
Bulgaria	0	0	1	0	2
Burkina	0	0	0	0	1
Burma (Myanmar)	0	0	5	0	1
Canada	2	1	1	2	5
Chad	0	1	0	0	0
China	12	6	4	11	9
Colombia	1	0	0	0	0
Croatia	0	1	0	4	1
Djibouti	3	0	6	3	1
Dominican Republic	0	0	1	0	0
Egypt	24	23	22	34	26
Eritrea	1	1	6	3	1
Ethiopia	4	5	1	1	5
Ghana	1	1	4	2	0
Grenada	0	0	4	1	0
Guyana	0	0	0	1	0
Haiti	0	0	0	1	0
India	23	23	19	33	31
Indonesia	2	5	9	14	16
Iran	12	4	3	9	6
Iraq	1,485	1,467	1,381	2,595	4,815
Jamaica	1	0	0	0	2
Japan	0	0	1	0	2
Kazakhstan	0	0	1	0	0
Kenya	1	1	0	0	1
Kuwait	4	9	8	12	19
Lebanon	42	25	39	49	37
Libya	5	7	1	2	5
Macedonia	0	0	0	1	2
Malaysia	0	2	0	0	0
Mexico	0	0	0	0	1
Morocco	8	5	8	9	8
Mozambique	0	0	5	5	0
Nepal	0	1	2	3	1
New Zealand	1	0	0	0	0
Nigeria	8	8	7	2	5
Oman	5	4	5	11	5
Pakistan	15	9	17	22	33
Peru	0	0	1	0	0
Philippines	111	134	106	129	120
Qatar	1	1	1	1	1
Romania	0	2	0	0	2
Russia	3	3	2	4	9
Saudi Arabia	56	46	39	63	57
Sierra Leone	1	0	7	1	2
Somalia	0	2	1	2	0
South Africa	1	0	1	0	2
Sri Lanka	21	30	26	33	25
Stateless (Art 1 1951 Convention)	2	8	0	0	0
Sudan	30	17	27	15	11
Syria	24	28	32	35	40
Taiwan	0	3	0	1	7
Tanzania	0	0	2	0	0
Thailand	1	5	3	2	6
Tunisia	0	3	0	1	0
Turkey	7	9	5	16	4
Uganda	0	0	0	1	0
Ukraine	4	1	1	3	3
United Arab Emirates	4	3	5	2	4
United Nations	0	0	1	0	0
United States	0	5	2	6	2
Unspecified nationality	11	19	5	1	2
Vatican	0	0	0	0	1
Yemen	7	3	8	15	7
Yugoslavia	2	0	2	2	7
Zimbabwe	0	0	1	1	0
Total	1,955	1,944	1,851	3,180	5,381

Note:
Amman is the designated post for Iraqi nationals.

DEFENCE

Afghanistan

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence under what circumstances political clearance is required by UK forces in Afghanistan before engaging in military action. [67537]

John Reid: The Chief of Defence Staffs Directive, along with secondary directives and the Rules of Engagement, provide the political guidance and clearance under which UK forces operate in Afghanistan.

Clearance for a particular course of military action is delegated down to the lowest appropriate level.

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what evidence he has of co-operation between Afghans engaged in the opium trade and insurgents. [67538]

John Reid: There are reports that Taliban have been encouraging Afghan farmers to grow opium poppy and offering protection to farmers against eradication of their poppy crop. I am not however aware of conclusive evidence of a direct link between drug traffickers and the Taliban leadership in Afghanistan, although both benefit from instability.

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether UK armed forces in Afghanistan have authority to seek to prevent insurgents and terrorists crossing the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. [67540]

John Reid: Responsibility for the security of national borders rests with the Pakistan and Afghanistan security forces respectively. I am withholding details of authorised support by UK forces for border operations as it would risk operational security and could endanger the lives of our forces.

Children's Services

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many nursery and creche places are provided for people working in his Department; what charges are made for the provision of such services; and what other facilities are provided for the children of employees of his Department. [67370]

Mr. Touhig: The Ministry of Defence provides the following childcare support for its civilian and military employees:

46 work place nurseries offering circa 1,750 full day care places for children aged three months to five years.

36 creches (benefiting 700 children) providing occasional care and 70 pre-schools (benefiting over 2,000 children) providing education on a sessional basis, primarily for Service families.

14 wrap-around care schemes for five to 12 year olds (benefiting 350 children) providing after school care to match the working day.

15 holiday play schemes providing full day care for five to 12 year olds during school holidays (three are shared with other government departments) benefiting 550 children.

Four salary plus childcare voucher schemes for civilian employees at the Army Pay Centre Glasgow, Defence Science Technology Laboratory (DSTL) staff, Warship Support Agency Rosyth and Defence Bills Agency Liverpool. The schemes benefit circa 240 parents.

Within MOD responsibility for childcare is delegated to the main budget areas. Initial funding can be from a variety of sources:

the central budget allocation;

MOD's grant from the Civil Service Modernisation fund;

local authorities;

benevolent funds or raised by the parents themselves.

The business case then determines how much direct or indirect subsidy the MOD gives.

MOD nurseries are usually run by contractors, as commercial enterprises. Charges vary and competitive rates occur where indirect subsidies in the form of a peppercorn rent are provided. In addition about 10 per cent. of the nurseries offer direct subsidies, which can reduce the fees by around a third. Some play schemes also receive direct subsidies.

MOD's four voucher schemes provide employees with varying amounts of support, ranging from a flat rate £50 for after school care and £75 for pre-school care per month in Liverpool to around a third of actual costs on a sliding scale for the registered care of their choice in Glasgow, Rosyth and for DSTL staff. These schemes offer the advantage of supporting parents to make their own choices about where and what type of childcare support they want for their child. In total the four voucher schemes cost the Department circa £30,000 a month.

No further information regarding the charges to parents and MOD's contribution towards the costs of childcare schemes is held centrally and it could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Iraq

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether his Department pays a contract premium to civilian people who face daily risks when trying to deliver the reconstruction effort in troubled parts of Iraq; and if he will make a statement. [66767]

John Reid: All defence contracts in Multi-National Division (South East) are subject to a rigorous application procedure to ensure that we obtain the best value for money. The decision on whether or not to pay contract workers a risk premium is entirely a matter for the individual companies concerned.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence under what conditions civilian personnel serving in Iraq are eligible for the Operation Telic medal. [67775]

Mr. Touhig: The Iraq medal is a Ministry of Defence medal. Civilian personnel serving in Iraq are eligible to receive the medal, provided they are sent to Iraq by the Ministry of Defence; work in direct support of the military, and meet the stipulated eligibility criteria.

Rules of Engagement

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will publish the Rules of Engagement or equivalent instructions for troops engaged in *(a)* counter-insurgency, *(b)* counter-terrorism and *(c)* peacekeeping operations indicating the (i) similarities and (ii) differences between them. [67536]

John Reid: Rules of Engagement (ROE) govern the use of force by UK forces. ROE are provided for all operations and tailored to the specific task and operational environment to ensure a proportionate response to events. It is a long-standing policy that we do not release the details of ROE. To do so could hand an advantage to opponents and prejudice the safety and capabilities of UK forces.

Troop Deployment (Iraq/Afghanistan)

Mr. Crausby: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many UK troops in *(a)* Iraq and *(b)* Afghanistan have been (i) injured in action, (ii) not in action and (iii) removed from active duty as a result of illness or disease. [66281]

John Reid: The best centrally available records for TELIC casualty statistics are published on the Ministry of Defence website:

http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/FactSheets/OperationsInIraqBritishCasualties.htm.

Work is underway to collate casualty statistics for Afghanistan. As my right hon. Friend, the Minister of State for the Armed Forces, made clear in his answer of the 27 February 2006, we have undertaken to provide casualty statistics for Afghanistan from 1 January 2006 to the same conventions as Iraq. I will write to my right hon. Friend when it is complete, and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Antisocial Behaviour

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people in Northern Ireland were found to be in breach of antisocial behaviour orders during 2005. [68103]

Mr. Hanson: The relevant authorities have notified the Northern Ireland Office of two persons being found in breach of their antisocial behaviour orders during 2005.

Community Differentials

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether any taskforces have been

established to tackle disadvantage in *(a)* Protestant and *(b)* Catholic working class areas in the last five years. [66384]

Mr. Hanson: The information is as follows.

The Taskforce to Address the Needs of Protestant Working Class Communities was established in March 2004 and included senior civil servants from all Government Departments. The report of the taskforce was published on 4 April 2006.

The North Belfast Community Action Project was established in December 2001 to report on the social, economic and community problems in Protestant and Catholic communities in North Belfast. A report of the project's findings was published in May 2002.

The West Belfast and Greater Shankill Task Forces were established in May 2001 to identify practical actions which could be taken quickly to improve employment prospects and reduce poverty in the respective task force areas.

Departmental Contracts

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland which contracts let by his Department in each of the last three years ran beyond their original completion date; what the estimated additional cost was of the delay in each case; what company each overdue contract was with; what financial penalties were included in each contract; which financial penalties were enforced; and what the total cost was of financial penalties enforced, *(a)* in total and *(b)* broken down by (i) contract and (ii) company. [66461]

Mr. Hain: The information requested is provided in the following table:

	Contract title	*Company*	*Financial penalties included in contract*	*Financial penalties enforced*	*Estimated additional cost (£)*
2003–04	Provision of Consultancy Services on pensions provision for police lateral entry scheme	Deloitte Total Reward and Benefits Ltd.	None	None	1,692
2004–05	Independent element of the operational review of the section 75 equality duty	Eithne McLaughlin and Neil Faris	None	None	14,000
2005–06	—	—	—	—	—
Total					15,692

Departmental Websites

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list *(a)* the websites operated by his Department and *(b)* the reports placed on the internet in March 2006, indicating in each case whether paper copies were also made available. [65203]

Mr. Hain: The Department operates three websites, the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) website, the Organised Crime Task Force (OCTF) website, and the Criminal Justice Services NI (CJSNI) website.

The Ninth Report of the Independent Monitoring Commission was published on the 8 March 2006 and placed on the NIO website, along with the "Police and Criminal Evidence (Northern Ireland) Order 1989—Draft Codes of Practice 2006 Edition". Paper copies of both of these documents are also available.

The "Public attitudes to crime and recovered assets in Northern Ireland", was published on the OCTF website on 7 March 2006. While paper copies of this report were not routinely issued a hard copy would be provided on request.

Domestic Rates

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what period of time will be allowed for domestic ratepayers who wish to appeal against the new rating valuation of their homes in Northern Ireland; [66988]

(2) what appeal mechanism is being put in place for domestic ratepayers wishing to challenge the new rating valuation of their homes. [66989]

Angela E. Smith: The Valuation and Lands Agency (VLA) are currently putting procedures in place in an attempt to be as helpful as possible to all ratepayers and will form part of a full-scale exercise in openness, transparency and accessibility.

The capital values will be published on a phased basis during July and August this year and each individual ratepayer will receive a detailed notification of his or her valuation assessment. This will provide householders with an unprecedented period of around eight months advance notice of their values, before billing commences in April 2007.

At the same time, all of the capital values will be published on the VLA website, together with supporting information such as size and type of property. This will enable householders to compare their value with others in their area. A free-phone service will also be available to deal with initial inquiries.

During this eight-month period, a ratepayer may initiate an 'Informal Review' with the district valuer. This is a new process being set up by VLA, providing ratepayers with an opportunity to have their assessment reviewed, and changed as necessary, before rate bills are issued in April 2007.

The statutory appeals process will come into effect in April 2007 and this will comprise:

Review by the district valuer (those ratepayers who have availed of the "Informal Review" in the previous year will be given the option of fast tracking to the next stage).

Further review by the Commissioner of Valuation for Northern Ireland.

Appeal to the Northern Ireland Valuation Tribunal (NIVT), which is a new tribunal to be set up.

Further limited appeal to the Lands Tribunal for Northern Ireland.

Recourse to the Court of Appeal on point of law only.

Domestic Violence

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people were successfully prosecuted in domestic violence cases in crimes investigated by the Police Service of Northern Ireland in each of the last five years, *(a)* in total and *(b)* by District Command Unit; and how many victims of such incidents were (i) women in a heterosexual relationship, (ii) men in a heterosexual relationship, (iii) women in a same sex relationship, (iv) men in a same sex relationship and (v) children. [66460]

Mr. Hanson: Current sources of prosecutions and convictions data do not include the necessary background information to facilitate the identification of offences relating specifically to domestic violence. The PSNI have continued to improve the methods by which domestic incidents and crimes are recorded; clearance rates by PSNI District Command Unit for recorded crimes with a domestic motivation were published for the first time in June 2005 in the PSNI Statistical Report 2004–05. The report is available on the PSNI website address www.psni.police.uk In 2004–05 there was a total of 8,508 recorded crimes with a domestic motivation; the clearance rate was 72.9 per cent.

Civil measures can also be taken in relation to domestic violence cases, that is, an individual can obtain a non-molestation or occupancy order. These are protective orders and not offences in their own right; however breach of such an order is an offence though it is again not possible in such instances to identify solely those which relate to domestic violence. In 2003, the most up-to-date information currently available, there were 239 persons convicted for breach of a non-molestation order and 39 convicted for breach of an occupation order.

Free School Meals

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many and what percentage of children in each *(a)* grammar school and *(b)* other secondary school in Northern Ireland receive free school meals. [67815]

Angela E. Smith: The requested information has been placed in the Library.

Government Car Fleet

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress is being made on increasing the use of environmentally friendly vehicles used by Government Ministers and senior civil servants in Northern Ireland. [66993]

Angela E. Smith: In line with the greening Government and Sustainable Development initiatives, the Department of Finance and Personnel's Central Transport Unit (CTU), is replacing all its ministerial and senior civil servant vehicles with fuel efficient modern diesel models or hybrid vehicles as and when they are due for replacement.

The Department currently has two hybrid vehicles (petrol/electric) which it uses for short haul journeys.

Greater Shankill/West Belfast Task Forces

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the implementation of the recommendations of the *(a)* Greater Shankill and *(b)* West Belfast Task Forces. [66406]

Angela E. Smith: The West Belfast and Greater Shankill (WBGS) Task Forces produced a joint report in February 2002 detailing over 150 recommendations covering a wide range of issues. Early progress was made in a number of areas including work by Invest NI to regenerate the Forth River (former Mackies) complex. The Department for Employment and Learning also piloted the Targeted Initiatives programme in the task force areas, working closely with a local stakeholders' forum, the Employment Services Board.

In 2004, through the Integrated Development Fund (IDF), £21.7 million was allocated, subject to positive economic appraisal, to support 17 projects aimed specifically at addressing the social and economic problems in the task force areas. The economic and social environment has changed since the Task Force Report was published and, apart from the IDF initiative, there have also been a number of other policy initiatives, not least the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, which will have had a positive impact on the task force areas.

Through its Belfast Regeneration office the Department for Social Development continues to work with all sectors associated with the task force areas to tackle disadvantage in a strategic and integrated way primarily through Neighbourhood Renewal and, more recently the Renewing Communities initiative with the aim of achieving tangible outcomes in terms of community, economic social and physical renewal. The Department also continues to deliver a variety of other programmes which, while not specific to the task force area do nevertheless, impact on the Greater West Belfast and Shankill areas.

Housing

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the change in the number of households in Northern Ireland was for the period between March 2005 and February 2006. [67542]

Angela E. Smith: There are no official statistics available to answer this question directly. However, based on the 1991 and 2001 censuses and official population projections produced by the Government Actuary's Department, it is projected that there were 660,900 households in June 2005 and 668,800 households in June 2006—a projected increase over one year of 7,900 households.

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people of *(a)* Catholic and *(b)* Protestant community background have been (i) waiting for and (ii) awarded public housing in (A) Northern Ireland, (B) Belfast, (C) Derry, (D) North Belfast, (E) South Belfast, (F) West Belfast and (G) East Belfast in each of the last five years. [66979]

Mr. Hanson: Housing is allocated on the basis of need and not religious affiliation. It is dependent on existing stock becoming available for re-letting and the provision of new build social housing which can vary from area to area due to high demand and low turn over as well as the availability of land. The information is not available in the format or time span requested. However the tables set out the information that is available. This does not include transfers between Northern Ireland Housing Executive properties, nor does it include allocations made by Housing Associations. In respect of the waiting list figures no information is available before the 2001–02 financial year and figures for the 2005–06 year are not yet compiled. In respect of houses that have been awarded, information is only available from the 2003–04 financial year. The figures for the 2005–06 year are not yet compiled. In addition figures for the Belfast area reflect the Housing Executive Districts that approximately cover the four geographic areas of the city.

The information provided should also be considered in the context:

The religious composition of households is based on 'self reported' answers to the question held within the General Housing Application Form. The religion of the applicant is assumed to be the same for all individuals within the household.

The Equality Unit is currently unable to readily identify 'mixed' religion households although we are aware that a number of households currently described as 'Roman Catholic' or 'Protestant' would clearly fall into a 'mixed' category.

The breakdown of the waiting list is a snapshot of applicants for Housing Executive properties on the waiting list on the last day of the month shown.

The Housing Executive does not hold complete records prior to June 2002.

Waiting for accommodation

	At March			
	2002	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Northern Ireland				
Catholic	9,401	10,512	10,983	12,182
Protestant	11,407	12,237	12,512	13,222

	At March			
	2002	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Belfast east				
Catholic	99	109	95	101
Protestant	1,267	1,237	1,250	1,242

	At March			
	2002	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Belfast north				
Catholic	1,062	1,149	1,157	1,332
Protestant	386	420	451	473

	April to March			
	2001–02	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Belfast south				
Catholic	528	497	512	555
Protestant	889	858	836	868

	At March			
	2002	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Belfast west				
Catholic	1,414	1,432	1,570	1,735
Protestant	529	612	632	661

	At March			
	2002	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Londonderry				
Catholic	1,019	1,270	1,250	1,407
Protestant	177	214	188	249

Awarded accommodation

	At March	
	2004	*2005*
Northern Ireland		
Catholic	580	455
Protestant	978	828

Belfast

	At March	
	2004	*2005*
Belfast east		
Catholic	8	1
Protestant	62	90

	At March	
	2004	*2005*
Belfast north		
Catholic	44	30
Protestant	64	54

	At March	
	2004	*2005*
Belfast south		
Catholic	15	0
Protestant	50	44

	At March	
	2004	*2005*
Belfast west		
Catholic	19	37
Protestant	79	55

	At March	
	2004	*2005*
Londonderry		
Catholic	75	58
Protestant	45	24

Investment Strategy

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps will be taken in the context of the investment strategy to tackle *(a)* community and *(b)* geographic differentials in (i) economic inactivity, (ii) unemployment and (iii) housing allocation. [67212]

Angela E. Smith: Targeting social need, along with equality and promoting good relations, are central to the work of government. This is fully reflected in the process for determining our overall expenditure priorities and allocations through Priorities and Budget, which is consistent with the first three years of the Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland (ISNI) published in December 2005.

In formulating investment priorities during the development of the Strategy, departments gave due consideration to these principles to ensure that opportunities were taken to tackle disadvantage, and to promote equality including in the labour market and in health, education and housing.

As the ISNI is delivered, the opportunities to tackle disadvantage and promote equality will be kept under review as programmes and projects are rolled out. The Investment Strategy itself will be reviewed in parallel with the Comprehensive Spending Review, and in line with the development of the government's approach to tackling poverty and social need.

Literacy Levels

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will collect and collate statistics on literacy levels in Northern Ireland at *(a)* ward and *(b)* sub-ward level. [68034]

Angela E. Smith: There are no plans to collect and collate statistics on literacy levels in Northern Ireland at *(a)* ward and *(b)* sub-ward level. Measurement of literacy scores involves the administration of specific tests, and estimates of literacy levels in the population have depended on sample surveys (for example, the International Adult Literacy Survey which was carried out in Northern Ireland in 1996). Sample sizes for this type of survey are not large enough to enable the reporting of results at ward level or lower. Proxy information such as the proportion of the population with no qualifications is available at this level of detail for Northern Ireland (e.g. 2001 Census).

Local Government Finance

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what have been the total annual *(a)* commercial and *(b)* domestic rates collected in each of the last five years in (i) Lisburn city council, (ii) Antrim borough council, (iii) Newtownabbey borough council and (iv) Carrickfergus borough council. [67618]

Angela E. Smith: The following table shows the rates collected for domestic and non-domestic (commercial) rates for the period 2001–02 to 2004–05. Figures for 2005–06 are not yet available.

Figures used have been extracted from the un-audited summary of rate collection (annex A) contained in the agency's annual report and financial statements.

District/rates collected	*2001–02 (£ million)*	*2002–03 (£)*	*2003–04 (£)*	*2004–05 (£)*	*2005–06*
Lisburn					
Domestic	15.7	17.6	19.5	21	n/a
Non-domestic	13.2	14.7	17	19.8	n/a
Antrim					
Domestic	6.4	7.3	8.3	8.9	n/a
Non-domestic	7.7	8.4	8.5	8.8	n/a
Newtownabbey					
Domestic	13	14.6	15.7	17.1	n/a
Non-domestic	13	14.8	15.7	15.4	n/a
Carrickfergus					
Domestic	6.2	6.8	7.7	8.7	n/a
Non-domestic	4.8	5.2	5.4	4.8	n/a

Planning Area Enforcement Orders

Dr. Alasdair McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many planning enforcements against houses of multiple occupancy have been issued in each planning area in Northern Ireland since the legislation came into force. [66140]

Angela E. Smith: No enforcement notices have been issued in respect of houses in multiple occupation since the new legislation came into force in November 2004. Approximately 30 cases are currently under investigation and may lead to further enforcement action in due course.

Property Tax Reform

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will place in the Library a copy of the paper produced by the head of rating policy division of the Northern Ireland Department for Finance and Personnel, on property tax reform, for the IRRV International Conference in Alicante, Spain on 24 February. [66696]

Angela E. Smith: I can confirm that arrangements have been made to place a copy of the paper in the Library. It may be helpful to note that the paper was published last year on the IRRV website along with other papers presented at that conference.

Public Prosecution Service

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many proposals were received in the public procurement exercise for a Public Prosecution Service Regional Office in Derry. [14489]

Mr. Hain: 11 proposals were received in response to the public procurement exercise for a Public Prosecution Service Regional Office in Londonderry.

Review of Public Administration

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what strategic role the Northern Ireland Housing Executive will have after the implementation of the programme for the Review of Public Administration in 2009. [68253]

Mr. Hanson: The Housing Executive remains Northern Ireland's strategic housing authority and continues to have an extremely important role to play not only in implementing the Government's housing policies, but also in working with a range of agencies as part of the Government's overall efforts to address poverty and social exclusion.

As implementation of the Review Public Administration moves forward and the new local councils are established, the Housing Executive will have to work in close partnership with those councils, particularly as they take on new housing-related functions. It will be appropriate at some stage in the future to consider how the new arrangements are working in practice and in particular how efficiently and effectively the new councils are discharging their housing-related functions. It would only be on foot of such a careful and thorough review, particularly in view of the sensitivities that continue to surround housing issues, that consideration would be given to further housing-related functions transferring to the councils.

For the foreseeable future, therefore the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, as Northern Ireland's strategic housing authority, has an extremely important role to play as a key partner in developing and implementing the Government's policies.

Riding for the Disabled

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what Government support is available for those involved in riding for the disabled activities in Northern Ireland. [67135]

Mr. Hanson: The Riding for the Disabled Associations (RDA) is responsible for the development and promotion of horse riding for people with disabilities in Northern Ireland. The Association offers people with disabilities the opportunity to become involved in riding and carriage driving. It is part of RDA National and is a registered charity.

The Riding for the Disabled Association is a member club of Disability Sports Northern Ireland (DSNI) who receive £125,000 per year in public funding through the Sports Council for Northern Ireland. DSNI provides support to a range of sport's organisations on improving access and opportunities under its Community Access Grants scheme to help improve access to existing facilities provided by voluntary and community organisations.

There is also support available for equestrian sport, including horse riding, for people with disabilities from the Building Sport programme (BSp), which is run by the SCNI lottery unit.

Sewerage Stations

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland which sewerage stations in Northern Ireland are not meeting standards set out in EU directives. [67407]

Angela E. Smith: During 2004—the most recent year for which verified compliance data are currently available—the following seven waste water treatment works did not meet the requirements of the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (UWWTD) as they did not have secondary treatment:

Bangor (Briggs Rocks)
Carrickfergus
Culmore
Donaghadee
Larne (Sandy Bay)
Newtownabbey
Portrush

In addition the 13 works below failed to meet either the effluent quality standards or the monitoring requirements of the UWWTD:

Armagh
Ballyclare
Ballymena
Ballymoney (Glenstall)
Ballynacor
Banbridge
Bullays Hill
Coleraine
Cookstown
Magherafelt
Moygashel
Omagh
Tandragee

Initial assessment of 2005 data indicates an improvement in compliance compared with 2004.

Over the three year period to 2007–08 some £290 million is being invested in upgrading WWTWs to ensure compliance with EC Directive standards. Since the compliance assessment of 2004, the Water Service Capital Works Programme has delivered new WWTWs at Culmore, Omagh, Cookstown and Ballyclare, all of which are now capable of producing UWWTD quality effluent. The new works at Larne was completed in early 2006 and, in addition, Carrickfergus and Newtownabbey are scheduled for completion in mid-2006.

In addition work has commenced on the new North Coast WWTW to resolve compliance requirements at Portrush, Portstewart and Coleraine. In addition, Water Service is pursuing the use of Public Private Partnership investment to complement conventionally

funded programmes. Initial PPP programmes for wastewater and sludge treatment, currently estimated at some £122 million, are being taken forward for detailed planning and procurement.

Social Economy Companies

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will collect and collate information on the distribution of social economy companies at ward level in Northern Ireland. [67822]

Angela E. Smith: There are no plans to collect and collate information on the distribution of social economy companies at ward level. DETI, as the Department with lead responsibility for developing a more integrated approach to the sector, plans to undertake and publish the results, at NI level, of the first biennial survey of social economy enterprises in NI in 2006–07.

Special Educational Needs

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of children in each *(a)* ward, *(b)* county and *(c)* constituency in Northern Ireland (i) have special educational needs and (ii) are statemented. [68036]

Angela E. Smith: Information in relation to statemented pupils has been provided to the hon. Member on 6 March 2006, *Official Report*, column 1129W.

Information on pupils with special educational needs at primary, special and nursery schools in Northern Ireland is not available at ward level. Analysis based on the location of schools is not available in respect of counties, but is provided in the following tables for Education and Library Board areas and constituencies. The distribution of pupils with special educational needs pupils is affected by the location of special schools and special units attached to mainstream schools.

Percentage of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) in Northern Ireland, by Education and Library Board area, 2005–06

Education and Library Board	*Percentage of pupils with SEN*
Belfast	18.7
Western	18.3
North Eastern	13.2
South Eastern	17.3
Southern	14.2
Total	16.1

Percentage of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) in Northern Ireland, by parliamentary constituency, 2005–06

Parliamentary constituency	*Percentage of pupils with SEN*
Belfast East	16.2
Belfast North	19.4
Belfast South	17.0
Belfast West	23.3
East Antrim	13.3
East Londonderry	15.3
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	14.9
Foyle	19.2
Lagan Valley	16.7
Mid Ulster	12.9
Newry and Armagh	15.1
North Antrim	13.1
North Down	13.6

Percentage of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) in Northern Ireland, by parliamentary constituency, 2005–06

Parliamentary constituency	*Percentage of pupils with SEN*
South Antrim	13.1
South Down	16.5
Strangford	18.6
Upper Bann	14.0
West Tyrone	17.2
Total	16.1

Note:

1. Figures relate to pupils in nursery, primary, post primary and special schools only.
2. Figures for SEN pupils relate to those pupils at stage 1 to stage 5 on the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice.
3. Figures provided relate to the location of schools attended.

Speech Therapy

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many primary school pupils were referred for speech therapy in each of the past five years, broken down by postcode. [67183]

Angela E. Smith: DE does not hold information on the number of children of primary school age referred for Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) as the referral is the responsibility of General Practitioners, Community Paediatricians or other medical professionals, generally as a result of parental concerns. However, through the School Census, DE does collect details of the number of children in Primary Schools with a Statement of Special Educational Needs, where the Statement records their special educational needs as speech and language difficulties, although not by postcode. The total of such children in Northern Ireland at October 2005 was 1,145.

St. Patrick's Day

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much public funding was spent on the celebration of St. Patrick's Day in Northern Ireland. [67058]

Angela E. Smith: The Northern Ireland Office and the NI Departments do not hold records of all public funding spent specifically on the celebration of St. Patrick's Day in 2006. However, the Community Relations Unit in the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister provides annual funding to each of the 26 District Councils through its District Councils Community Relations Programme. In the current year, eight of the Councils indicated in their claims that some of their funding was used for St. Patrick's Day events. This amounted to £85,466.

The Community Relations Unit also provides Grant in Aid to the Community Relations Council, which provided £5,000 to Armagh City Council towards the cost of St. Patrick's Day events.

In addition, the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) has committed to providing financial support of £30,000 per annum to an extended St. Patrick's Day/Week Festival in Down/Armagh area for 2006 and 2007. This funding is being provided through NITB's core budget and funds administered on behalf of the International Fund for Ireland.

Town Centre Retail Development

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps are being taken by the Planning Service in Northern Ireland to assist town centres to compete with out of town retail developments. [65877]

Angela E. Smith: The Planning Service will continue to seek to protect the vitality and viability of existing town centres in line with regional policy contained in Planning Policy Statement 5 "Retailing in Town Centres". The Department for Regional Development is currently reviewing this Policy Statement.

In relation to Belfast City Centre, the Department for Social Development published in April 2004 a Regeneration Policy Statement (RPS) which sets out Government's objectives and approach to achieving the regeneration of Belfast City Centre by strengthening the City Centre as Northern Ireland's premier regional shopping destination. The RPS has facilitated the development of a major retail-led regeneration scheme at Victoria Square and plans for a further major retail-led scheme in the North East Quarter of the City Centre were announced on 28 March 2006.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Animal Procedures

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the use of primates in scientific procedures; and if he will make a statement. [67705]

Andy Burnham: The Government's assessment of this important issue is that the responsible, limited use of non-human primates for experimental and other scientific purposes continues to play an essential part in producing new knowledge and insights that underpin advances in healthcare and bring other benefits not currently achievable by other means. There is in our view no immediate prospect of an end to this use whilst the benefits to humans, animals and the environment outweigh the costs to the animals involved and until there are suitable alternatives available.

At the same time, the Government remains committed to ensuring that non-human primates are only used where it is considered fully justified and to ensuring that the highest standards of animal welfare are applied. In recognition of this, primates are given special protection under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act1986 and may only be used where no other species is suitable, when the likely welfare cost to them has been carefully weighed against the expected benefits of the research, and when everything possible has been done to minimise their numbers and suffering.

Asylum Seekers

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many visitors to the UK travelling on visas issued in Amman, Jordan, have applied for asylum following arrival in the UK, in each of the last five years; what their country of origin was; and if he will make a statement. [67394]

Mr. McNulty: Information on how many visitors to the UK travelling on visa issued in Amman (Jordan) have applied for asylum following arrival in the UK is not available.

Information on the asylum applications by nationality is published quarterly and annually. Copies are available from the Libraries of the House.

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers from Iraq have had support withdrawn by the National Asylum Support Service since the commencement of flights to Erbil airport returning failed asylum seekers to Iraq. [66518]

Mr. McNulty: Scheduled flights to Erbil commenced on 18 June 2005 and charter flights returning unsuccessful asylum seekers began on 16 August 2005 to Erbil and now also to Sulaymaniyah.

NASS has withdrawn section 95 support, under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, from 1,650 Iraqis since 18 June 2005, 1,207 since 16 August 2005. Section 95 support is withdrawn at the end of the asylum process and occasionally before the asylum claim has been determined, due to a breach in the conditions of support.

After the resumption of air services to Iraq, from one September 2005 the National Asylum Support Service has withdrawn support from 5,148 unsuccessful asylum seekers who were claiming support under section four of the same Act, as they were not fully satisfying the eligibility criteria, for example by not taking reasonable steps to leave the United Kingdom.

A discontinuation of section 95 support can lead to a successful application for section four support as an unsuccessful asylum seeker. This, in turn, will lead to another withdrawal of support, as section four is designed to be limited and temporary in nature. There will be individuals who have had a withdrawal of both types of support during this period and in the figures above.

Cannabis

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many arrests have been made for possession of cannabis in each of the last 10 years in *(a)* Romford, *(b)* Havering, *(c)* Greater London and *(d)* England and Wales. [63019]

Hazel Blears: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Charities Bill

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the evidential basis is for the statement by Lord Bassam of Brighton in the House of Lords on 28 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 231, that there has been a fair measure of agreement on the thresholds in the Charities Bill, with particular reference to the charge for charities to register with the Charity Commission. [66891]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 2 May 2006]:* The Joint Committee on the draft Charities Bill, in commenting on the evidence submitted to it, said (at paragraph 113 of Volume 1 of its Report):

"The majority of evidence supported the proposal to raise the threshold for registration to £5,000."

The Joint Committee made no recommendation for any change to the proposed £5,000 threshold.

Charity Commission

Helen Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many schools the Charity Commission has *(a)* reprimanded and *(b)* closed for inadequate performance in the last five years. [67333]

Paul Goggins: The Charity Commission has not closed any charitable schools in the last five years for inadequate performance and neither is it competent to do so. The Commission is concerned with the governors' compliance with their legal obligations in exercising control and management of the school under charity law. It is not competent to judge the quality and standard of education and care. The Commission has made recommendations on relevant matters to school governors in the course of visits it has undertaken to schools and has taken other action to secure compliance with governors' duty to provide the Commission with their annual accounts in appropriate cases.

Helen Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many schools Charity Commission staff visited in the last 12 months. [67334]

Paul Goggins: Charity Commission staff have visited nine charitable schools in the past 12 months as part of the Commission's structured visits programme. The Commission does not keep information on the number of visits that it undertakes in the course of its general regulatory case work but it estimates that it has made about four such visits to schools.

Crime Reduction (Hillingdon)

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the *(a)* agencies and *(b)* partnerships responsible for the reduction of crime in (i) Ruislip-Northwood constituency and (ii) the London Borough of Hillingdon. [40246]

Hazel Blears: There are two partnership groups within the Ruislip-Northwood constituency boundary which have some responsibility for crime reduction:

1. The Anti-Social Behaviour Reduction Forum covers the Ruislip-Northwood constituency including the Ickenham Ward in the Uxbridge constituency;

2. The Hillingdon Community and Police Consultative Group has a number of local Community and Police Liaison Groups and the following cover the Ruislip-Northwood constituency: Eastcote and East Ruislip; Harefield; Northwood; Ruislip and Ickenham.

There are two partnerships responsible for crime reduction across the borough of Hillingdon:

1. The Hillingdon Community Safety and Drug Strategic Partnership is the primary partnership body responsible for crime reduction in the borough.

2. There is a separate Hillingdon Criminal Justice Board, which includes the Crown Prosecution Service, the Police, Probation Service and the magistrates' court and deals with operational issues within the judicial system.

Criminal Convictions

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many persons aged *(a)* 11 to 15, *(b)* 16, *(c)* 17 and *(d)* 18 years were (i) prosecuted for and (ii) convicted of a criminal offence in (A) Southend-on-Sea, (B) Essex, (C) the Metropolitan Police area of London and (D) England and Wales in each year since 1990. [64705]

Fiona Mactaggart: Data from the Court Proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform on the number of persons aged *(a)* 11 to 15, *(b)* 16, *(c)* 17 and *(d)* 18 years proceeded against at the magistrates' courts for all offences, in (A) Southend-on-Sea, (B) Essex, (C) the Metropolitan Police area of London and (D) England and Wales, 1990–2004 are contained in the following table.

Statistics for 2005 court proceedings will be available in the autumn of 2006.

Number of persons prosecuted at magistrates court and found guilty at all courts, for all offences[1] by age group breakdown, in (a) Southend-on-Sea (South East Essex)[2], (b) Essex, (c) Metropolitan Police area, (d) England and Wales, 1990 to 2004

Found guilty

Area/Age group breakdown	*1990*	*1991*	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*
South East Essex								
11–15	62	51	46	57	91	132	197	147
16	58	54	38	60	73	1144	127	168
17	197	174	178	164	156	141	271	219
18	298	272	246	224	280	303	445	472
Essex								
11–15	275	266	195	249	337	476	628	683
16	306	275	221	224	310	390	527	569
17	1,089	752	714	580	584	677	988	944
18	1,813	1,125	1,104	1,150	1,175	1,216	1,645	1,682
Metropolitan Police area								
11–15	2,051	1,852	1,414	1,715	2,257	2,347	2,555	2,512
16	1,820	1,656	1,469	1,514	1,911	2,046	2,775	3,147
17	4,420	4,197	3,365	3,143	3,301	3,346	4,378	4,883
18	6,130	6,076	5,126	5,078	5,529	5,075	5,481	6,126

Number of persons prosecuted at magistrates court and found guilty at all courts, for all offences[1] by age group breakdown, in (a) Southend-on-Sea (South East Essex)[2], (b) Essex, (c) Metropolitan Police area, (d) England and Wales, 1990 to 2004

Found guilty

Area/Age group breakdown	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
England and Wales								
11–15	19,278	16,900	15,203	16,185	21,260	23,721	23,516	24,665
16	17,871	15,547	13,713	13,012	15,500	17,335	19,538	20,813
17	47,122	41,262	34,225	26,096	25,245	26,743	31,576	33,590
18	70,567	62,166	53,936	47,237	46,485	44,791	47,997	52,332

Found guilty

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
South East Essex							
11–15	172	171	123	150	144	131	165
16	134	117	94	146	119	95	127
17	247	250	199	257	200	190	185
18	517	432	332	294	320	314	293
Essex							
11–15	754	749	738	872	792	774	893
16	565	571	583	636	519	501	670
17	983	919	953	1,028	918	805	930
18	1,863	1,613	1,420	1,409	1,376	1,442	1,343
Metropolitan Police area							
11–15	2,851	3,404	3,544	4,152	4,246	3,850	3,906
16	3,987	3,042	2,932	3,382	3,292	3,068	3,268
17	5,517	5,251	4,924	5,670	5,571	4,491	4,486
18	6,378	6,133	6,022	6,715	7,094	7,275	6,478
England and Wales							
11–15	28,145	31,268	32,815	34,609	33,945	33,316	35,447
16	22,724	22,838	22,944	24,344	24,048	23,660	24,918
17	35,516	36,014	35,469	36,378	36,375	35,397	35,616
18	55,226	53,017	50,635	50,354	50,359	51,313	48,958

Number of persons prosecuted at magistrates court and found guilty at all courts, for all offences[1] by age group breakdown, in (a) Southend-on-Sea (South East Essex)[2], (b) Essex, (c) Metropolitan Police area, (d) England and Wales, 1990 to 2004

Prosecuted

Area/Age group breakdown	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
South East Essex								
11–15	121	91	80	83	155	199	321	244
16	130	105	83	85	127	148	210	225
17	390	269	278	228	242	210	380	321
18	568	405	362	318	363	415	587	626
Essex								
11–15	418	443	359	406	553	706	979	1,045
16	461	478	407	362	508	595	795	847
17	1,465	1,089	1,098	874	901	993	1,404	1,331
18	2,254	1,6181	1,580	1,559	1,631	1,628	2,225	22,219
Metropolitan Police area								
11–15	3,216	3,009	2,704	3,346	4,299	4,560	4,803	4,338
16	2,662	2,576	2,633	2,697	3,401	3,560	4,534	4,572
17	5,920	5,993	5,083	5,477	5,814	5,511	6,998	6,907
18	7,514	7,959	7,184	7,803	8,493	7,565	7,967	8,486
England and Wales								
11–15	27,767	26,349	25,727	27,389	35,778	39,305	39,809	39,838
16	25,642	23,970	22,956	21,825	25,721	28,587	31,663	32,249
17	61,356	56,005	49,860	41,797	40,685	41,998	49,015	50,328
18	88,573	82,059	74,233	67,830	67,713	64,088	68,588	73,384

	Prosecuted						
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
South East Essex							
11–15	274	282	198	226	214	196	240
16	230	192	150	204	184	143	182
17	360	377	267	333	281	252	249
18	691	557	431	381	411	414	384
Essex							
11–15	1,149	1,139	1,222	1,306	1,172	1,104	1,205
16	831	859	890	962	797	766	903
17	1,381	1,330	1,369	1,421	1,263	1,099	1,211
18	2,433	2,110	1,937	1,873	1,833	1,882	1,757
Metropolitan Police area							
11–15	4,767	5,610	6,315	7,699	7,355	6,513	6,128
16	5,529	4,665	4,710	5,595	5,314	4,837	4,801
17	7,470	7,330	7,286	8,522	8,350	6,736	6,310
18	8,556	8,306	8,247	9,371	9,637	9,702	8,512
England and Wales							
11–15	44,585	48,281	52,667	56,481	54,009	51,722	50,813
16	34,539	34,736	35,762	38,429	37,7025	36,122	35,656
17	51,856	52,382	52,921	54,790	54,553	52,638	49,874
18	76,134	73,033	70,098	70,986	70,775	71,355	65,203

Departmental Policies

Emily Thornberry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will set out, with statistical information relating as directly as possible to Islington South and Finsbury constituency, the effects on Islington South and Finsbury of his Department's policies and actions since 2 May 1997. [60733]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Government have put into place policies in the areas of crime reduction, antisocial behaviour, policing and active communities that are yielding considerable benefits for the constituency.

Between March 1997 and March 2005 the number of police officers in the Metropolitan Police area increased by 4,396 from 26,677 to 31,073. The Government's introduction of community support officers (CSOs) in 2002 has put 2,053 CSOs on the streets in the Metropolitan Police Service area to tackle crime and antisocial behaviour. Metropolitan Police will receive £1,818 million in general grants for 2006–07, an increase of 3.1 per cent. (£54.7 million) over the comparable figure for 2005–06. General grants funding to Metropolitan Police has increased by 20.8 per cent. between 1997–98 and 2006–7 (Figures are not directly comparable, due to boundary changes, adjustments to pay centrally for NCS and NCIS, and the transfer of pensions and security funding from general grant to specific in 2006–07. All have reduced general grant for Metropolitan Police Authority compared with 1997). In addition to general grants, Metropolitan Police will also receive an estimated £394.5 million in specific grants funding for targeted initiatives and capital provision in 2006–07. The Metropolitan also gains £5.3 million from the amending reports for 2004–05 and 2005–06. The distribution of resources locally is a matter for the Police Authority and the Chief Officer.

The Crime Reduction programme (CRP) was a £340 million intervention programme running for three years from April 1999. Figures are not available for constituency or local level.

In Islington a total of 20 Antisocial Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) have been issued (The latest figures available).

Table 1: Number of offences recorded—1997[1]

	Number
Islington CDRP	
Domestic burglary	n/a
Theft of a vehicle	n/a
Theft from a vehicle	n/a
Metropolitan Police Force area	
Domestic burglary	88,010
Theft of a vehicle	55,432
Theft from a vehicle	104,872

n/a = not available.

[1] The data in this table is prior to the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard. These figures are not directly comparable with those for later years.

Table 2: Number of offences recorded—1998–99 to 2001–02[1]

				Number
	1998–99[2]	1999–2000[3]	2000–01	2001–02
Islington CDRP				
Domestic burglary	n/a	3,165	2,645	2,966
Theft of a vehicle	n/a	2,362	2,447	2,573
Theft from a vehicle	n/a	4,966	4,499	4,584
Metropolitan Police Force area				
Domestic burglary	75,797	79,504	70,169	73,930
Theft of a vehicle	59,409	62,791	62,452	62,112
Theft from a vehicle	103,611	112,206	105,699	112,146

n/a = not available.

[1] The data in this table is prior to the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard. These figures are not directly comparable with those for later years.

[2] The coverage was extended and counting rules revised from 1998–99. Figures from that date are not directly comparable with those for 1997.

[3] Recorded crime figures for CDRPs were collected for the first time for the 12 months to March 2000.

Table 3: Number of offences recorded—2002–03 to 2004–05[1]

Number

Offence	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Islington CDRP			
Domestic burglary	3,083	2,611	2,451
Theft of a vehicle	2,351	2,043	1,340
Theft from a vehicle	5,003	5,553	3,678

Table 3: Number of offences recorded—2002–03 to 2004–05[1]

Number

Offence	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Metropolitan Police Force area			
Domestic burglary	72,237	67,996	63,084
Theft of a vehicle	58,405	55,158	48,026
Theft from a vehicle	114,987	103,899	88,164

[1] The data in this table takes account of the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard in April 2002. These figures are not directly comparable with those for earlier years.

£

Scheme	*Area*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06*	*2006–07*
Small Retailers in Deprived Areas	Islington CDRP	26,419	66,236	66,236	—	—	—	—
Communities against drugs	Islington CDRP	—	262,200	594,218	—	—	—	—
Safer Communities Initiative	Islington CDRP	—	—	137,255	—	—	—	—
Building Safer Communities Fund[1]	Islington CDRP	—	—	—	412,195	422,500	422,500	—
Basic Command Unit Fund[2]	Islington	—	—	—	366,436	366,436	366,436	366,436
Partnership Development Fund	Islington	—	50,000	50,000	—	—	—	—
Home Office Regional Directors' Allocation (HORDs)[3]	London Region	—	—	—	1.24m	1.24m	1.24m	1.24m
Safer Stronger Communities Fund (SSCF) (Home Office Contribution)		—	—	—	—	—	—	515,201

[1] In the years 2004–05 and 2005–06 the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships received an additional £25,000 for ASB co-ordinator.
[2] Figures for constituency level
[3] Figures for London Region, not available for CDRP or constituency
[4] SSCF brought together a number of HO and ODPM funding streams and was rolled out to all areas for 2006–07.
The HO Contribution is made up of the total of the former BSCF, ASB Co-ordinator Grant and Drugs Partnership Support Grant.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will set out with statistical evidence relating as closely as possible to West Lancashire constituency the effects in West Lancashire of changes to his Department's policies since 1997. [64237]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Government have put into place policies in the areas of crime reduction, antisocial behaviour, policing and active communities that are yielding considerable benefits for the constituency.

Between March 1997 and March 2005 the number of police officers in the Lancashire Police area increased by 339 from 3,247 to 3,586. The Government's introduction of Community Support Officers (CSOs) in 2002 has put 159 CSOs on the streets in the Lancashire Police Service area to tackle crime and antisocial behaviour.

Lancashire Police will receive £187 million in general grants for 2006–07, an increase of 3.1 per cent. (£5.6 million) over the comparable figure for 2005–06. General grants funding to Lancashire police has increased by 27.3 per cent. between 1997–98 and 2006–07. (Figures are not directly comparable, as adjustments to pay for NCS and NCIS centrally, and the transfer of pensions and security funding from general grant to specific in 2006–07 have reduced General Grant for Lancashire Police Authority compared with 1997). In addition to general grants, Lancashire police will also receive an estimated £33.8 million in specific grants funding for targeted initiatives and capital provision in 2006–07. Lancashire will also gain £0.6 million from the Amending Reports for 2004–05 and 2005–06. The distribution of resources locally is a matter for the Police Authority and the Chief Constable.

The Crime Reduction Programme (CRP) was a £340 million intervention programme running for three years from April 1999.

Figures are not available for constituency or local level. In West Lancashire a total of 14 antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) have been issued. (The latest figures available).

Table 1: Number of offences recorded—1997[1]

	1997
West Lancashire CDRP	
Domestic burglary	n/a
Theft of a vehicle	n/a
Theft from a vehicle	n/a
Lancashire police force area	
Domestic burglary	14,833
Theft of a vehicle	8,160
Theft from a vehicle	18,993

n/a—not available.
[1] The data in this table is prior to the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard. These figures are not directly comparable with those for later years.

Table 2: Number of offences recorded—1998–99 to 2001–02[1]

	1998–99[2]	*1999–2000*[3]	*2000–01*	*2001–02*
West Lancashire CDRP				
Domestic burglary	n/a	422	383	591
Theft of a vehicle	n/a	598	546	577
Theft from a vehicle	n/a	681	706	872

Table 2: Number of offences recorded—1998–99 to 2001–02[1]

	1998–99[2]	1999–2000[3]	2000–01	2001–02
Lancashire police force area				
Domestic burglary	12,186	10,561	10,643	12,102
Theft of a vehicle	7,350	6,504	6,151	6,154
Theft from a vehicle	16,122	14,308	14,202	14,861

n/a—not available.

[1] The data in this table is prior to the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard. These figures are not directly comparable with those for later years.

[2] The coverage was extended and counting rules revised from 1998–99. Figures from that date are not directly comparable with those for 1997.

[3] Recorded crime figures for CDRPs were collected for the first time for the 12 months to March 2000.

Table 3: Number of offences recorded—2002–03 to 2004–05[1]

Offence	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
West Lancashire CDRP			
Domestic burglary	550	469	327
Theft of a vehicle	459	514	376
Theft from a vehicle	731	787	659
Lancashire police force area			
Domestic burglary	9,513	8,821	6,695
Theft of a vehicle	5,585	5,231	4,514
Theft from a vehicle	13,289	11,468	10,822

[1] The data in this table takes account of the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard in April 2002. These figures are not directly comparable with those for earlier years.

£

Scheme	*Area*	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07
Small Retailers in Deprived Areas	North West total CDRP	470,667	941,211	942,205	—	—	—
Communities against drugs	West Lancashire CDRP	85,500	85,500	—	—	—	—
Safer Communities Initiative	West Lancashire CDRP	—	26,876	—	—	—	—
Building Safer Communities Fund[1]	West Lancashire CDRP	—	—	116,412	119,323	119,323	—
Basic Command Unit Fund[2]	West Lancashire	—	—	199,837	199,837	199,837	199,837
Partnership Development Fund	West Lancashire CDRP	1,800,000	1,970,000	—	—	—	—
Home Office Regional Directors' Allocation (HORDs)[3]	North West Region	—	—	1,164,100	1,164,100	1,164,100	1,164,100
Safer Stronger Communities Fund (SSCF) (Home Office Contribution)	West Lancashire CDRP	—	—	—	—	—	1,878,673

[1] In the years 2004–05 and 2005–06 the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships received an additional £25,000 for ASB co-ordinator
[2] Figures for constituency level
[3] Figures for North West Region, not available for CDRP or constituency
[4] SSCF brought together a number of HO and ODPM funding streams and was rolled out to all areas for 2006–07.
The HO Contribution is made up of the total of the former BSCF, ASB Co-ordinator Grant and Drugs Partnership Support Grant.

Departmental Expenditure

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was spent by his Department on refreshments in each year since 1997. [41248]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Costs for refreshments and working lunches are combined and the total since 1997 is provided in the following table. Refreshments and working lunches are offered as courtesy to visitors or to facilitate the efficient management of meetings. The rise in expenditure reflects an increase in training courses and implementation of new policies and systems. Overall expenditure for 1998 was artificially reduced by a one-off VAT credit.

	Working lunches
1997	346,685
1998	92,916
1999	457,147
2000	511,610
2001	572,279
2002	727,354
2003	1,330,997
2004	1,047,330

Departmental Fuel Efficiency

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps have been taken in the last 12 months to make his Department more fuel efficient. [67454]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Home Office is committed to achieving the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate energy targets; namely to reduce absolute carbon, from fuel and electricity used in buildings on our estate, by 12.5 per cent. by 2010–11, relative to 1999–2000 and to increase the energy efficiency of the buildings on our estate, measured in terms of kWh of fuel and electricity use per square metre of buildings floor area by 15 per cent. over the same period. To meet these targets the Department is benchmarking key office sites to identify those buildings which are high energy users.

The contract at our London HQ building at 2 Marsham street requires our PFI partner to operate the building at 10 per cent. below the best practice benchmark contained in the Government's Energy Efficiency Best Practice Programme Energy Use in Offices Guide.

In 2005–06 the Prison Service funded a number of energy saving projects with a total value of £512,760. Work included extension of building management systems at the following establishments; Askham Grange, Belmarsh, Castington, Coldingley, Lewes and Preston. Automatic lighting controls were installed at Belmarsh, Brockhill, Cardiff, Hewell Grange, Parkhurst and Swansea.

A number of business groups on the core office estate have undertaken awareness raising programmes on energy conservation and improving energy efficiency. Specific actions have been taken by local property centre managers including replacement of lighting with energy efficient bulbs in large office buildings; reducing the number of lighting units required; and requiring security personnel to ensure lights are switched off when they conduct their evening patrols.

Overall, the Department has achieved an 11 per cent. reduction in total energy consumption since the baseline year.

Departmental Tendering Policy

Martin Horwood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his policy is on including *(a)* ethical and *(b)* environmental factors in tenders for services. [33334]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Home Office expects to let all its contracts in accordance with ethical principles and would consider any case where evidence to the contrary was presented. There is published internal guidance on principles of ethical behaviour in procurement, which all staff engaged in tendering for services and other contracts must follow.

Under EU procurement rules there is scope to incorporate requirements covering sustainable development and environmental factors, such as Green production methods, into specifications. Award criteria may include environmental characteristics if linked to the subject matter of the contract.

In contracts let by the Department, environmental factors are considered on a case by case basis relative to the subject matter of the contract, and the requirements of EU law. The Department will consider the use of the "Sustainable Procurement Toolkit" due to be issued by DEFRA which will aid the consideration of environmental factors in public sector tenders for services.

Departmental Vehicles

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many cars are *(a)* owned and *(b)* leased by his Department; what models the cars are; what type of petrol each model requires; and what the fuel efficiency is of each model. [41357]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The total number of cars owned or leased by the Department as at the end of February 2006 was:

	Total owned	*Total leased*
Diesel	384	39
Petrol	2	4
MPG range	22–59	8–54.30

Full details of make, model and fuel efficiency are shown in the following table.

Table A: Cars owned by the Department

	Make	*Model*	*Fuel type*	*Combined imperial MPG*
	Audi	A4 Avant 1.9TDI SE	Diesel	48
	Citroen	Berlingo1.9D van	Diesel	37
	Citroen	Berlingo Van 2.0 Lx	Diesel	37
	Citroen	C51.6HDI LX H/Back	Diesel	52.3
	Citroen	Dispatch Van 2.0HDI	Diesel	37
	Citroen	Relay LWB Van 2.2HDI	Diesel	25
2x	Ford	Cmax 1.6TDCI LX	Diesel	59
32x	Ford	Focus 1.6TDCI LX	Diesel	59
6x	Ford	Focus 1.6TDCI LX 90	Diesel	59
13x	Ford	Focus 1.6TDCI LX5dr	Diesel	59
	Ford	Focus 1.6TDCI LX Est	Diesel	59
5x	Ford	Focus 1.6TDCI LX H/B	Diesel	59
6x	Ford	Focus 1.8TDCI	Diesel	51.4
5x	Ford	Focus 1.8TDCI 100 LX	Diesel	51.4
	Ford	Focus 1.8TDCI LX 115	Diesel	51.4
8x	Ford	Focus 1.8TDCI LX	Diesel	51.4
	Ford	Focus 1.8TDCI LX 5dr	Diesel	51.4
	Ford	Focus 1.8TDCI LX H/B	Diesel	51.4
	Ford	Focus 1.8TDI 90 LX	Diesel	51.4
	Ford	Focus 1.8TDI LX 4dr	Diesel	51.4
3x	Ford	Focus4dr SAL 1.8TD	Diesel	51.4
	Ford	Focus 5dr 1.8TDI 90 LX	Diesel	51.4
44x	Ford	Galaxy 1. 9 TD LX	Diesel	42.8
	Ford	Galaxy 1. 9 DTI 115PS	Diesel	42.8
4x	Ford	GALAXY 1.9 LX Five door	Diesel	42.8
	Ford	Galaxy 1. 9 LX Est	Diesel	42.8
3x	Ford	Galaxy 1 .9 TD LX MPV	Diesel	42.8
3x	Ford	Galaxy 1. 9 TDI	Diesel	42.8
9x	Ford	Galaxy 1. 9 TDI 115PS	Diesel	42.8
24x	Ford	Galaxy 1.9 TDI LX	Diesel	42.8
2x	Ford	Galaxy 1.9 LX	Diesel	42.8
3x	Ford	Galaxy 1.9TDCI LX	Diesel	42.8
3x	Ford	Galaxy 1.9TDXI LX	Diesel	42.8
3x	Ford	Mondeo 2.0 Est LX	Diesel	48
	Ford	Mondeo 2.0 Ghia H/B	Diesel	48
6x	Ford	Mondeo 2.0 LX TDCI	Diesel	48
	Ford	Mondeo 2.0 TDCI 115	Diesel	48
	Ford	Mondeo 2.0LXTDCI 115	Diesel	48
	Ford	Mondeo TDCI 115 LXE	Diesel	48
	Ford	Mondeo 5dr Estate	Diesel	48
2x	Ford	Tourneo 2.0TDCI GLX	Diesel	45
2x	Ford	Tourneo GLX 8 seats	Diesel	45
	Ford	Tourneo Minibus	Diesel	45
2x	Ford	Transit Tourneo 8STS	Diesel	45
	Ford	Transit 2.0 SWB eight GL	Diesel	25
	Ford	Transit 2.0SWB Van	Diesel	25
	Ford	Transit Connect Van	Diesel	25
4x	Ford	Transit Dog Van	Diesel	25
	Honda	Civic 1.7 CDTI 3dr HB	Diesel	48
	Land Rover	Discovery 2.5 TDI Gs	Diesel	25
	Mercedes	Sprinter Van	Diesel	22
2x	Mercedes	Traveliner Mini Bus	Diesel	25
	Mercedes	Traveliner TL72.21	Diesel	25
2x	Mercedes	Vito 2.0 Van	Diesel	25
	Mercedes	Vito 2.2 108 CDI Van	Diesel	25
	Mitsubishi	Shogun LWB 3.2	Diesel	25
	Nissan	Terrano 2.7 DTI S ES	Diesel	25
2x	Peugeot	3071.6HDI S90	Diesel	54.3
	Peugeot	3071.6HDI S 5dr HB	Diesel	54.3
2x	Peugeot	307 2.0 DTI	Diesel	54.3
	Peugeot	307 2.0 HDI 90 ESTAT	Diesel	54.3
	Peugeot	307 2.0 HDI LX	Diesel	54.3
3x	Peugeot	307 2.0 HDIS	Diesel	54.3
3x	Peugeot	307 2.0 HDIS 90	Diesel	54.3
	Peugeot	307 2.0 S HDI 90BHO	Diesel	54.3
2x	Peugeot	307 2.0 HDI Style HB	Diesel	54.3
	Peugeot	307 3dr Hatchback	Diesel	54.3
2x	Peugeot	307 5dr Hatch 2.0 S	Diesel	54.3
2x	Peugeot	406 2.0 3dr ESTAT	Diesel	45
	Peugeot	407 S 1.6HDI 4dr SAL	Diesel	49.6
3x	Renault	Laguna 1.9DCI 100A	Diesel	48
	Renault	Laguna 1.9DCI1100	Diesel	48
10x	Renault	Megan Secenic 1.9 DC	Diesel	50
	Renault	Scenic 1.9 DCI 120	Diesel	50
	Renault	Scenic Express 1.9DCI	Diesel	50
	Rover	45 2.0TD Club 5dr	Diesel	52
	Rover	Mg 45 2.0 IL TDI	Diesel	52
	Skoda	Octavia 1.9TDI 90	Diesel	53.3
	Skoda	Octavia 1.9D Elegance	Diesel	53.3

Table A: Cars owned by the Department

	Make	Model	Fuel type	Combined imperial MPG
	Skoda	Octavia 1.9TDI EST	Diesel	53.3
2x	Toyota	Avensis 2.0 D4D	Diesel	48
3x	Toyota	Avensis 2.0 D4D T2	Diesel	48
	Toyota	Avensis 2.0d4D T2 HB	Diesel	48
	Toyota	Avensis Tourer 2.0	Diesel	48
	Vauxhall	Astra 1.6Ils	Diesel	40
	Vauxhall	Astra 1.6l Envoy	Diesel	40
	Vauxhall	Astra1.7CDTI 16V	Diesel	40
2x	Vauxhall	Astra1.7CDTI LS	Diesel	40
	Vauxhall	Astra 1.7 DTI	Diesel	40
	Vauxhall	Astra 1.7 DTI 1 6 Ls	Diesel	40
6x	Vauxhall	Astra 1.7DTI 16 V	Diesel	40
4x	Vauxhall	Astra 1.7DTI 16VLS	Diesel	40
3x	Vauxhall	Astra 1.7DTI LS	Diesel	40
4x	Vauxhall	Astra 1.7DTI LS HB	Diesel	40
	Vauxhall	Astra 1.7DTI RNVOY	Diesel	40
	Vauxhall	Astra1.7STI LS 5dr	Diesel	40
3x	Vauxhall	Astra 1.7CDTI 16V LS	Diesel	40
2x	Vauxhall	Astra 1.7CDTI 5dr	Diesel	40
2x	Vauxhall	Astra 1.7CDTI CLUB	Diesel	40
2x	Vauxhall	Astra 1.7CDTI H/B	Diesel	40
12x	Vauxhall	Astra 1.7CDTI LIFE	Diesel	40
	Vauxhall	Astra 1.9CDTi Hatch	Diesel	40
	Vauxhall	Astra Estate 1.7	Diesel	40
	Vauxhall	Astra van 1.7DTI LS	Diesel	48
3x	Vauxhall	Corsa 1.3 CDTI DESIG	Diesel	55
2x	Vauxhall	Movano van 2.5 TDI	Diesel	25
	Vauxhall	Vectra	Petrol	35
	Vauxhall	Vectra	Diesel	35
	Vauxhall	Vectra 1. 8 Ls5dr HB	Petrol	35
2x	Vauxhall	Vectra 1.9CDT H/Back	Diesel	48
2x	Vauxhall	Vectra 2.0 DTI 16V L	Diesel	48
2x	Vauxhall	Vectra 2.0 DTI LS	Diesel	48
	Vauxhall	Vectra 2.0 DTI LS 4D	Diesel	48
	Vauxhall	Vectra 2.0DTI	Diesel	48
	Vauxhall	Zafira1.9CDTI LIFE	Diesel	46.3
	Volvo	S80 2.4 D5 SE Auto	Diesel	36.7
2x	VW	Bora 1. 9 S TDI	Diesel	48
	VW	Bora 4dr 1.9 S TDI	Diesel	48
	VW	Caravelle Variant	Diesel	30
9x	VW	Golf 1.9 ESDI	Diesel	53
6x	VW	Golf 1.9ESDI 5dr	Diesel	53
	VW	Golf 1.9TDIS	Diesel	53
	VW	Golf 1.9 TDI S EU4	Diesel	53
	VW	Golf 1.9E SDI H/B	Diesel	53
	VW	Golf 1.9 SE TDI	Diesel	53
3x	VW	Golf 1.9TDI S 5 door	Diesel	53
	VW	Passat 1.9 SE TD	Diesel	47
	VW	Polo 1.9 E SDI SAL	Diesel	55
	VW	Polo 1.9E SDI 5dr	Diesel	55
2x	VW	Transporter 7 + 1 Seats	Diesel	45
8x	VW	Transporter Shuttle	Diesel	45

Table B: cars leased by the Department

	Make	Model	Fuel type	Combined Imperial MPG
	BMW	E39 530DA SE Saloon Auto	Diesel	34.00
	Citroen	C8 2.0HDI LX MPV	Diesel	48.00
	Citroen	Relay 18 2.2 HDI HI Roof Van	Diesel	25.00
9x	Citroen	Xantia 2.0 HDI LX Estate	Diesel	53.30
2x	Citroen	Xsara 2.0HDI Desire Estate	Diesel	51.40
	Ford	Escort 1.8D 75 Van	Diesel	0.00
	Ford	Fiesta 35 Car Derived Van	Petrol	45.00
	Ford	Fiesta 35 Car Derived Van	Diesel	45.00
	Ford	Focus 1.8TDCI LX 5dr Hatch	Diesel	51.40
	Ford	Galaxy 2.3i Ghia Automatic	Petrol	25.70
	Ford	Ranger 2.5TD Regular Cab	Diesel	25.00
	Ford	Transit 2.4TDI 350l HR Panel Van	Diesel	25.00
2x				
23x	Ford	Transit 2.5 TD SWB 9minibus	Diesel	25.00
	Honda	ST1300 Police Motorcycle	Diesel	0.00
	Land Rover	Discovery TD5 ES 5dr Estate	Diesel	30.10
	Land Rover	Discovery TD5 GS 5dr	Diesel	25.00
	Mercedes Benz	111KA 3200 Van	Diesel	25.00

Table B: cars leased by the Department

	Make	Model	Fuel type	Combined Imperial MPG
2x	Mercedes	Special Mobile Unit	Diesel	8.00
	Mercedes-Benz	Viito112CDI	Diesel	25.00
	Mitsubishi	L200 2.5TD4WD GL D/Cab Pickup	Diesel	25.00
	Nissan	Primera 2.0 S 4dr Saloon	Petrol	35.00
	Peugeot	306 Meridian 2.0 HDI 5dr Estate	Diesel	54.30
	Renault	Espace Expression 2.2DI Estate	Diesel	39.80
	Vauxhall	Astra 1.7 DTI LS Estate	Diesel	50.00
	Vauxhall	Omega 2.0 GLS	Petrol	25.00
2x	Volvo	184SB D5 2.4 4dr Saloon Auto	Diesel	32.80
	Volvo	FI6E PL3 18T Box Van	Diesel	12.00
2x	Volvo	S80 2.4D5SE Auto 4dr Saloon	Diesel	36.70
	Volvo	V70 T5 2.3 Estate Police Spec Auto	Petrol	26.20

DNA Databases

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the likelihood of chance matches of DNA samples from degraded or limited samples; and if he will make a statement. [63146]

Andy Burnham: The National DNA Database (NDNAD) currently uses SGM Plus profiling technology which tests for 10 areas of DNA (known as short tandem repeats or STRS) at each of which there are two markers (i.e. a total of 20 markers). The Government have every confidence in the SGM Plus profiling system but recognises that it should keep its reliability and level of discrimination under review.

The NDNAD contains the profiles of over 3 million individuals. We are not aware of any chance match between two full SGM Plus profiles for unrelated individuals having been obtained to date. However, as the size of the NDNAD grows and as more international comparisons are made with other countries' DNA profiles, the probability, although remaining very small, will increase.

Subject samples taken from persons on arrest are very unlikely to be degraded or limited in quantity. The probability of a chance match between full SGM Plus profiles from samples from two unrelated subjects is less than one in a thousand million. If the subjects are related, the likelihood of a match by chance is higher; for siblings it is of the order of one in 10,000.

Approximately half of all crime scene samples yield a partial profile i.e. a profile with less than 10 STR areas. This is because the DNA collected at crime scenes is either limited in quantity or degraded. Developments in DNA technology now allow DNA profiles to be obtained from small amounts of DNA although these may often prove to be partial profiles. The probability of a chance match of a partial crime scene sample profile with a profile from someone other than the true offender will vary, depending on how many markers are present in the partial crime scene profile and whether the innocent person involved in the chance match is related to the offender.

Recent research studies by the European DNA Profiling Group (EDNAP) and the European Network of Forensic Science Institutes (ENFSI) have demonstrated that the success rate for analysis of degraded samples (which yield partial profiles) improved by using recently developed tests for markers based on shorter lengths of DNA (mini STRs).

The international scientific community have agreed that the best way forward would be to develop a new test system using 13 or 16 STR areas, including some mini STRs. This would also need to take account of the divergent requirements of the different European countries. The time scale for the development and introduction of a new test system would be a commercial decision by the companies that make the new test system and it is estimated that this development could take around two years. Home Office officials are actively involved in taking forward this work which will help in obtaining fuller profiles from limited or degraded samples, hence reducing the probability of chance matches occurring.

Drug Users (Illegal Income)

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the average annual illegal income of arrested *(a)* heroin and *(b)* crack users. [47717]

Mr. Charles Clarke: We do not have the information requested.

However some information on illegal income among arrested drug users in a sample of 16 custody suites is provided in research published by the Home Office in 2004 from the New English and Welsh Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring Programme (NEW ADAM). The report of the survey is available on the Home Office website (http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs04/rdsolr1904.pdf)

Easter Celebrations

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost was of Easter celebrations in prisons in England and Wales in 2006. [67099]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Prison Service—Public Sector Prisons—does not routinely capture the costs of celebrating religious festivals. An answer to this question could be obtained only at a disproportionate cost.

Equal Pay

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps are taken to ensure that women in his Department receive equal pay for work of equal value. [65711]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Home Office has since 2003 undertaken regular equal pay audits of its pay systems. These audits are undertaken on an annual basis following the implementation of pay awards. In addition, a more comprehensive equality proofing exercise of reward policies and practices are undertaken every three years. The findings of the equal pay audits and equality proofing exercises are shared with employee representatives. Where there are any equal pay concerns or issues, these are addressed through an equal action plan which in turn provides a direct input into the normal pay determination process with employee representatives.

EU Nationals

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of nationals of the new EU member states who *(a)* have worked in the UK since 1 May 2004 for periods of less than 28 days and *(b)* have spent some time working in the UK since 1 May 2004 and have subsequently left the UK; and if he will make a statement. [67113]

Mr. McNulty: All European economic area (EEA) nationals have a right of free movement and residence in the United Kingdom. Accession state nationals are not subject to immigration control, and if they are working for less than 30 days, have no requirement to register with the workers registration scheme (WRS). As such there are no reliable estimates of the numbers of accession state nationals who have worked for less than 28 days.

The WRS does not measure net migration (inflows minus outflows). Rather, it gives gross figures for the number of workers applying to the scheme. An individual who has registered to work and who leaves employment is not required to de-register, so some of those counted will have left employment and some are likely to have left the UK.

Extradition Act

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether applications to extradite British citizens to the United States under the terms of the Extradition Act 2003 are required to be accompanied by prima facie evidence. [63193]

Andy Burnham: Under the Extradition Act 2003, and the Extradition Act 2003 (Designation of Part two Territories) Order 2003, extradition requests by the United States are not required to be accompanied by prima facie evidence. Instead, requests from the US are required to show information that would justify the issue of a warrant for the arrest of the person concerned. There is no distinction in the Extradition Act 2003 nor in its predecessor legislation between British citizens and those of other nationalities.

Family Deportations

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many families with children detained as a family unit in centres were removed from the UK *(a)* as a family unit and *(b)* with some family members on different flights in (i) 2005 and (ii) 2006; [66515]

(2) in how many cases where a family with children was detained some family members were removed from the UK and others remained in the UK in *(a)* 2005 and *(b)* 2006. [66516]

Mr. McNulty: IND does not have a central record of the number of people detained and removed from the UK as part of a family unit. However, given the sensitive nature of family cases, all family removals are handled carefully. Since 23 November 2005, the Immigration Service has sought ministerial authority on every case when the removal of a family or individuals would result in a family unit being separated. Since that date we have sought ministerial authority on five occasions.

Human Trafficking

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what resources of his Department have been allocated to combat human trafficking. [64050]

Paul Goggins: In March 2000 a multi-agency Government taskforce 'Reflex', chaired by the National Crime Squad, was set up to deal with organised immigration crime. Its remit is to co-ordinate the enforcement response to such issues, both nationally and internationally, and to develop the intelligence and strategic planning to underpin this. Reflex continues to receive an annual allocation of £20 million from the Home Office.

Also in March 2003 a Home Office-funded pilot scheme was launched in partnership with Eaves Housing for Women (the POPPY scheme) to provide safe accommodation and tailored one-to-one support for adult female victims who have been trafficked into the UK and into prostitution. The POPPY scheme was established as a small-scale pilot project and has recently been formally evaluated. On the basis of the positive evaluation findings, Ministers announced on 7 April 2006 additional funding of £2.4 million over two years to expand the excellent service provided through the POPPY scheme.

MI5 (Northern Ireland)

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many informers made redundant by the Police Service Northern Ireland since its creation have been recruited by MI5. [66523]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It is the longstanding policy of successive Governments not to comment on the operational activities of the Security Service.

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures are in place to ensure the sharing of information between MI5 and the Police Service Northern Ireland; and what recent steps he has taken to test these arrangements. [66528]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Information is routinely shared between the Security Service and Police Service Northern Ireland at all levels. The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and I are satisfied that the information sharing arrangements work well and will continue to do so.

Nabeel Sami Fathallah

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much in benefits has been granted to Mr. Nabeel Sami Fathallah (HO Ref 10776940) since his arrival in the UK; and if he will make a statement. [67392]

Mr. McNulty: Information relating to an individual is not routinely disclosed.

Northamptonshire Police Force

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will provide additional funding to bring the per capita spending for Northamptonshire police force up to the national average. [59190]

Hazel Blears: Government funding for police authorities is chiefly allocated using a funding formula that distributes resources on the basis of relative policing need. Damping is also applied to improve stability of funding by reducing year-on-year grant variations. Grant is not, and never has been, distributed purely on a per capita basis.

Northamptonshire police authority will receive its fair share of resources next year. Its 3.1 per cent. (+£2.1 million) increase in general grant is in line with the broadly flat rate increase of 3.1 per cent. for all police authorities in England and Wales. If the funding formula had been strictly applied, Northamptonshire would have received £0.8 million less. On top of general grant a range of other funding will also be available, including £1.9 million in special formula grant, a consolidation of four former specific grants that will enable the authority to operate more flexibly, and an estimated £7.7 million in specific grants and capital provision.

O'Connor Report

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will establish a national policing agency dedicated to countering terrorism and domestic extremism to address the findings in these areas of the O'Connor report. [40966]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Regional and national CT structures are already in place. The Association of Chief Police Officers' Committee on Terrorism and Allied Matters sets policy and strategic direction for counter-terrorism policing at a national level. Police counter-terrorist efforts are co-ordinated regionally and nationally through the regional intelligence cells, the work of the national co-ordinator of special branch and the national co-ordinator of terrorist investigations while ensuring that force special branches maintain the essential link to local policing and local communities. The Metropolitan Police Service has national counter-terrorism responsibilities including a number of specialist units which provide support to forces. As with other aspects of policing, these structures are kept under constant review.

Omagh Bombing

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will seek the resignation of *(a)* the head of MI5 and *(b)* members of her staff in connection with the Omagh bombing. [67213]

Mr. Charles Clarke: No.

Operation Trident

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much has Operation Trident cost. [54473]

Hazel Blears: Expenditure allocated to specific enforcement operations in the Metropolitan Police Service is a matter for the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) and the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis.

The MPA will receive £1,818 million in general grant next year, an increase of 3.1 per cent. (£54.7 million) over the comparable figure for 2005–06. This is in line with the broadly flat rate increase of 3.1 per cent. for all police authorities in England and Wales. The MPA also gains £5.3 million from amending reports for 2004–05 and 2005–06 bringing the overall increase in general grant in 2006–07 to 3.4 per cent. In addition to this, it will receive £54.7 million in special formula grant, a consolidation of four former specific grants, as well as a range of other funding in specific grants, capital provision and to tackle terrorism.

Passports

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to provide premises in Argyll and Bute, which first time passport applicants can attend for their interview. [68084]

Andy Burnham: I have placed a document in the Library setting out the planned provision for such interviews throughout the United Kingdom.

John Penrose: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate his Department has made of the costs of replacing lost or damaged biometric chips in passports and ID cards; who will be responsible for these costs; and from what sources funding will be drawn. [66889]

Andy Burnham: The current policy for replacing lost or damaged passports is that the customer makes a fresh application and pays the full cost for renewing the passport unless the document was clearly faulty at issue, there are no plans to change this policy for biometric passports. Every biometric passport goes through a vigorous quality assurance process before issuing to the public which ensures the passport reaches the public in full working order. Broadly comparable arrangements will be put in place for identity cards in due course.

Police Restructuring

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much he has spent on consultants' fees in evaluating the costs of the reorganisation of police forces; and which consultants he has engaged for this work. [62490]

Hazel Blears: Consultants from a number of organisations have been employed to assist in the process of assessing the financial case for change, including:

Deloitte

Avail (Tribal Vale)

Ernst and Young

KPMG

Accenture

IBM

Mott MacDonald

Methods-Walker-Cox

Mentis

Due to the ongoing nature of this work, as some of the consultants are still working on this project, it would be premature to disclose costs at this stage.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what role his Department will play in the appointment of members of the new merged Yorkshire police authority. [65791]

Mr. Charles Clarke: We envisage that any order made under section 32 of the Police Act 1996 amalgamating the Humberside, North Yorkshire, South Yorkshire and West Yorkshire police areas would provide for each of the four precursor police authorities to appoint a specified number of their members to be members of the combined police authority. As such, there would be no role for the Home Secretary. The precise terms of the order are the subject of ongoing discussions with the police authorities concerned. The making of such an order is subject to our consideration of any objections received in response to the notice given by the Home Secretary of his intention to amalgamate the four forces.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what mechanism the Government will adopt to equalise the council tax precepts in Wales to take into account the proposed merger of the four Welsh police forces. [60356]

Hazel Blears: The financial implications of amalgamating different levels of council tax precept remain under consideration. No final decisions have yet been taken.

Prisons

Dr. Vis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of which of the projected prison population scenarios outlined in Home Office Statistical Bulletin 10/05 is most likely to occur; and if he will make a statement. [67348]

Fiona Mactaggart: Figures for 10 scenarios can be found in Home Office Statistical Bulletin 10/05 "Updated and Revised Prison Population Projections, 2005–2011, England and Wales". Of the 10 published scenarios, scenario one has been the closest to the observed total prison population over the 11 months since the projections were made. NOMS and HMPS continually monitor the prison population against the projections. In the longer term, it is more difficult to predict which scenarios may be closer to actual prison populations.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the impact on the *(a)* mental and *(b)* physical health of prisoners of too few hours of purposeful activity and too many hours of incarceration in cells. [65614]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Prison Service makes every effort to ensure that as much purposeful activity as possible is available to prisoners and the additional

workshops that are coming on stream in establishments are one example of increasing levels of activity hours available to prisoners.

Purposeful activity in prisons consists broadly of education, work and resettlement activity. Specific activities include basic skills and vocational education, workshop activity, tackling substance abuse, offending behaviour programmes and pre release training. These activities reflect the work that is taking place in establishments to rehabilitate prisoners and prepare them for release.

There is currently little information about the impact of imprisonment on people with mental health problems. The National Forensic Mental Health R&D Programme is currently funding a research project on factors mediating the effect of prison on mental health. This is due for completion in summer 2008. Further details are available on the programme's website at http://www.nfmhp.org.uk.

On physical health, the National Audit Office (NAO) report Serving Time: Prisoner Diet and exercise (HC 939) found that prisons met their statutory obligations to provide opportunities for exercise, and that prisoners' average level of physical exercise is close to the number of hours recommended by the Chief Medical Officer. A copy of the report is available in the Library, and on the NAO website at http://www.nao.org.uk/publications/nao_reports/05-06/0506939.pdf.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the *(a)* running costs of each establishment in the Prison Service and *(b)* average number of people held at that establishment (i) was in 2005–06 and (ii) is expected to be in 2006–07. [66885]

Fiona Mactaggart: The average population and respective provisional resource costs for prisons in England and Wales in 2005–06 is shown in the following table. Final figures will be included in the Prison Service annual report and accounts which will be published in July 2006. The Prison Service is unable to give an indication of costs for 2006–07 at this stage. Costs for contracted prisons are commercial in confidence and therefore not included.

Average England and Wales prison population and provisional resource costs in 2005–06

	Average prison population by establishment England and Wales—1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006	*Provisional resource costs for 2005–06*
Acklington	856	15,467,337
Albany	523	12,221,048
Altcourse	958	—
Ashfield	330	—
Ashwell	540	10,981,699
Askham Grange	107	3,516,195
Aylesbury	424	14,108,954
Bedford	468	11,175,655
Belmarsh	907	38,376,251
Birmingham	1,413	30,511,106
Blakenhurst	1,045	19,292,151
Blantyre House	117	2,842,417
Blundestone	458	11,623,496
Brinsford	459	17,170,038
Bristol	597	18,186,073
Brixton	800	22,515,326
Brockhill	127	6,359,239
Bronzefield	420	—
Buckley Hall	233	8,877,159
Bullingdon	959	21,185,406
Bullwood Hall	146	7,867,683
Camp Hill	585	12,600,325
Canterbury	302	7,207,344
Cardiff	739	17,412,508
Castington	363	14,034,042
Channings Wood	655	14,212,356
Chelmsford	576	15,910,565
Coldingley	387	9,332,096
Cookham Wood	170	6,417,139
Dartmoor	612	15,927,470
Deerbolt	393	13,637,220
Doncaster	1,071	—
Dorchester	243	7,041,501
Dovegate	810	—
Dover	284	9,215,882
Downview	273	10,221,287
Drake Hall	276	8,053,065
Durham	760	21,666,069
East Sutton Park	95	2,349,408
Eastwood Park	287	10,932,963
Edmunds Hill	236	9,242,349
Elmley	981	17,883,273
Erlestoke	422	9,300,057
Everthorpe	594	12,297,725
Exeter	513	13,218,685
Featherstone	607	13,996,463
Feltham	615	34,767,160
Ford	510	7,616,383
Forest Bank	1,021	—
Foston Hall	228	8,501,991
Frankland	706	34,774,004
Full Sutton	588	27,578,346
Garth	645	16,672,488
Gartree	467	14,314,727
Glen Parva	770	21,764,829
Gloucester	283	8,659,041
Grendon/Spring Hill	528	15,325,508
Guys Marsh	560	10,943,133
Haslar	133	4,752,047
Haverigg	553	12,060,763
Hewell Grange	158	4,355,975
Highdown	736	17,152,274
Highpoint	800	14,614,910
Hindley	400	16,721,512
Hollesley Bay	271	7,856,662
Holloway	435	23,179,875
Holme House	964	21,486,999
Hull	997	21,820,284
Huntercombe	345	15,254,757
Kingston (Portsmouth)	186	6,085,858
Kirkham	490	14,355,912
Kirklevington	220	4,266,047
Lancaster	238	6,809,598
Lancaster Farms	507	16,518,588
Latchmere House	193	3,201,882
Leeds	1,194	26,254,941
Leicester	345	10,870,596
Lewes	526	11,781,360
Leyhill	448	11,648,932
Lincoln	467	14,077,730
Lindholme	803	20,979,888
Littlehey	694	12,963,947
Liverpool	1,324	29,374,453
Long Lartin	440	22,417,024
Low Newton	251	10,449,289
Lowdham Grange	511	—

Average England and Wales prison population and provisional resource costs in 2005–06

	Average prison population by establishment England and Wales—1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006	*Provisional resource costs for 2005–06*
Maidstone	549	11,720,212
Manchester	1,233	33,208,103
Moorland Open	231	21,424,188
Moorland	755	—
Morton Hall	288	8,535,428
New Hall	337	15,711,208
North Sea Camp	275	5,858,898
Northallerton	191	6,147,689
Norwich	775	16,892,085
Nottingham	502	14,080,191
Onley	531	16,047,312
Parc	994	—
Parkhurst	506	15,482,547
Pentonville	1,162	26,505,196
Peterborough	669	—
Portland	409	13,089,825
Preston	591	16,592,724
Ranby	1,008	21,604,218
Reading	283	9,201,468
Risley	1,061	19,925,783
Rochester	384	9,576,973
Rye Hill	590	—
Send	208	6,676,724
Shepton Mallet	183	5,611,671
Shrewsbury	294	8,530,692
Stafford	673	13,746,220
Standford Hill	447	9,330,002
Stocken	612	12,548,544
Stoke Heath	635	19,102,566
Styal	403	14,718,333
Sudbury	548	9,373,744
Swaleside	773	15,960,360
Swansea	406	10,571,345
Swinfen Hall	585	15,617,488
The Mount	706	15,180,196
The Verne	579	10,818,578
The Weare	76	5,366,580
The Wolds	295	—
Thorn Cross	239	8,693,442
Usk/Prescoed	411	8,833,280
Wakefield	577	25,146,687
Wandsworth	1,438	31,229,830
Warren Hill	204	10,437,376
Wayland	699	12,196,243
Wealstun	788	16,581,028
Wellingborough	566	13,926,999
Werrington	135	7,092,748
Wetherby	333	13,120,810
Whatton	365	11,214,354
Whitemoor	442	29,209,623
Winchester	690	17,052,281
Woodhill	763	29,297,976
Wormwood Scrubs	1,237	28,687,915
Wymott	1,041	22,387,315
Total	76,411	

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the *(a)* availability and *(b)* take-up of correspondence courses in prisons in the last 12 months. [66565]

Phil Hope: I have been asked to reply.

This information is not collected centrally. However, the existing prison service and the new Learning and Skills Council development regions do fund distance learning as part of the existing funding arrangements and the "learning journey" for offenders—as appropriate to individuals' needs.

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what percentage of prisoners' time in prison was spent on education and training in the last period for which figures are available; [66923]

(2) what methodology is used to calculate the percentage of prisoners' time in prison spent on education and training. [66924]

Fiona Mactaggart: Data in the specific format requested are not available. The proportion of prisoner time undertaking education and training compared with overall purposeful activity is therefore given. According to provisional data for 2005–06, prisoners spent 25.2 hours per prisoner per week undertaking purposeful activity. Time spent in education and training was 5.1 hours per prisoner per week representing 20.1 per cent. of the total purposeful hours.

Data relating to purposeful activity is reported on a weekly basis. The weekly purposeful hours figure is based on the total hours prisoners have spent undertaking each of the 30 activities listed as purposeful divided by the average prisoner population and converting to a weekly average. Education and training hours are calculated in the same way based on five education and training activities.

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the total cost to public funds was of anger management courses offered to prisoners in the prison service in the last 12 months; and what recent assessment has been made of the efficacy of such courses; and if he will make a statement. [67503]

Fiona Mactaggart: Accredited anger management programmes delivered in prison cost about £1.75 million a year. Other anger management work is undertaken locally for which the costs are not available.

There has been one evaluation in England and several evaluations internationally examining the efficacy of anger management programmes for offenders. International and UK evidence shows promising but inconclusive results (due to the limited quality of research design) in terms of reducing recidivism.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the prisons which the Prison Inspectorate judged as good overall in the provision of education in the last 12 months. [66567]

Phil Hope: I have been asked to reply.

Of the 14 prisons that have been inspected since April 2005, and who have had an inspection report published by the Adult Learning Inspectorate, one prison, HMP and YOI Usk and Prescoed, has been given an overall effectiveness grade of 'good' for its education provision.

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the rates are for telephone calls made by prisoners in each prison. [64170]

Fiona Mactaggart: The national call rates for British Telecommunications and Global Communications and Consultancy Ltd are identical at 11 pence per minute. Tables detailing international call rates have been placed in the House Library.

Safe Countries

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many countries of the world he has judged to be sufficiently under the rule of law to offer no threat of torture or abuse to their nationals. [67462]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Secretary of State for the Home Department does not make assessments about whether foreign countries are sufficiently under the rule of law to offer no threat of torture or abuse to their nationals. As is the case with other Departments, when the Home Department interacts with foreign countries on issues relating to torture and the abuse of their nationals, it proceeds on the basis of case-specific assessments.

Special Branch

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 6 February 2006, *Official Report*, columns 954–55W, on special branch, whether the special branch national training unit referred to in the Special Branch Summary of Responsibilities document of August 2004 has been disbanded. [50212]

Hazel Blears: The special branch national training unit has not been disbanded. It is based in the Metropolitan Police Service and provides three national special branch training courses: special branch initial training, the special branch ports course and a course for heads of special branch. In addition, it provides a range of more detailed and specific courses for the Metropolitan police special branch.

Terrorism

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people in the UK are suspected of having attended jihadist terrorist training camps abroad. [66871]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It is not our policy to comment on operational and intelligence matters.

Travellers

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on law enforcement in Travellers' camps. [33869]

Hazel Blears: Equal standards of behaviour are expected from both the settled community and the Gypsy and Traveller community, and the police are responsible for the investigation of crime and antisocial behaviour wherever this occurs. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Home Office have jointly published several documents which deal with enforcement against Gypsy and Traveller sites, and a specific document addressing antisocial behaviour will be issued later this year.

Young Offenders

Dr. Vis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the reasons are for the change in the cost of a place in Ashfield young offenders institution between 2003–04 and 2004–05. [67347]

Fiona Mactaggart: When HMYOI Ashfield opened in 1999 it held both young offenders and juveniles. In February 2004 the establishment was re-roled to hold juveniles only. The increased cost per place since that time is a reflection of the more intensive regime and level of intervention that juveniles receive.